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AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL DEFENCE STRATEGY - OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLES?

by

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ABSTRACT

TITLE: Australian National Defence Policy - Old Wine in New Bottles?

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For the major part of its history Australia's national defence policy has relied upon alliances with major world powers to ensure **its** security. The Nixon Doctrine and withdrawal of United Kingdom forces from East of the Suez persuaded Australia to develop a more independent strategy, which attempts to develop regional balances of power and cooperative security agreements. Australia's defence forces are required to become self reliant, but within a framework of alliances. Although contemplated throughout the 1970s, this strategy was first articulated in 1986, and was most recently reinforced through the release of the 1994 Defence White Paper "Defending Australia."

The paper examines this strategy, its history and objectives, and reviews it in relation to Australia's regional setting and proposed objectives. Limitations such as constraining the area from which threats to Australia are assumed to occur, the definition of the nature of the threats, and the time frame **within** which major threats may occur are examined. A series of questions suggest that the strategy does not reflect current or potential future regional balances of power, perspectives and culture, while also failing to address emerging threats and actors such as non-state institutions, information warfare and economic warfare. The paper concludes that the strategy is flawed because it assumes the outcome of political, military and diplomatic liaison will be as hoped, and falls to provide any alternative in the event that unanticipated regional tensions or hostilities eventuate which may threaten Australian interests. Stopping short of suggesting an alternate strategy, the paper recommends approaches to defining the region, including the use of alternate futures development.

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Australian National Defence Strategy - Old Wine in New Bottles?

Men are not tied to one another by paper seals. They are led to associate by resemblance, by conformities, by sympathies. Nothing is so strong a tie of amity between nations as correspondence in laws, customs, manners and habits of life. They are obligations from the heart.

Edmund Burke

We have no eternal allies and we have no perpetual enemies. Our interests are eternal and perpetual, and those interests it is our duty to follow.

Lord Palmervion

If man does not give thought to problems which are still distant, he will be worried by them when they come nearer.

Confucius

Background

The last ten years have seen significant change in the balance and nature of world and regional power. The emergence of new states and economic powers, and the increasing influence of non-state actors such as multi-national corporations and special interest groups are all symptomatic examples. Some of these changes have led to the re-emergence of old animosities, the associated unfortunate unleashing of ethnic or religiously based war, and an apparently increasing inability of national and international institutions to properly predict, interpret, or control situations. At the same time, state institutions and their leaders continue to foster the perception that they possess the understanding and power to control the trend towards domestic lawlessness, violence, and assumed declines in living standards of many "Western" based societies. Such ability is also implied in relation to the world environment. The notion that state institutions and their leaders can exercise international influence on situations which, in an increasingly complex world, do not fall within their sphere of control is further evidence of the strength of their presumptions. At a time when many perceive decaying world stability, the remaining superpower, the U.S., shows

increasing reluctance to act as the world policeman, prompted in part by increased priority being placed on domestic issues and the associated decline in military budgets. When the U.S. does become involved, there is growing evidence that it lacks the influence and power to control many regional situations, such as Somalia, or to develop clear policy direction for itself or in support of its allies, for instance, support of European concerns related to Bosnia.

States and major powers remain the central elements in the administration of world and regional systems. They continue to carry the expectation of the vast majority of people, despite the impression that they are increasingly unable to control world events or domestic agendas. The relative rise and decline of states has been a cause of conflict between nations throughout recorded history. Significant changes in power have occurred at the state level in the last decade. Most notable were the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. and Yugoslavia, both of which were embroiled in regional wars. Change in an economic sense has occurred through the emergence of the Asian tigers and China. Such events suggest that the "peace dividend" once heralded by the fall of the Soviet Union was premature and the potential for conflict between emerging states is high. In addition to the increasingly complex nature of the world, predictions by futurists such as Alvin and Heidi Toffler suggest that there is a fundamental revolution taking place in the nature of power.¹ Such observations compound the difficulty associated with developing a realistic view of the future. Whether related to such future predictions or not, sophisticated military organizations are recognizing the importance of information warfare, the ability to use new communications technologies to their advantage, and to explore ways of utilizing this technology to get inside the

opponents "decision loop."² Whether these predictions prove to be correct or not, these forecasts and developments underscore the increasingly complex nature of the world, the manner in which information can now be controlled and disseminated, the subsequent impact on how power can be developed and used, and the consequent changing if not increasing nature of threats.

The time frame associated with these observations coincides with the period within which Australia was attempting to develop more independent national security and military strategies. These strategies were shaped in the early 1980s and carried with them the concepts of world order, the manner in which countries used power and dealt with each other, and the perceived clear delineation of power between the various states which prevailed at that time. Australia's current defence strategy reflects the fact that the concepts of the early 1980s had, and continue to have, an influence on how Australia views the world and its players. Whether this strategy is capable of coping with the reality of the current world, Australia's regional setting, or the potential nature of the future world, is open to question and is the theme of this paper.

Purpose

The primary purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that Australia's national security strategy is limited in its perspective and, consequently, flawed in its outlook. This aim will be achieved by reviewing historical influences and the environment within which Australian national security issues must be considered, by providing an outline of current national security strategy, and through an analysis of the factors and interpretations which have shaped the associated Defence strategy. The thesis will be

developed that the current strategy is flawed for a variety of reasons. The nature of these flaws will be addressed in terms of the interpretation of the regional situation, the lack of coherence between strategy objectives and resource allocations, and the adequacy of the associated strategy in coping with the reality of potential future threats. This paper will not attempt to define an alternate strategy, although alternate approaches to some of the issues will be suggested. Important considerations which currently do not appear to be adequately addressed will be outlined. Possible shortcomings in the formulation and application of Australia's current military strategy will then be highlighted through the development of a series of questions which challenge its adequacy. Given this approach the paper will raise more questions than it answers. These questions are aimed at stimulating debate which will contribute to a broader framework of reference in the continuing process of evaluating national security issues.

Historical Influence

Australia's military strategy has, for the greater part of its history, been conceived in the context of alliances and treaties. Recent Australian perspectives on national military strategy have also been dominated by the requirement to strive for a regional balance of power and cooperative security strategy within Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific. Consequently, the role of alliances continues to occupy a central theme in achieving these objectives. The role of alliances within Australia's national security strategy has important historical roots. A review of the influences which have affected this approach is, therefore, appropriate.

Colonial Allegiance and Security Dependence. Coral Bell identifies

Australia's relationship with Britain prior to World War II as a mutual defence alliance so automatic and unconditional that it had never required a written form, and that:

[Australia's] commitment, like that between members of a family, was generally regarded as comprehensive, mutual, automatic, not needing to be defined in writing, stemming not from choice but from happenstance. The bond survived the clash of differing strategic priorities because of common history, ethnic origins, culture, political and legal institutions- and economic interdependence.³

Until the withdrawal of British forces from the Southeast Asian area of operations during World War II, Australian interests, and the manner in which Australian's viewed themselves, were almost exclusively tied to Britain, the founding "mother." Notwithstanding the normal ups-and-downs of international relations, those with Britain were viewed as central to economic growth and national security. The ties were strong from political, economic, cultural, and defence perspectives. The Queen of England was, and still is, the Queen of Australia. Although no formal treaties or defence agreements existed, there was a natural acceptance that both partners would, as a matter of course, rise to the defence of the other. The assumption was made that as a major offspring of a world power Australia would automatically benefit from the protection that this relationship implied. Australia had never flinched from its perceived duty to the British Empire in terms of its defence, and had often paid a high price for the assumption of assured mutual protection.⁴ Despite the British assertion that operations in India and Burma provided forward defence, the unexpected experience of losing the regional protection of its British ally after the fall of Malaya and Singapore early in World War II changed this perspective.

World War II and the Cold War Affiliation. The events of World War II caused Australia to re-evaluate its dependence on Britain for national security. The circumstances associated with the switch in primary allegiance can be traced to Britain's inability to directly support Australia's defence requirements in Southeast Asia and the Pacific during this war. Despite continuing strong support for Britain, Australia subsequently accepted, and has continued to accept, the U.S. as its ultimate protector. The U.S. was the major allied power in the Asia Pacific region during World War II and was prepared to directly support the defence of Australia. Britain's World War II priority was to win Europe first. Although accepting the British priority, this combination of factors led to an emerging acceptance of the U.S. as the primary regional ally. The level of U.S. involvement and influence in Asia increased dramatically in 1942 and has been continuous ever since. This involvement has been demonstrated through the defeat and rebuilding of Japan, the attempts to limit the spread of communism in the Philippines, Korea and Vietnam, and its role as a major trading partner and competitor with the emerging Asian industries and economies. Together with the post-World War II decline of Britain, France and Germany as traditional world powers, and the emergence of the U.S. and U.S.S.R., these factors further stimulated the shift in Australia's primary strategic alliance from Britain to the U.S. Since that time successive Australian governments have sought to maintain strong ties with the U.S., regardless of the political party holding power on either side of the Pacific. Australia has subsequently fostered the notion that, because of strong ethnic, cultural and military ties, it is a favoured state of the U.S.

The unexpected experience of losing the regional support of its major ally (Britain) in World War II led Australia to seek more formal commitments and guarantees through the alliances it entered. This led to the natural acceptance of the Australia, New Zealand and United States (ANZUS)⁵, treaty and the South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO)⁶ both of which provided strong, visible bonds to the Western superpower. Although the major partner changed, the format remained essentially the same, with Australia demonstrating commitment and providing men during the Korean campaign, Vietnam, and the Cold War in return for the assumption of assured national security. The comfort associated with the establishment of these treaties was somewhat shaken by the declaration of the Nixon Doctrine.⁷ This doctrine brought home the reality that although Australia was willing to play its part as a dependent ally, total reliance on a major power was no longer a singularly viable option.

Regional Military Initiatives. The Five Power Defence Agreement (FPDA)⁸, ANZUS and SEATO represented moves towards regional alliances and cooperation, but even these were underpinned by the initiative of a major power (Britain or the U.S.). Australia has made policy decisions outside the accepted framework of these alliances, and in recent times has worked hard to become more self sufficient in defence capability. Nevertheless, Australia's participation in these formal regional security arrangements could perhaps have been stimulated by the interest of one of these outside powers. A review of policies up until the mid 1970s indicates that either Britain or the U.S. (or both) historically have formed the central preoccupation in the formulation of military strategy.

The Emerging Defence Requirement. The Nixon Doctrine and British withdrawal from East of the Suez prompted serious re-consideration of Australia's national defence requirements. Up until this period Australia's security policy had been characterised as "forward defence." This implies a considered Australian policy which required the overseas stationing of forces based on a clear interpretation of Australia's security requirements. This interpretation may be generous. Australian deployments, including those within its own region, might have had their genesis in major alliance considerations with Britain or the U.S. rather than in Australian interpretations and initiative. A plausible explanation of the forward defence policy may be that Australia was comfortable in the belief that continued support of a major ally would ensure its security in the face of any regional or global conflict. This approach also allowed significant economies to be recognised in terms of force structure and readiness, and removed the difficult task of developing and justifying a uniquely Australian set of military objectives. Threats to Australian security were identified with regard for the expectation and interpretation of a major ally, and military capabilities supplemented those of allies rather than attempting to provide a focused and balanced Australian force structure. Because of the relationship with a major ally, large standing forces were not maintained and high levels of readiness were not seen as essential to Australian security. Warning periods, which would allow mobilisation while enjoying the protection of an alliance, were accepted as normal and valid. The bi-polar nature of the Cold War and the consequent Western security alliance focus on countering communist growth allowed this approach to be accepted as realistic. However, the reality that Australia would have to develop a more independent ability to project

national power if it was to be seen as a credible actor on the international stage was becoming more evident throughout the 1970s. New strategic concepts and national policies which reflected an increased awareness of Australia's regional setting would have to be developed. This also dictated that the difficult process of developing independent national security and military objectives be undertaken.

National Security Decision Making - An Australian Framework Of Reference

The Australian concept of national power and the elements which combine to provide that power conform to accepted definitions.⁹ Stated in less classical terms, national interest, power, objectives and strategy could be defined as follows:

Vision (national interest) could be described as a fundamental description of Australian objectives. This includes their ideology. Is it important to remain a democracy, maintain free speech, individual freedom, economic security, standards of living, and law and order? What are the acceptable limits of these requirements and should they be supported externally by Australia?

Resources (national power) provide the ability to achieve the Australian vision, wield influence and project power if necessary;

Goals (national objectives), which are established by the Australian government in response to the community and external influences; and

Plan (national strategy), which links resources and goals through the national decision making process. What are the influencing factors and environment within which decisions must be made? What resources must be applied and actions taken to achieve the vision?

Without resources (national power) a plan cannot be developed which will achieve the goals associated with a nation's vision. Major national resources contributing to a nation's power are accepted as being economic and military strength, political stability, demographics,¹⁰ and geography.¹¹ National power is generally acknowledged as

stemming from national will, economic, military and political power, with the primary factors being economic and military strength. Is there any argument that U.S. world primacy is based on both its economic and military strength? Regional power or primacy is also established on the basis of relative national power.

The Australian National Decision Making Environment

Domestic. Australia is perceived as a wealthy nation with a stable government, little internal unrest, and strong defence forces relative to its regional neighbors. This has been achieved in a country which has a population of 17.5 million in an area equivalent to the contiguous 48 states of the U.S. (for comparative population data see figure 1). The country is rich in mineral deposits.¹² The population is culturally and religiously different from the Asian region, with the majority of the population being of European descent. Population centres are widely dispersed, situated in areas of reasonable rainfall and temperature, and centred around ports. Because of the long distances between population centres, infrastructure costs are high and must be supported from a relatively small tax base. Direct and indirect taxation levels are high. Population growth rates are low and in recent years have been maintained through immigration. Specific government policies have been aimed at creating a "multicultural society" and relatively high levels of Asian immigration have been supported since the mid 1970s. Living standards are high in terms of literacy, medical support, working conditions and personal income. The welfare system provides full support to any section of the community which is considered to be under-privileged or disadvantaged.¹³ Expectation of living standards and government support remains high.

	AREA KM2	POPULATION		
		EST. 1994	GROWTH	/KM2
AUSTRALIA	7,686,850	18,077,419	1.38%	2
USA	9,686,850	260,713,585	0.99%	26
CHINA	9,596,960	1,190,431,106	1.08%	114
JAPAN	377,835	125,106,937	0.32%	326
INDIA	3,287,590	919,903,056	1.82%	263
SINGAPORE	633	2,859,142	1.12%	4261

Figure 1¹⁴

The Australian economy has evolved since 1945 from one based primarily on agricultural activities to one that placed greater emphasis on mining and manufacture. Concerted attempts have been made to replace traditional markets in Britain and Europe with more regional partners. Australia initiated the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) process which seeks to identify and support interests associated with regional economies in an open multilateral trading system. Approximately 55% of all Australian exports are now consumed by the Asian market.¹⁵ Many tariffs have been removed in an effort to make Australian industry more competitive and to open up other trading opportunities. In FY91/92¹⁶ Australia had the 9th largest GDP of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, and the economy was rated 20th in terms of the value of imports and exports.

Despite this apparent strength, Australia's rate of economic growth is now significantly lower than many Southeast Asian neighbours. The increasing demands of welfare and social programs and the associated overseas borrowing to support them

contributes to a debt burden that reached 44% of GDP in 1992 (in contrast to 11 percent 10 years earlier).¹⁷ Average growth during the period 1982-1989 was 2.7%. The economy has recently been in a recession, showing a decline of -3.2% for the period 1989-91. Growth in 1992 was limited to 0.004%. The short-term forecast is for marginal growth through 1994, with a projected growth rate of 1%-2%.¹⁸ By October 1992 unemployment had reached 11.2%, remains in excess of 10% in 1995, and is forecast to remain high during the remainder of the decade. A steadily aging population contributes to the increasing demands on social services and government expenditure. Arguably, the most difficult task now facing Australian governments is to control the rate of debt growth while ensuring that adequate social services, employment, standards of living, and levels of security are maintained.

The competing demands inevitably result in the need to prioritize requirements through the budget process.¹⁹ That the budget process, "is about politics and can never be divorced from politics," is a statement that applies to most democratic forms of government.²⁰ Politicians and governments wish to remain in power. Consequently, policies, budgets and priorities will be strongly influenced by the perception of what the electorate thinks is important. This dictates a constant balancing act between political imperatives and the requirements associated with maintaining less transitory national interest and adequate power. Reality lies in the fact that governments can become distracted from the formulation of a national vision which weighs internal and external influences and from the consensus building which should be associated with unpopular policies that may need to be implemented from time to time.

The Regional Environment. Australia's current national security strategy limits its major assumptions to the Asian and Western Pacific areas and not a global position. Hence, for reason of brevity, this section will focus on these areas rather than the global perspective. The overwhelming feature of this region is the size of the population. Excluding the Middle East and those parts of the former U.S.S.R. which are considered to be in Asia, the area includes 59.7% of the world's population on 26.6% of the available land (only 20.7% if the area of Australia and New Zealand are excluded).²¹ By 2025 the region is expected to have a population of 4,200 million, compared with 2,980 million in 1992.²² Asia includes the world's two most populous countries: the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) (1,178,526,000 in 1993), and India (897,443,000 in 1993), who together account for more than one-third the world's population.²³ Indonesia has the fourth largest population, with Japan seventh, Pakistan eighth, and Bangladesh ninth.²⁴ Of these countries, the PRC, India, and Pakistan are known or believed to have nuclear weapons programs. North Korea is also believed to possess this capability. Although of poor weapons quality, Japan has access to appropriate nuclear materials and a vigorous space program which could support development of a delivery vehicle.

The World Bank classifies all Asian and Southwest Pacific countries other than Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong, Australia and New Zealand as low income.²⁵ As a result, although the region contains more than one-half of the world's population, it accounts for only one-fifth of the world's income in terms of GNP.²⁶ The area can reasonably be characterized as poor, rapidly growing, and with an uneven distribution of wealth. Many of the countries are resource poor and provide poor education,

medical facilities and general living standards. Despite this characterization many of the economies, particularly some of the ASEAN²⁷ nations, are quite vital with some showing double digit growth;²⁸ however, there remains considerable variation in the economic structure, distribution and source of wealth within the Asian region. For example, only 3% of Japanese GDP is derived from agriculture, whereas about one-third of the South Asian region GDP is derived from that source.²⁹ The emergence of Asian economies is underlined dramatically by analysis which indicates that Asia will have four of the top five world economies by the year 2020 (see figure 2).

RANK	1992	2020
1	USA	CHINA
2	JAPAN	USA
3	CHINA	JAPAN
4	GERMANY	INDIA
5	FRANCE	<i>Indonesia</i>
6	INDIA	GERMANY
7	Italy	S;. KOREA
8	BRITAIN	Thailand
9	RUSSIA	FRANCE
10	BRAZIL	Taiwan

Figure 2³⁰

Thus, based on the parameters used to determine the relative economic strength shown in this figure, five Asian states will join the top ten economies of the

world in a little more than a quarter century. All could be defined as regional neighbours of Australia.

As populations and economies grow, so does the demand for raw and manufactured products to meet the requirement for consumer necessities, fuel for industry, transportation and heating etc.³¹ Although large oil and gas deposits are being exploited in the South China Sea (SCS) and Indonesia, the remainder of Asia does not have large supplies of fossil fuels. The economies of Asia and the Pacific are reported to have grown more rapidly than those of the rest of the world during the period 1965 to 1990 but this growth was not uniform. For example, the East Asian area grew rapidly while South Asia lagged the rest of the world in comparison to GNP growth. Prospects for East and Southeast Asia are forecast to remain high, while South Asian growth is seen to remain vulnerable.³² Uneven economic growth which creates further disparities in relative wealth, or the regional development of manufacturing and information technology based industries, could result in large internal movements of people, pressure for relaxations in regional immigration policies, or the creation of economic refugees. Some of these factors are already evident in the region.

Security assessments will vary depending on the outlook of the nation and agency making them, but the following is offered as a U.S. perspective on the region:

Economic, demographic, technological, industrial, and education trends clearly indicate the rise of Asian power relative to the rest of the world. The countries of China, India, a confederated Korea, and Indonesia will mature as major regional powers with increasing global influence. The greatest potential for mid-intensity war lies in Northeast Asia as another Korean war could develop before the year 2000. As the Soviet Union and the US redeploy their forces, the potential for struggle to fill a power vacuum or to form new coalitions in Northeast Asia could lead to a ml -or even high-intensity conflict I.³³

The greatest risk for the west will be simultaneous conflicts in North and South Asia, especially involving the potential of emerging nuclear powers such as North Korea, Iran, India and Pakistan.³⁴

If economic, social and demographic trends continue, Asia is likely to be the most dynamic region in the early 21st century - one characterized by the increasing military power, political influence and cultural assertiveness. ...Trends analysis indicates that Asia is the rising locus of demographic, economic, and military strength.³⁵

Although generated in support of the U.S. Army Intelligence Global Security Forecast, the information provided in support of these assessments noted the following issues: Ascendant powers of China, South Korea, Iran and Germany will evoke threat perceptions that could lead to high intensity wars; low to mid-intensity wars will be significantly more frequent but less dangerous to U.S. vital interests; Asia will be the region of most major conflicts; and there will be many significant flashpoints worldwide.³⁶ This data is not presented as a definitive analysis but to provide a point of comparison against which Australia's regional perspective can be considered. A point worth noting is that in terms of the regional aspects of the assessment it did not include Australia Whether this is an intentional oversight or because Australia is not perceived as a member state of the region is not known.

Evolution of Australia's National Defence Strategy and Priority for Resource Allocation

The Dibb Report. The development of national objectives and strategies and the associated defence objectives are assumed to occur in parallel; however, Australia entered the 1970s with a critical requirement to identify appropriate national defence policies in the light of issues such as the Nixon Doctrine. This situation led to the first attempts to develop a more self-sufficient security strategy. Despite growing awareness of the requirement and increased debate, a coherent statement of

Australia's needs was not articulated until the publication of the Dobb Report in 1986.³⁷ The terms of reference for this report were established by the Minister for Defence and can be summarized as: seeking to confirm the basis of Government strategic guidance and its ability to support forward planning, identifying the basis for force structure and resource allocation, and outlining the suitability of current Australian Defence Force (ADF) capabilities and command and control mechanisms.³⁸ This report was the first to emphasise defence self reliance, but also recognised the difficulties associated with Australia's geography, demographics and economics in achieving that aim. In summary, the recommended solution to these problems was proposed through the maintenance of strong alliances, supporting the concept of adequate warning time and the associated ability to build up defences during that time, and the adoption of a policy of denial to protect Australia's sovereignty. The denial policy was identified as equating to a defensive posture.³⁹ The definition of the threat to Australia was limited in terms of the anticipated level of military conflict and the potential nature of the threat,

Australia faces no identifiable direct military threat and there is every prospect that our favourable security circumstance will continue. ...There is no conceivable prospect of any power contemplating invasion of our Continent and subjugation of our population. ...United States interests [in the region] would be directly affected in respect of both its own supremacy in the region and its obligations under the ANZUS Treaty.⁴⁰

The report also identified Australia's areas of direct military interest (ADMI) and primary strategic interest (APSI).⁴¹ To aid in providing force development guidelines, the nature of credible threats were defined as "low-level" and "escalated low-level" conflict.⁴² The policy of denial was to counter these threats through interlocking capabilities which would have the synergistic effect of deterring aggression. These capabilities, or layers of defence, are summarized as: the provision of high quality intelligence and surveillance systems which would remove the probability of surprise;

providing air and naval forces which have the capability to detect, classify and destroy targets in the sea-air gap to the north of Australia (the prime threat axis having been defined as the north and north-western approaches); the provision of sea, air and land forces capable of preventing hostile landings, air attacks or mining in the sea-air gap; and the provision of ground force elements who would deny access to northern population centres and military infrastructure .⁴³

DOA87 Policy Objectives. The Dibb report was followed by the Australian Government Policy Information Paper - The Defence of Australia 1987 (DOA87). There are three fundamental principles on which DOA87 was based: the need for self-reliance in defence, the development of effective regional cooperation, and strong international alliances.⁴⁴ This paper reflected the tenets of the Dibb report in terms of the likely nature and source of threats. DOA87 made no reference to the policy of denial, presumably because of the public debate related to the validity of that concept. Instead, a policy of "defence in depth" was proposed, which would be designed to provide early warning of potential threats and to deter any potential aggressor. The only clear difference to the policy of denial was recognition of the requirement to provide the capability to attack an opponent's domestic and military infrastructure.

Despite recognizing the requirement to maintain an offensive military capability, a central theme of the defence policy espoused by DOA87 was the development and maintenance of close international and regional alliances. The assumption was, and still is, that this would provide access to capabilities not available within the ADF (for example, high technology equipment and intelligence from the U.S.), and lead to a greater spirit of cooperation, which would enhance regional stability. In other words, a

degree of threat reduction is assumed to be achievable by way of cooperation in military, economic, political and trade partnerships, "[defence] self reliance can only be achieved within a framework of alliances and regional associations."⁴⁵ Australia's defined area of "direct military interest" and region of "primary strategic interest" conformed to that in the Dobb report.⁴⁶ The extremities of Asia and potential world influences were acknowledged but only as being peripheral to the security of Australia as they were not seen to represent any direct military threat. Consequently, the area and nature of strategic defence and security interests were defined parameters of the national security decision making process, as were subsequent defence force allocations. A major direct threat to the Australian mainland was seen as remote, and priority for force structure and capabilities was directed towards countering possible low-level and escalated low-level incursions.⁴⁷

DOA87 places significant emphasis on the requirement to provide, "the right mix of capability and technology,"⁴⁸ which was considered to provide Australia with a significant level of defence self-reliance, deterrence and power projection.⁴⁹ These requirements have subsequently led to major emphasis being placed on capital procurement, which was undertaken on the optimistic premise that defence expenditure would continue to increase in real terms.

That DOA87 objectives continued to provide the basis for national security decision making and the subsequent allocation of defence resources was reiterated by the Government, the Chief of [Australian] Defence Force (CDF)⁵⁰ and the Secretary of the Department of Defence⁵¹ throughout the 1990s. The draft of the 1993 Strategic Review, which was itself a precursor to the 1994 White Paper, modified the terms used

to define Australia's areas of strategic and military interest as simply the "wider region" (Asia-Pacific, including the Sub-Continent, Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia and Southwest Pacific), and the "nearer region" (Southeast Asia, Southwest Pacific, and the nearer reaches of the Indian Ocean).

Foreign Policy. Senator Gareth Evans, Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, stated in that departments 1990-91 annual report that Australia seeks to "contribute to enhanced global security and a more Just international order through improving the strength and efficacy of the multilateral system and expanding Austral la's influence in that system."⁵² This approach includes the full gamut of political, humanitarian, environmental, military, and international law situations. Since the release of this policy, the United Nations (UN) has been the most prominent forum through which Australia has attempted to enhance its global image by taking a strong leadership role in the attempted resolution of the Cambodian situation, and general support of peace keeping and humanitarian missions.

Regional Policy. In 1989 the government reasserted the long term goal for Australian involvement in the Asia-Pacific region as being,

a comprehensive engagement with countries in the region: 'comprehensive' in that there should be many elements in the relationship and engagement because it implies a mutual commitment between equals. The essential elements of the concept of comprehensive engagement might be stated as participating in the gradual development of a regional security community based on a sense of shared security interests.⁵³

The intent of this policy is to ensure that Australia engages its regional neighbours across the full range of issues, thereby assisting the development of a more benign and predictable environment. The full range of political, diplomatic, economic and military opportunities are the recommended instruments of this policy,

which the government defined as; "military capability [exchanges, exercises, training, military assistance programs and military aid], politico-military capability, diplomacy, economic links, development assistance, 'non-military' threat assistance, and exchanges of people and ideas."⁵⁴ These national objectives are reflected in the policy associated with all related government departments, including Defence, and provide support for all forms of regional agreements and associations, including those in which Australia is currently not a central partner, for example, ASEAN. Such statements reinforce the common objectives of the Departments of Defence and Foreign Affairs. The outcome of these initiatives is to demonstrate Australia's 'willingness to participate and support regional objectives, while at the same time attempting to will ensure that the resulting open and free exchange of dialogue and ideas will lead to "a confident and natural partnership in a common neighborhood of remarkable diversity."⁵⁵

The 1994 Defence White Paper. The major thrust, aims and priorities of the policy presented in "Defence White Paper 1994 - Defending Australia" (DWP94) are consistent with those in DOA87. Despite amending terms to make consumption presumably more palatable to the region, there are significant continuing themes in the white paper. The white paper reaffirms the importance of regional alliances as outlined in DOA87, and in particular the importance of those with the U.S.⁵⁶ The DOA87 emphasis on developing and maintaining a technologically superior regional defence force is reiterated in DWP94.⁵⁷ This paper also reiterates the idea that the priority for capability development and resource allocation is the defence of Australian territory and not alliance capability or support of multi-lateral operations, "important as these international [UN] and domestic activities are for Australia [response to domestic crisis

such as floods], they do not determine force structure of the Australian Defence Force."⁵⁸ There are differences between DOA87 and DWP94 in some of the terms used, such as "short warning conflict," whose subsequent description and associated requirements largely conform to the previously defined "low-level" and "escalated low-level" conflict, but the overall thrust and objectives of the two papers remains the same. The significant new observation in the white paper is the recognition of the changing and increasingly complex nature of the region.⁵⁹

The white paper acknowledges the increasing complexity of the regional setting and the likelihood for continuing change by asserting that, *"our region is one of great dynamism, strategically as well as economically. The next 15 years will see great change in our strategic environment. With the end of the Cold War, important new uncertainties have emerged about the future situation in asia."*⁶⁰ Despite this observation, there is no analysis, impact statement, or insight to accompany the recognition of a changing strategic environment that supports the decision to continue current strategies. Simply acknowledging the likelihood of change does not constitute the basis of strategic planning. Without some definition of the potential impact(s) of such change, the validity or coherence of current or alternate strategies cannot be tested. By definition in DOA87 and DWP94 the government does not see a direct non-regional threat to its security. Nor does the current white paper see any major threat within the next 10 years as the offensive capability in the region is stated as limiting regional threats to low-level incursions. This appears to be based on the assumption that it would take approximately 10 years to develop the range of capabilities and skills to mount significant threats to the Australian mainland.⁶¹ The policy of self-reliance

within a framework of alliances is also maintained and is tacit acknowledgment of the fact that a comprehensive and independent defence strategy is beyond Australia's resources.

The 1994 white paper is a continuance of the basic defence philosophy first espoused in the Dibb Report and, although terms have been altered, the relative definition of potential threats, priorities and force development requirements remains consistent.⁶² Consequently, although DWP94 acknowledges the likelihood of significant changes in world and regional strategic, economic and military balances, there is no fundamental change in Australia's Defence policy other than the definition of the timeframe for which it is presumed to be valid.⁶³ Despite the credible and overdue attempt to provide the necessary focus and develop a methodology to ensure that shrinking defence funds were allocated to correct priorities, the policy themes articulated in DOA87 and maintained through DWP94 continue to constrain objectives and options by "situating the appreciation." In developing a strategy which defines the exact nature of the threat, the areas from which it will emanate, the time frame within which major threats will not occur, and the potential forms of conflict, Australia's security is tied to a singular view of the future. This strategy is to provide the foundation of Australia's national defence for the next 15 years (2010)⁶⁴ and, through the acquisition priorities it supports, the force structure and capability for a significantly longer period.

Interpreting the Strength of Alliances

Special Relations with the U.S. The alliance with the U.S. continues to be given high priority within the defence strategy and, paradoxically, is seen as central to self sufficiency.⁶⁵ Is the ANZUS agreement the cornerstone of the special Australia-U.S. Defence relationship? If so, why, as it implies no obligation on any partner to come to the assistance of the other?

That treaty is in the vaguest terms. It refers only to an obligation to consult, unlike the NATO treaty documents which refer to an attack on one party being an attack on all. ANZUS did not bring American help over Borneo, nor over West Irian, when the Australian Government of the day considered, whether rightly or wrongly does not matter, that vital Australian interest were, involved.⁶⁶

Analysis of whether there is any binding nature to this treaty, and of the apparently vague wording, has led to conclusions which include:

[the treaty does not] constitute a binding commitment to do anything except consult whenever Australia or New Zealand considers itself to be threatened in the Pacific and the reference to action in the event of armed attack is in the form of a declaration, not usually considered as forceful a commitment as a direct statement that something will be done.⁶⁷

The Nixon Doctrine further implies that the assumption of assured support would not be soundly based. Given such an interpretation, what does the treaty imply? Answers have included access to high technology equipment, intelligence and the implied influence of being a treaty member with a superpower. As important as these ancillary benefits are, Australia would do well to heed the observation that:

In regard to the question of 'especial relationship', it is also important to recognize that leaders of a great power do not base decisions of state on personal and sentimental consideration rather, they must base such decisions on a combination of hard judgments about national self-interest and domestic political circumstances. In neither case is the judgment reached likely to be much affected by the fact that a minor (or major) ally has adopted a more or less 'devotional stance' in its dealings with the power in question.⁶⁸

To some degree Australia appears to be influenced by the internal perception of its "special relations" with the superpower. The notion that, because of strong ethnic

and cultural bonds and a history of military support, Australia is a favoured state of the U.S. is undoubtedly of greater significance to Australia. The concept of a strong and enduring tie with the U. S., and the assumed prestige and credibility it lends Australia in its geographic region, appears to affect Australia's interpretation of its own source of influence within that region. What makes Australia's relationship any more important than those being created between the U.S. and other Asian countries? In the emerging world why would the U.S. wish to maintain the importance of the Australian relationship over any other? What is the strategic significance of Australia to the U.S. and what makes the Australian alliance potentially more important than other nations? Given the acknowledged likelihood that U.S. economic interest will become increasingly more entangled in the region, what is the scenario which suggests that the U.S. will continue to give Australia priority consideration and if it risks alienating other regional partners at some point in the future?

Objective analysis may well suggest that factors such as; the increasing U.S. economic relationship with the regional, the strategic location of other nations and their position in relation to lines of communication and supply, particularly sea lanes, and the relative ability of other nations to exercise future political influence in the area, at least makes other regional countries potentially more strategically attractive to the U.S. Australia could actually find itself competing with the U.S. for influence in the area, or with other Asian countries to maintain its apparent preeminent position with the U.S.

The defence white paper appears to hedge its bets in terms of interpreting U.S. regional presence. The observation is made that the U.S. will maintain its presence in the region and contribute to its security in the next 15 years, but will not seek or accept

primary responsibility for maintaining peace and stability in the region.⁶⁹ If Australia's desire to foster continuing U.S. engagement with the region is based on the perception that it can rely on U.S. intervention to resolve regional problems, that perception may be seriously flawed. The potential for the U.S. to remain removed from tensions or conflict associated with territorial claims is high. The likely impact of further U.S. defence cuts, which may be stimulated by domestic agenda considerations such as the desire to implement a balanced budget amendment, a significant domestic political issue currently high on the U.S. agenda, is not addressed. The observation that U.S. Pacific forces are larger than prior to the end of the Cold War, with the associated implication for the region, is somewhat misleading. USCINCPAC forces differ fractionally but not significantly from that period, and current figures indicated that they are slightly smaller than during the cold war.⁷⁰ A more correct observation would be that Pacific forces have not been cut the way European forces have, and that force levels may have been maintained because of the continuing commitment of Pacific Command to Middle East operations.

The current U.S. approach to the evolving Asian region is to develop bilateral relations and avoid commitments which obligate 't to preconditioned response. How this approach ties in with the declared policy of "engagement and enlargement" is not clear. The policy may be in response to the complex nature of the region or to possible analysis which suggests that multi-lateral and strong defence alliances could possibly lead to direct conflict with China in the future. A further equally likely possibility is that the policy is simply a further impact of domestic priorities that have resulted in a general reluctance among Americans to be seen as the world's

policeman. Force reductions since the Gulf War have reduced U.S. capacity to respond to regional tensions or conflicts. Outside the continuing support of the Korean peninsula and Japan, the future role of the U.S. in the region is not clear but may well be related to economic interests. Natural resources such as oil and gas have resulted in large investments in the region by U.S. companies.⁷¹ U.S. trading figures are also high and growing.⁷² Such investment, trade and vested interest could influence U.S. response to threats against regional security but, because of the multiple countries involved, also makes regional interference unlikely in issues which may involve more than one economic ally. These investment and trade figures may also place pressure on the U.S. in the event that priorities have to be established in relation to Australian and regional interests.

New World - Old Influences. The alliances proposed in the defence strategy are aimed at creating an environment in which Australia's national power and the ability to influence are enhanced. In looking towards alliances Australia appears to be attempting to create the same type of comfortable Anglo-Saxon relationships shared with the Britain and the U.S., and to operate with the opinion that it is viewed within the Asian region as a desirable partner with credible and influential power. Has this notion been developed in terms Australia can accommodate rather than the reality of regional perspectives? Asian and Southwest Pacific nations are not homogenous in terms of politics, cultures, economics, religion, military or industrial capability, or their view of themselves and the world around them. Can appropriate military alliances and balances be achieved in a region which has multiple and conflicting claims to territories such as the Paracel and Spratly Islands, and which bring with them influences from

regions that Australia chooses to identify as "wider" or, as in the case of India and China, not at all in terms of direct threat?⁷³

Whether formed regionally or with the U.S., alliance capability is a by-product of economic and military strength rather than an inherent capability of the alliance. As previously stated, government strategy does not allow any priority in resource allocation to develop alliance force capability, interoperability requirements, or the development and maintenance of combat capability in this area. The military capabilities brought to an alliance will be those inherent in the equipment bought to defend Australian sovereignty and practiced in pursuit of that goal. Reduced combined training and exercise opportunities brought on by reduced operating funds do not help in the development of alliance or coalition capability or demonstration of commitment.

The definition of self reliance within a framework of alliances also is debatable when logistical support is based on the ability or desire of a foreign power, the U.S., who has numerous competing world and regional interests and priorities. In light of the increasing impact of domestic issues on U.S. Federal budget priorities, the U.S. public is increasingly unwilling to support large military budgets and foreign intervention. The long term impact to foreign allies of decreasing U.S. military budgets could be that access to diminishing U.S. resources and stockpiles could become more difficult, thus seriously affecting the ability to capitalize on warning time to supplement Australian forces. This could become a critical factor given that the majority of current air and naval forces, and some land forces, are of U.S. origin. The issues include access to spares and munitions, with the latter becoming a critical factor based on current stockpile policies and lead times.⁷⁴ Given the desire to develop self reliant capabilities

within a framework of alliances, such limitations bring into question the ability to achieve the required goals through current approaches.

Australian National Defence Strategy - Solvency and Coherence?

The Australian government has defined an objective, the defence of the Australian continent and the development of a security environment within Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific which limits the likelihood of military action. The resources to achieve this objective are diplomatic, economic and military. The stated plan which links objectives and resources is to concentrate force development on the defence of Australian territory against low-level attacks, to support multi-national forums such as the UN, and to foster alliances which develop a spirit of cooperation and mutual support within the region. The fact that force development criteria are based on defence against low-level incursions constrains military objective setting. Further, while the desire to develop a sense of regional homogeneity in relation to economic and military objectives is an essential political and diplomatic objective in the development of a more benign environment, these objectives do not in themselves constitute military strategy. The defined threat and alliance elements of the strategy make the definition of military objectives difficult. Essential as the alliance goals are, the central place they occupy in the national defence strategy limits that strategy to a statement of political and diplomatic objectives rather than the basis of a coherent plan which supports the development of military strategy.

The solvency of Australia's national military must also be tested against actual resource allocation. Capability enhancements required to achieve policy aims and to

develop a more self reliant posture were first identified in DOA87. Further capital equipment purchases have been proposed in DWP94.⁷⁵ The force structure and capability requirements identified in DOA87 required a level of financial commitment over time to ensure that the capability could be achieved (accepted as being 2.6% to 3% of GDP, which itself was assumed to grow at 2.5% to 3% per year).⁷⁶ Unfortunately, such a commitment could not be maintained. The inability to maintain funding at the required level resulted in several DOA87 capital procurement objectives being postponed or extended and manpower and operating funds being cut in an attempt to maintain capital procurement priorities.

The Government initiated a series of reviews to address concerns that DOA87 objectives and the development of a self reliant capability were not being achieved. The most influential of these reviews was the Force Structure Review of 1991 (FSR91).⁷⁷ FSR91 formally revised real growth projections in the Defence budget to 0%, while at the same time recommending initiatives which would require further funding, for instance, revised force basing. Criticism of these initiatives included the over emphasis on capital acquisition at the expense of reductions in operating funds, which detracted from the ability to support operational training as well as supporting the central tenants of the security strategy. Prior to the release of the 1994 white paper, the time frame associated with providing the capability requirements defined in DOA87 had been estimated to be 2010.⁷⁸ DWP94 acknowledged that Defence outlays will be below the level recommended in DOA87.⁷⁹ This not only brings into doubt the ability to complete the initiatives proposed by DOA87 but also the additional capital equipment purchases outlined in DWP94. Rather than maintaining the relevance of a

policy first initiated through DOA87, the funding restraints and overall government priorities bring the validity of the strategy into question. This is not to suggest that government priorities are wrong, but rather that the strategy needs to be reconsidered in light of both the changing environment and the domestic constraints on achieving initial government priorities.

Military forces must develop objectives, strategies and force structures in keeping with national policy directives and strategies. National objectives have a significant impact on military doctrine, re-equipment priorities, types and priority of training, readiness, stockpile policies and the like through the military strategy they dictate. The white paper states that, "Planning focuses on capabilities rather than threats"⁸⁰ (underlined for emphasis in original). A reasonable definition of threat is capability coupled with intent; therefore, logic suggests that planning be predicated on intent, or assumed intent, rather than countering a particular capability. If one holds that the existence of capability does not in itself represent a threat, the recognition of developing intent becomes critical. To some degree this is acknowledged in DWP94:

A threat of armed conflict only arises when, in addition to the required military capability, there is a cause which provides motive, and an intention to use force in regard to that dispute. We believe no country at present has either a motive or an intention to attack Australia, and we have no reason to expect that any country will develop such a motive or intention. Our defence planning is therefore not based on an expectation of threat to Australia from any country.⁸¹

Despite having acknowledged the changing strategic circumstances and increasing complexity of the region, the white paper continues to present an interpretation which characterises it as benign in terms of a direct security threat. Together with the focus on regional capabilities rather than intent or threat, this does not assist the process of defining balanced military objectives and priorities, resource allocation or force

development. The Australian government definition of defence strategy and objectives does not give support to the concept that the primary role of military forces in peacetime is the demonstrated or implied ability to contribute to national power and objectives through military power projection. Such a notion implies the requirement for balanced force capability rather than counterforce capability.

The validity of basing force structure requirements against low-level incursions along the north and northwestern shores of Australia, and the actual ability to provide a "leak proof" defence against such incursions, is questionable. Nor is this task consistent with the government requirement to focus on regional capability rather than threat. The size of the implied surveillance task and associated force requirements could consume a significant portion of the defence budget and still fall short of securing northern Australia against such incursions. The question must also be asked if force structure has actually been consistently targeted at this objective or a more realistic balanced force capability. If the real primary objective of Defence policy is to protect Australian sovereignty against low-level and escalated low-level incursion, the relevance of various elements of the ADF in relation to achieving this priority mission must be brought into question (tank battalions, limited air and sea deployment capability, lack of joint doctrine and joint C41 capability). Although alliance development, regional presence, and support of UN activities are central to the strategy and, together with training, form the day-to-day requirement of ADF activities, they carry no priority in establishing the basis of force capability.⁸²

That the first priority of military forces should be the maintenance of the nation state and sovereignty goes without question. If the assumption is that the likelihood of

direct threat to Australia is low, the question that should also be asked is what is the most likely scenario which will lead to the use of Australian forces in support of national interests? A plausible answer could be that Australia will employ forces in support of an alliance, or because of the implication a particular external conflict has to its vital interests. The most likely scenario is that Australia will form part of a larger UN or alliance coalition. The defence strategy objective of enhancing security through improving the strength and efficacy of the multilateral system and Australia's participation in the Gulf War both recognize and suggest this eventuality.

Given these assumptions, the argument can be developed that the perspective on force development priorities should be expanded. Australian forces must be prepared for the most likely as well as the highest priority challenges. While needing to ensure that capabilities unique to the protection of the homeland are provided (Over The Horizon Radar surveillance of the northern approaches is an example), the ability to ensure continuing interoperability with major allies, to be able to provide meaningful combat capabilities to an alliance force as a result of that interoperability, and to have developed a level of alliance credibility through combined exercises and training needs to be given higher priority. These capabilities not only enhance the credibility of Australia as a potential partner, they directly contribute to and strengthen the development of alliance credibility and the deterrent aspect of the policy. To be a credible alliance or coalition military partner forces must be capable of being responsive. These requirements do not imply the need to change capital procurement objectives, but to ensure that interoperability requirements are considered in defining platform capabilities, and that operating opportunities and funds are provided at a level

which supports credible joint and combined training.⁸³ While funds for such training must be allocated in a prudent fashion, and justified against readiness requirements, the continued implementation of cuts at the operating level is the ultimate form of false economy as it can quickly undermine force capability and, therefore, the significant investment in combat systems. High tech equipment is of little value if the operational and procedural training to capitalize on its capability are lacking. The changes in force structure priorities outlined in this paragraph would enhance power projection capability.

Government policy continues to emphasize the requirement for technological superiority. Ownership of high technology equipment does not in itself represent power projection or force capability. There are numerous contradictions in recent history to the assumption that relative military capability or technology will ensure Influence or the outcome of conflict. Such assumptions must be considered to be at least potentially flawed and dependent upon the context in which force is being applied. Even if the assumption is accepted as being correct, what is the basis of fact to support the opinion that Australia will maintain technological superiority, or that the regional interpretation of Australian technology and capability is as implied in government policy?

What is the likelihood of Australia maintaining technological superiority in the region given relative economic growth and trends in defence spending?⁸⁴ Several nations within the Asian area could be considered to at least have technological parity with Australia, for example, India. Equally strong claims to special relations and, therefore, special consideration by the U.S. can also be made by countries such as

Japan. What if less capable regional nations were prepared to form military coalitions in which differing technological capabilities were combined to provide enhanced power projection in support of ambitions? High technology is readily available at reduced costs and the regional balance could change quickly, a factor again acknowledged but not addressed in DWP94. The need to be technologically superior will become increasingly more important if the "information age," or third wave as described by Toffler, evolves as postulated. The issue will then change from the balance of military hardware to the balance of ability to influence the opponent or partner by getting inside his decision loop. Australia may already be behind some Asian countries who have economic and industrial resources to exploit the technology.

DWP94 provides several warnings related to the requirement to maintain military skills,

A military force that has been neglected in peace cannot be revived quickly when a threat emerges. ...The skills to operate modern weapons also may take decades to develop. The Australian Defence Force's skills need to be honed and tested continually if we are to be sure that our forces would be able to prevail in conflict.⁸⁵

Given the implication of these skills to the maintenance of a technologically superior force, and the difficulty of developing such skills even with the benefit of warning time, military leadership must ensure that adequate balance is maintained between readiness and capital procurement to avoid a "hollow force" situation. Continuing cognizance should be given to the fact that while tasks such as economic zone surveillance for regional partners and LJM operations provide productive employment, they do not always provide operationally significant training. DWP94 states that the capabilities developed to defend Australia have proven themselves to be sufficiently versatile to fulfill the wider range of tasks implied by alliance support and UN

operations.⁸⁶ The operations referred to are the Gulf, Namibia, Cambodia, Somalia, Rwanda, and the South Pacific. That specific capabilities can be used to support UN peacekeeping operations is not disputed. Many of these tasks are associated with providing police type functions, logistics, distribution, communications or initial command and control while re-establishing legitimate forms of government. If these activities are considered to imply a given level of military expertise then that level of expertise must also be assumed to be inherent in the forces of regional neighbours who also participated in some of these missions. The Gulf War commitment was supported by the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) whose task, although demanding and important, was to support blockade operations. To interpret Australian forces as being highly interoperable and unilaterally combined force capable from the operations stated in the white paper would be a mistake. Although showing a level of commitment to the most important alliance partner, and support for the LTN, only one of these operations involved direct support of a regional partner and none demonstrate that fighting skills are honed or that forces can prevail in combat.

Australian national security and military strategies fall to address the increasing likelihood that future threats to Australia may not be posed in terms of traditional direct military action against the homeland. Threats do not have to represent high technology or be aimed at invading the continent to be effective. The simple movement of people - en masse - may represent a significant threat, such as the Cuban and Haitian boat people did to the U.S., and for which it was prepared to deploy combat forces to intervene. Regional demographics suggest that such an eventuality is not unlikely in the Asian-Australian area. Also, the increasingly complex and

interdependent nature of the world economy, the ability of non-state institutions and actors to wield influence, the emergence of information warfare,⁸⁷ and the potential for shifting coalitions based on economic or military desires and objectives are all discounted on the premise that a major threat to Australia would be signaled by a Normandy style invasion with all the associated warning indicators.⁸⁸ This assumption implies that intent will become obvious, thus providing warning time, which is itself a critical assumption central to current Australian strategy. Therefore, the entire concept of warning time is dependent upon: the accurate interpretation of the regional and global influences affecting the region, emerging regional objectives and priorities, the inter-relationship of issues which DWP94 acknowledges as complex, and the ability to forecast with sufficient accuracy the net outcome of these factors. That Australia may be able to achieve these objectives within the range of available intelligence, diplomatic and political assets is arguably within the bounds of possibility, but not probability. History indicates that even countries with access to information and intelligence resources far greater than Australia's, for instance the U.S., Russia and U.K., fail to consistently interpret the current situation or predict future events with any certainty. Australian strategy assumes that distance, time and relative technology will provide a degree of immunity from attack, traditionalist thinking which takes no account of the emerging world, region, technology, or potential nature of future threats.

In addition to the government sponsored reviews, the defence forces themselves have responded to the need to increase efficiency in order to maintain standards of pay, service conditions, and capital procurement projects.⁸⁹ If perceived to be in response to predetermined directives, the penchant to change the organization and

names as indicators of efficiency and progress, or the presumption that changes are in response to apparent political imperatives, can be detrimental to force cohesiveness. This is not to suggest that all changes have been predicated on this basis, or have failed to yield benefits, but that negative perceptions were allowed to be generated through rapid implementation. In times of fiscal constraint and reorganization, governments, and the departments that support them, must be prepared to critically challenge and question issues, actions and policies. Open, critical but constructive debate is the sign of a healthy organization, a factor which is interpreted by some as being missing within the Department of Defence and one which, rightly or wrongly, has been attributed to the cause of poor morale (forces are perceived internally as being on the back foot and in a reactionary mode). To some the changes within the forces appear to be so rapid and continuous that the basis on which progress and capability are being measured is no longer clear. The apparent lack of public debate associated with changes to the military does not help leadership in the task of preparing for and implementing them. At the same time, leadership must also strive to maintain the credibility of readiness requirements identified in the Chief of Defence Force Preparedness Directive.⁹⁰ Consistent acceptance of the difficulty or failure to meet identified readiness requirements can affect service credibility and result in the loss of personal identification with objectives and service loyalty (as opposed to unit morale) among highly skilled and motivated service people. The net effect can be the loss of technically and professionally skilled individuals from all levels to the civilian sector. Although addressing the importance of leadership, tactical and operational level issues

against strategic policy, the relevance of these issues stems directly from the priorities implemented in response to government national security requirements.

Interpretation and Perception

Which Mirror is Australia Looking In? Where does Australia perceive its source of vitality within the region it is attempting to influence? The defined Australian strategy casts it in a leading role through the initiative of developing bilateral and multi-lateral relationships. Whether this is because it views itself as the stronger partner or because it is the author of the initiative is not clear. How clearly and on what basis do regional partners view the overtures? If Australia is a vital power in the region, logic suggests that other countries would be attempting to court it and develop the type of relationships which appear to be so central to the strategy. What evidence is there that Australia is a strong power in the region and that its strategies are working? Although a dialogue partner with ASEAN since 1974, Australia has not been invited to become a full member, and there is open resistance to such a move from at least one member country. The counter point can be made that time is required for the diplomatic and political process which precedes change. However, given the recent dramatic changes in the balance of world power and the evolving nature of the region it could also be argued that if Australia was considered to have anything to offer in terms of its ability to contribute to regional strategic strength, security and stability, there would be far more positive signs.

Australia has consistently failed to forecast events in its declared regions of interest.⁹¹ Does this reflect a lack of ability to understand and interpret its defined national security decision making environment? This begs the question: does Australia understand the Asian-Pacific psyche, culture and subsequent possible responses, or is it viewing the region with or through a Western perspective? If such limitations are real,

what is the implication of a strategy which relies so heavily on the ability to correctly characterise and interpret the region? There also is evidence that a degree of mistrust exists between some nations within the region.⁹² What is the likely impact of regional sensitivities and mistrust on the ability to develop strong and enduring regional alliances?

What Map Are Regional Partners Using? How do potential regional partners view Australia? Although written in 1972, the following observation by an Australian academic still carries some relevance,

for all its short history, Australia has been on the periphery of-world events, sallying forth on occasion to help with righteous causes, but doing so by muscle more than mind. We are inherently preoccupied with ourselves, as are most people, but distance and water emphasise the preoccupation and wealth makes it possible. ...It is probably fair to say that most of the time most of the world is not consciously aware of Australia at all. On the whole, it is not news. It enters rarely, if at all, into other governments calculations. It is still important to know how others see us - not simply the degree of friendship or hostility, respect or contempt, but the detail of their perceptions of significant cultural, economic, political or military issues. It is important because, if the perceptions are accurate, they may reveal inadequacies in our own capacity or performance that need to be remedied. ...To assess how others see Australia and its policies is therefore a chancy and difficult business, and bound to be full of gaps and qualifications and compounded subjectivities. It is still worth attempting.⁹³

How is Australia evaluating regional interpretations? Is the evaluation based on an inward Australian assessment or on supported analysis of factual feedback from within the region? If the basis relies entirely upon self interpretation of regional opinion, the process is at least incomplete if not flawed. The regional view of Australia is affected by history and culture and has been recognized by the Australian government as being less than favourable, "The cultural gap between Australia and the region, and the image problem with which we are still, often unfairly, dogged, can create real problems for our overall national security."⁹⁴

Regional opinion is divided on the source of potential threats and the role of outside powers, which to some includes Australia. Indonesia and Malaysia appear to wish to reduce the role of outside powers in the region, while Singapore and Thailand see outside involvement as strengthening regional security. The general exception appears to be regional attitude towards U.S. presence. Why are regional countries anxious to maintain U.S. presence in the area and what impact does this have on Australia's relative ability to wield influence? Given the region's colonial experience, the wish for continued U.S. presence is unlikely to stem from an innate desire to seek Western guidance or control of oriental issues. The most probable reason is the emergence of China as a potential world power in the near future and the clear indications that it is prepared to project power into the region to support its claims.⁹⁵ Whether the U. S. would be prepared to accept the role of protector is doubtful and is reflected in its policy of remaining neutral on issues such as the Spratly Islands, although its acceptance of Chinese naval protection for US oil companies operating in the area suggests a curious form of neutrality.⁹⁶ The natural regional desire to secure the support of the world power, even through bilateral alliances, is unlikely to lend any pre-eminent influence being granted to Australia.

In conducting research for this paper to determine the attitude of the region, any individual country, or organisations such as ASEAN, it was unusual to find reference to Australia's roles, influences or objectives in any of the regional journals, books or articles, or in assessments of the region conducted by outside agencies and authors. Although this could be discounted on the basis that the research conducted represents a small fraction of the published total, the material researched did represent a wide

cross section of regional discussion and thought, The significance of this seemingly unimportant indicator should not be discounted when attempting to determine regional acceptance and attitude towards Australia, or when seeking examples of how successful Australian influence is or could be.

If Australia fails to establish credible influence and power within the region and the proposed brotherhood of regional alliances and cooperative spirit does not develop to the required level or include Australia as a full partner, how will Australian objectives be affected? How does the current strategy allow Australia to project itself as a favoured ally with anybody under such circumstances? The issue is not whether Asia looks at Australia as a threat but whether it is prepared to accept it as a partner and on what terms. Also, if the world is changing in the general way described by Toffler and others, the threat to Australia is not just regional but global, Information technology reduces distance, and Australia's apparent isolation would do little to protect it in the "Third Wave."

Defence Implications

The white paper acknowledges the changing regional environment but stops short of suggesting that the likelihood of conflict has increased since the withdrawal of Soviet presence and influence. This conforms to a general trend towards ignoring the fact that intervention by the U.S. and U.S.S.R. in regional situations tended to be a stabilizing product of the Cold War. The assumption of the superpowers was that a gain by one in any area was automatically a loss to the other, This stimulated early counter-balancing superpower intervention with the consequent tendency to contribute

to regional stability. Paralleling this was a major concern that regional tensions which were allowed to develop to war, or the imminent threat of war, would subsequently draw the superpowers into supporting one side or the other, thus escalating the stakes involved and the possibility of confrontation from which neither could back down. This concern led to general acceptance of superpower intervention prior to such a situation developing. Analysis of the post bi-polar world supports the concept that because of the erosion of Soviet power and influence, and the low probability that the Russians will assert themselves globally in the near future, the potential for conflict in the developing world is measurably increased.⁹⁷ In relation to the perspective being considered in this paper, the issue is not whether such conflicts will occur in the region but whether the formulation of Australian strategy and objectives has considered and correctly weighed such alternatives. If so, to what degree do the proposed strategies account for the increased possibility of regional conflict and the associated likelihood that outside powers will not become involved in defusing regional tension?

On what basis is defence cooperation being measured? Although various regional forces exercise together, they follow different patterns and with different partners.⁹⁸ What is the mutual cause or opponent which will now unite the region militarily? Where is the evidence that forums such as ASEAN are prepared to expand their charter and address defence issues or that any of the Asian regions are prepared to unite to provide common military support? ASEAN has previously avoided expanding into the complex area of combined defence objectives and military policies, perhaps because of the sensitivity associated with issues such as the Spratlys.⁹⁹ Regional observation has included the fact that,

between 1989 and 1992 the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia each convened conferences to explore regional security alternatives for the 1990s. None of these gatherings of regional security specialists has advocated an ASEAN defense community or regionwide collective security arrangements. The experts agree that there is no need for a regional shield when threats to security are centered primarily on regime legitimacy and bilateral territorial disputes.¹⁰⁰

In addition to APEC, several important regional forums for discussion have emerged under the umbrella of ASEAN and include; the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference (PMC), the ASEAN ministerial Meetings (AMM), and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), all of which bring together Foreign Ministers from the member countries plus, on a selective basis for each forum, invited countries and recognised dialogue partners. The ARF was established in 1993 to specifically address security issues. ARF meetings are held annually in conjunction with the AMM and PMC; however, reports on the progress of ARF are not encouraging and include the observation that,

in two years of meetings (which only last for one day and are reportedly consumed by pleasantries and procedural matters) nothing of substance has been established. It has been difficult for ARF members to even agree on an agenda of what constitutes regional security 'problems that should be addressed multilaterally.'¹⁰¹

The observation has also been made that Asians, unlike their Western counterparts, prefer to take a very non-legalistic approach to things. Actions are characterised as a step-by-step evolutionary approach in contrast to the Western method of deciding to create an institution and immediately identifying its character and mission statement.¹⁰²

While supporting the concept of closer relations and establishing norms of behavior across the region as a whole, this attitude could explain the caution and reluctance to hasten development of security agreements given evolving economic and military considerations. ASEAN partners have continued to resist outside encouragement to hasten the process of developing formal military consultative and executive bodies.¹⁰³

Moves toward market economies by Asian countries should not be misinterpreted as

embracing Western value systems, institutions, procedures, thought processes or objectives, although the desire to remain economically competitive may force concessions related to resource claims and military objectives. Consequently, although Asian countries may appear to the external observer as becoming increasingly more Westernized, such change should be viewed as an unintentional product of pursuing Asian objectives and the apparent similarities should be recognized as being superficial in many ways.

Despite U.S. economic strength and apparent national influence, its objectives such as the promotion of democratic reform, and the implication that countries who do not participate will be given lesser consideration, are unlikely to be successful in creating states which reflect its ideals and are, therefore, easier to interpret and predict. This is not to say that defence cooperation and the development of regional multi-national alliances are not long term regional goals, but that they are unlikely to occur in the short term, and may not reflect Western models. Any regional tension or confrontation is likely to affect the outlook and attitude of all regional nations and further delay the process. Although fora which allow the exchange of ideas and concerns are goals for which all nations should strive, the existence of such communities and broad alliances does not automatically lead to assured stability or security. The statement of desired objectives and the opening of initial dialogue between partners on defence issues does not indicate the basis of a plan around which a successful strategy has been developed. Unless there is some national advantage, there is little precedent that any nation will ultimately place another nation's priorities, or those of the region, ahead of its own.

Southeast Asian countries continue to defy trends in defence spending with real growth reflected in defence budgets.¹⁰⁴

Asia may be the exception to the global trend toward reduced defense spending. Modest growth in East Asia defense spending could become more pronounced if the countries of the region are unsuccessful in finding mutually acceptable solutions to their various security concerns."¹⁰⁵

Those that have not already begun to do so appear to be moving from internal security to the process of strengthening external defences and capabilities. Do countries buy offensive capability for reasons other than enforcing their ability to wield influence? If not, what do these capabilities contribute to their national power? What are the potential effects on regional balances of power if economic trends and defence spending continue at current levels? What are the @s of capability being introduced and what is the intent behind their introduction? For example, why does India seek a ballistic missile capability and China a ballistic missile firing submarine and aircraft carrier? These questions are not trite, nor are the range of possible answers. For Australian national military strategy to be salient there should be clear answers supported by objective analysis.

The competition between superpowers for influence and access, the relative stability it brought to the region in terms of defining the Australian national position in relation to defence matters, and the associated defence support, did not require major regional military forces to maintain regional stability. The current trend could reasonably be interpreted as recognition that evolving regional balances require Asian states to now ensure a degree of national defence capability in keeping with their perceived role and status within the community of nations. That is, they must develop greater capability to project national power. The possibility that such forces could also

lend emphasis to regional claims associated with issues such as the Spratlys and
Parcels, that is, to imply military power projection in support of national objectives,
cannot be discounted. All Southeast Asian littoral states have lodged overlapping
claims in their 200-mile EEZs. Of fifteen possible maritime boundaries in the SCS,
twelve are in dispute.¹⁰⁶ Regional assessments include observations such as,
"Proliferation of modern weapons and missile technology could turn minor disputes into
conflicts of major concern. Destabilizing arms sales and technology transfer will
continue."¹⁰⁷ Attempts to describe Asian arms build ups as simply the replacement of
old equipment deny the fact that entirely new capabilities are being acquired; for
example, the Thai aircraft carrier. The emphasis on the development of blue water
capabilities by China, Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia can reasonably be linked to
territorial claims and disputes in the SCS, or the development or maintenance of
natural resources such as oil and fishing.¹⁰⁸ The conflict over claims associated with
these areas underlines the importance placed by regional states on the acquisition of
natural resources and the associated economic growth and enhancement of national
power and influence. Some regional nations may view themselves as being in the
position Australia found itself in the 1970s, in an evolving environment and with
emerging objectives. The improved economic situation they find themselves in allows
the development of capabilities central to the development of national power. This
represents a natural evolution, not an arms race. The observation should also be
made that such an evolution is likely to have occurred even had the former influence of
superpower competition in the region still been evident.

The contention is that the gap between current Australian defence capability, as expressed in terms of hardware and training, gives it a qualitative edge over regional countries. This edge is believed to enhance national power and provide leverage to Australian influence.¹⁰⁹ This apparent power, together with Australia's proposed standing in the region, is presumed to provide Australia the capability to influence regional consideration and tensions:

The capability of Australia's armed forces should be seen as having relevance not only for the defence of Australia, but for the region as a whole. Australia's possession of significant military power contributes to the strategic stability of our neighbouring regions, providing a 'secure south' for SE Asia countries.¹¹⁰

Do regional partners believe that Australia will never represent a threat or support a potential adversary, or is this just a reflection of Australia's interpretation of the region? How does such power have relevance in the region if the stated policy is not to become involved in regional conflict? What would the level of external threat to the region have to be and against whom would it have to be targeted for Australian military force to be committed? For the government or observers to contend that, "The offensive capability represented by the F111s and submarines is appropriate in that it commands deterrent respect rather than fear in the region," is to deny the very nature of both deterrent value and the ultimate threat of military force.¹¹¹ What is the value of a defence force whose role is stated as providing deterrence from low-level attack on Australia but that is not to be used, or threatened to be used, in the resolution of regional conflict or tension? If one has a big stick but declares that one will not use it except in very specific situations, nobody will fear the use of it or listen because of the threat of its use. Similarly, what is the message sent to regional partners when Australia is seen to be prepared to provide military capability in support of its U.S. alliance, as in the Gulf

War, but has a declared policy of not being prepared to use military force within the region other than to protect its own sovereignty? These contradictions must be apparent to other nations in the region.

The move to develop a more realistic security strategy which is representative of the strategic environment in which Australia finds itself represents a significant step as a nation and in the development of its national power. However, the ability to foster the perception that there is little or no direct security threat to Australia, and that bilateral relations, regional ties and international alliances will be sufficient to ensure that Australia will have the required level of influence in the region or world, thus being able to exercise some degree of control over its national interest, distorts the role of military power in the national power model. The potential for conflicting priorities and outcomes within the region has been recognized:

Overall, security developments in the Asia-Pacific seem likely to confirm the regions's multipolar characteristics which it possessed even when the adversarial relationship between the superpowers was at its most intense. If those countries with a significant capacity for independent action, including Vietnam, Indonesia and Australia, are added to the greater powers described, the range and variety of interacting and intersecting interests is considerable.¹¹²

The government has also recognized influences outside the defined area of strategic interest, at the extremes of the region, and from major powers,

China and India have political, cultural and military capacity of very significant potential influence in Asia. ...India continues to be the most under-rated of the likely great powers.¹¹³

United States attention to the region may become increasingly less concerned with geopolitical security and more focused on economic differences with some of its Asian partners.¹¹⁴

Specific concern is also expressed in relation to the emergence of China:

Over the next fifteen years, the most important focus of economic growth in Asia will be China. If the patterns of recent years are sustained, China's economy will become the largest in Asia and the second largest in the world within the next fifteen years. This will

affect global power relationships and become a dominant factor in the strategic framework of Asia and the Pacific. Economic growth is already allowing China to increase its military capabilities, especially of its maritime forces. China is likely to pursue its strategic objectives by a combination of diplomatic, political and economic means, underpinned by its growing military strength.¹¹⁵

Since the publication of this statement, China has forcefully exerted influence in the Spratlys¹¹⁶ and continues to enhance its maritime power projection capability.¹¹⁷

Operations in the Spratly Islands reaffirm China's willingness to use force in support of its national objectives and continues a trend first demonstrated in 1974 against Vietnam in the Paracel Islands, and again in 1988 in the Spratlys. That China will project power into the SCS as soon as economic and force capabilities allow, or when its perception of national interest dictate, should no longer be an issue in question. Given the accepted emergence of its economic strength, this could be sooner rather than later. Although such power projection may not necessarily have the aim of regional conquest and military dominance, China will undoubtedly use military power as a coercive factor in support of foreign policy issues and national objectives. The U.S. response to the most recent incident of Chinese power projection in the Spratly Islands again reinforces its desire to remain detached from territorial claims and the potential consequences of siding with any individual partner.¹¹⁸ Given the presumed future strength of the Chinese economy, the increasing trade and economic relations with the U.S., and the apparent Chinese desire to project influence in the region, what is the likely future strength and relative priority of Chinese and Australian special relations with U.S.? If at sometime within the next 15 years China makes aggressive moves within the region, possibly based on territorial claims associated with the acquisition of resources, is the U.S. likely to intervene if these moves do not directly threaten US "vital" interests? If

such a situation occurs and threatens to affect the stability of the region or Australia's interest, how will current Australian strategy cope with the eventuality?

The continuing growth of Indonesia's economy and the resultant further development of military capability is also identified:

The development of Indonesia's economy is potentially the most important strategic development in South-East Asia over the coming decade and beyond. ...If its economy can sustain high rates of growth, by 2020 it could equal Australia's. At the same time, Indonesia's armed forces will continue to develop their capabilities and professionalism.¹¹⁹

Notwithstanding this, and the other observations, there is no definition of what these assertions mean in relation to regional balances of power, objectives, etc. Given the increasing economic and, therefore, strategic relevance of many of the emerging Asian nations, Australia must ensure that its relative significance via-a-vis others in the region does not diminish over time.

Following the section headed, Economic Growth and Political Change, the white paper makes the statement that:

The long-term trends in regional security affairs we have identified will develop slowly, but are likely over the next fifteen years to affect our strategic circumstances significantly. They will have important direct consequences for the development of Australia's defence policy.¹²⁰

Unfortunately, there is no economic or security analysis or statement of objectives associated with the presumption of change which would assist in the definition and implementation of a viable military strategy, objectives or force structure. This is a serious omission given that current capital procurement initiatives will shape the capabilities of the ADF beyond the next 15 years. The declared time frame associated with developing military threats appears to lack any substantial basis. Although economic change may be long term, recent history indicates that changes in the security environment can be quite rapid. For example, Afghanistan, the Falklands, the

Gulf War, and the Fijian *coups detat* all arose rapidly and unpredictably. What of other nations? Should Japan, as a major trading partner with Australia, and who has two way trade with Southeast Asia amounting to US\$50 billion/yr, and investments of over US\$23 billion in the region,¹²¹ be taken into Australia's regional definition and strategic defence considerations? Whether the emerging economic strength of regional partners leads to confrontation or not, the *potential* for such a situation lends support to the theory that power should be viewed in a contextual sense, and that it is dynamic and multidimensional. Is Australia's view of the future set in a context that will ensure the ability to respond to the possible dynamics and dimensions of the region, or is the chosen strategy based on benign preferences vice likely reality?

Potential Limitations of Australian Defence Strategy

Notwithstanding the apparent policy links in the defence aspects of Australia's security strategy, it appears to be flawed by not considering an environment or outcome other than that predicted or wished for; consequently, it does not address the shaping factors which will affect the overall strategy. Several of its assumptions appear to ignore emerging circumstances which are currently being identified by futurists (Toffler et al) as possible sources of international influence and friction. That is, the potential nature of threats to Australian security may change, not stem directly from the identified regions of interest, or be defined in terms of direct military threats to Australian territory. More fundamentally, in terms of the balance of military power, economics and technology, the world, region and Australia are not what they were in 1986, all of which is acknowledged in DWP94. The validity of maintaining what is in

essence an approach first outlined in the Dobb Report as the basis for defence planning is unsound, if for no other reason than the economic premise on which defence allocations were based, and the allocations themselves, have changed (no real increase in defence spending since 1989, when economic growth went into decline, and DWP94 predictions are lower than current spending).

The fog and friction of war as described by Clausewitz can also be likened to the environment in which national objectives, strategy, policy, and diplomacy must be developed and executed. The reaction to and outcome of these policies will never really be known until they are tested in the political and international environment and subjected to the effects of the associated friction. The ability to develop appropriate strategies relies upon an estimate of the future, which is itself only based on an interpretation of the apparent facts and influences and estimates of those that are not known. Observations such as, "The future is both unknown and unknowable,"¹²² and, "Forecasting often produces coherent fiction masquerading in the garb of fact,"¹²³ appear to carry some validity when viewed with the hindsight that history provides. This situation confronts all nations.

The apparent Australian desire to define a future which can be managed appears to have led to the definition of a strategic environment in terms which are considered to be manageable or for which an achievable strategy could be developed. This desire has led to a singular interpretation of the future and Australia's role in it, which has constrained the definition of an appropriate military strategy. To be effective, strategy requires an assessment of the environment and objectives, an analysis of the other players in the environment, and consideration of their priorities. From this one

identifies the other players' preferences to determine which need to be influenced to achieve the objective. One's own strategy should then be developed to allow those operating in the area one wishes to influence to make apparently natural decisions which support one's objectives, Australia's security strategy could be argued as being capable of achieving this through the role that alliances, open exchanges and the like will play in leading to dialogue and concessions which preclude open hostility. The potential for such an outcome is real, but this represents only *one possible outcome* and it ignores the eventuality of regional conflict which is not directed at Australia but which may affect its vital interests. The strategy has relied too heavily on the fact that all of the causes and all of the effects can, and have been, accurately predicted. Such a view suggests that the intent and objectives of state systems are always as stated or implied and that analysis of factors which are acknowledged as being difficult to predict can be made. This implies that a non-native analysis process is desirable when developing national and military strategies.¹²⁴

Rather than looking for cause and effect situations, strategy formulation should concentrate on attempting to develop dimensions and descriptors which can influence interpretation. Such an approach will lead to the development of a series of alternate but plausible futures which are relevant to the planning process, and which provide alternatives that may not have been intuitively obvious. The process should not be predictive or exclusive but should allow thought to be given on how a response could be generated to changes in the environment. The aim is to try and develop a series of possible outcomes or views which describe the situation which is being considered in more detail. The views must be internally consistent and attempt to describe important

details of the futures that are being postulated. The outcome of developing such alternate futures should not be considered as a forecast but as an attempt to bound the risk associated with the planning process, from which issues such as courses of action, force structure requirements and the like can be more fully evaluated. The aim of this approach is to develop the descriptors which guide investment in those systems, policies and technologies which will have positive effect regardless of the specific scenario. If such investment cannot be made because the implied nature or size of the requirements is beyond national resources the process will have at least highlighted the major risks, thereby ensuring that limited resources can be applied to maximize strengths and minimize weaknesses. The process is not exclusive to military applications and can be applied to the development of strategies and options for any Organisation or objective.¹²⁵ A fundamental flaw in the development of Australia's military strategy, and the military strategy of many other nations, is that it suffers from the lack of such an approach.

Australia has attempted to adjust to the realities of the current world situation by developing a more self reliant position, as reflected in the policies associated with economics, tariffs, trade agreements and defence strategies. However, despite the necessary adjustment in attitude and approach, Australia continues to appear to be saddled with military concepts, policies and force structures which reflect more the experience and requirement of past colonial and bi-polar strategies than current reality and future prospects. On face value, acceptance that the only viable strategy outside the umbrella of superpower protection is the development of regional alliances appears to be logical. Australia lacks the resources to support independent action and is forced

to operate within the reality of interdependence. The desire to bound problems in terms that can be understood and coped with is also natural, but the resulting strategy denies the unavoidable reality that success relies upon the future evolving in the presumed manner, and that regional desires and interpretations conform to Australia's. The argument could also be made that current military strategy reflects the political and diplomatic reality of the Australian setting, but not one that tends to reinforce the perception of national power within the Asian region. To have developed the associated strategy with an apparently singular view of the future, Australia's role in it, and the regional and global response to that strategy is potentially disastrous and has prompted a series of questions related to how the policy was formed and whether it is capable of responding to a future which does not unfold in the presumed manner.

None of the questions posed in this paper can be answered with certainty because of the difficulty in predicting the future. History is littered with examples, some of them quite recent, of countries and coalitions preparing for the wrong future. The issue is not whether any singular view of the future is correct, but whether a chosen defence strategy is capable of coping with a range of possible alternate but plausible outcomes. Nor is the presentation of this information designed to lead the reader to the conclusion that conflict is inevitable, or that there are no attempts to resolve regional disputes in a peaceful manner.¹²⁶ ASEAN has proven to be beneficial in uniting partner members, and APEC has provided a vehicle for direction in an economic sense. Nevertheless, despite repeated overtures and encouragement from outside countries there are no binding regional defence initiatives, possibly because there are no issues common to all regional partners. Bi-lateral and multi-lateral

agreements which do not include all partners could be seen to detract from the strength of groups such as ASEAN. While the potential for regional stability is high, there remain sufficient cultural, religious and economic diversity, coupled with increased moves towards establishing national agendas and security issues, to suggest that the region is far from benign, cohesive, or strategically stable.

The 1994 defence white paper is a continuance of the basic defence philosophy first espoused in the Dobb Report and, although terms have been altered, the relative definition of potential threats remains consistent, as do force development priorities.¹²⁷ The paper indicates that this strategy is to provide the foundation of Australia's national defence until the year 2010.¹²⁸ Given its 1986 foundations, the theme of the current strategy must endure the test of 24 years, a timeframe which if applied to recent world history would encompass major changes in the balance of world and regional power, regional affiliations, emerging nations and national desires, increasing influence of non-state actors, and the reemergence of cultural, religious and historic animosities. In modern times it is difficult to imagine any strategy remaining essentially unchanged and credible for such a period.

Conclusions

Because of changes in its strategic environment, the Australian government has pursued the initiative of developing more independent national security and military strategies. These strategies were first announced by the government in the mid-1980s. This represented a significant step forward in the development of independent national power and objectives. The publication of the Dobb Report and the government

policy statement "Defence of Australia 1987" committed Australia to its current military strategy, and the 1994 white paper "Defending Australia" reaffirms it. As these strategies were evolving the world was undergoing further changes in the balance of state powers. Most notable among those were the cascading effects of the end of the Cold War and the economic emergence of the Asia-Pacific region. Almost simultaneously, technology was evolving to the point that the very nature of threats was becoming more complicated, as evidenced by the emergence of information warfare and growing acceptance of Toffler's "third wave."

Australian national security decision makers had the following choices: (1) Do nothing; (2) maintain the status quo and operate within the international environment as it unfolds; (3) develop a normative forecast of the environment and future which is either based on apparent strategic estimates or tailored around economic reality in terms of the level of capability which can be supported; or, (4) to develop alternate views or scenarios of the future against which national security strategies and defence resource allocations can be tested. Australia has tied its defence strategy to a normative forecast of the future. The region within which Australia must exert its influence has been limited by definition and identified as essentially Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific. By national policy definition, countries in the global or Asian system but outside this region are presumed not to represent a potential major threat. This position is held despite the fact that countries such as China have clear interest and demonstrated intent in the region. Military objectives have been constrained by the assumed viability and effectiveness of regional alliances and cooperation. The only direct military threat to Australia is defined as representing the

equivalent of "low-level" or "escalated low-level" actions. The primary military objectives that emerge are the defence of Australia's northern and northwestern shores from such threats, enhancing regional stability through the technological (and by implication operational) capability it possesses, and participation in regional exercise and programs which support the development of alliances. National policy also states that Australian forces will not be used within the region other than to protect Australia's sovereignty. This detracts from the potential deterrent nature of military capabilities, and from Australia's credibility as a regional partner when they are subsequently used in support of an external alliance. Central to Australia's strategy is the concept that its goals and objectives in terms of alliance development and capability are accepted and supported by all influential powers within the region, an assumption that appears to lack substantial proof. This combination of national security policy guidance and a strictly regional focus constrain the definition of military objectives and strategy.

The limiting factor in the development of Australian strategy has been the acceptance of a normative forecast of the future, Australia's role in it, and the response of other players. Rarely does one nation accept another nation's norms for the future. To expect threats to national security to be limited to the region also denies the changing nature of the world environment. Even if a threat was purely regional, to base future security on the expectation of a singular homogenous regional outlook and spirit of cooperation is unrealistic, particularly given the nature of the Asian region. Even assuming such an interpretation to be correct, having developed a definition of the future the defence strategy is flawed because of the inability to allocate the resources required due to national priorities and economic conditions. Consequently,

there is no coherent link between the national security decision making process and defence resource allocations. That funding levels cannot be maintained, or must decrease, may be an essential requirement in terms of the overall national interest, but to fail to recognize or respond to the impact on defence policy and objectives is strategically delinquent. Australia's security and defence initiatives lack a coherent plan, which limits them to being no more than a declaration of national policy objectives that are not supported by a strategy cognizant of resource requirements, history, the region, its potential futures, or regional views and acceptance of Australia. This singular view of the outcome of security strategy is untenable to the responsible definition of defence objectives and force structure. While regional stability and cooperation are objectives which Australia should continue to be strived for, the likelihood of other futures and other outcomes should not be discounted. The ability to develop a series of plausible alternate futures against which potential risks can be evaluated, acceptable levels of risk management or acceptance determined, and resource allocations identified on the basis of the implied range of threats and associated requirements, would provide a more robust base for policy development and the allocation of limited resources. Some of the subsequently implied threats and capabilities may not involve traditional military responses, and the process could provide indicators as to which other policies, technologies and capabilities should be pursued in support of identified security requirements.

The desire to develop a national security strategy representative of the environment Australia faced was both overdue and nationally significant. Australia's dilemma in developing the strategy was not unlike any other nations' as it does not

have control of the global or regional influencing factors. The perception that any government can exercise unfailing control over the regional or global environment is not supported by historical evidence, nations must operate within whatever environment they find themselves. Even U.S. power and influence has been unable to deter or control regional conflict. Recognition must be given to the fact that the potential for threats to develop is consistent and may include activity which directly threatens Australia's security without involving direct military action against sovereign territory. The world environment is not static and is continually changing, sometimes faster, sometimes slower, by emerging and declining nations and institutions, their perceived level of power, ambitions and objectives, and the friendly and hostile interactions between them. Nor has the influence of culture, religion, history or human behaviour and bias changed, which is particularly true in the Asian region. All countries must live with the reality that there is no such thing as a "no-threat environment." There is a constant potential for threats to develop quickly, to be of an unexpected nature, and from unanticipated sources. A more accurate threat statement would suggest that there are undefined or poorly characterised threats rather than no perceived major threats. National and military strategies should, therefore, be capable of coping with a range of alternatives which characterize the full nature of potential threats to national sovereignty and security. National security strategy and military objective setting should also reflect the fact that an important peacetime role of the military is the ability to project potential power in support of national objectives. Ownership of high technology equipment does not in itself project such power.

That the nature of Australia's defined strategic military environment changed during the development of this strategy is acknowledged in the 1994 government white paper. The admission of such change highlights the potential danger of developing normative forecasts for the region, world and future. That is, the world can and does change. This paper has attempted to highlight a key requirement as the ability to ensure that the influencing or shaping factors have been given adequate consideration and, consequently, that the region has been adequately characterized. In testing the strategy to determine how well this has been achieved a series of questions were posed which included: Have all the actors been properly analyzed in relation to their culture, political strength, national style, leadership, technology, doctrine, strengths, weaknesses, internal and external influences, and possible courses of action? What are the possible interactions between players and what potential courses of action do they suggest? The arguments posed in consideration of these questions suggest that the current strategy is incomplete in terms of its ability to cope with possible circumstances, situations and events that could occur in the next 15 years. The strategy also assumes that the interpretation of the future and responses to its objectives will unfold according to the norms postulated. Although many of the themes and activities outlined in Australian defence policy since 1986 are fundamental to any country's approach to its strategic environment, the reliance on alliance development and defence against a singularly defined threat cannot in themselves constitute a viable military strategy. As a military strategy such an approach provides few options to cover the eventuality that the future will not be as predicted. Australia's national defence policy is incomplete, contradictory, and represents an Australian view which is

not tested within the region. Further, it does not adequately address changes that possibly may occur as a result of continued economic and military growth within the Asian region. The strategy also fails to address the possible impact of "information technology" on the distribution of wealth, power and influence. At best, the national defence strategy represents a short term view.

The outline presented in this paper has led to a series of questions which challenge the validity of the current strategy. None of these questions are posed to suggest that the implied outcome or situation will occur but simply to test the environment and assumptions in which current defence strategy has been formulated. The criticisms of the current strategy are not exhaustive, but only a few need to be valid for the entire strategy to be judged as flawed. If Asia and the Southwest Pacific do not view Australia the way Australia views itself, and other nations in the region do not respond in the assumed manner, then there is no strategy. If an actual threat to Australia evolves from influences beyond the identified region, or in a manner which has not been covered, there is no strategy to cope with the eventuality. Intelligent strategy focuses on reality and options, not merely perceptions or limited perspectives. If there is any credibility associated with the questions posed in this paper the outcome could be that Australia's national security may be undermined within the next 15 years. Such an outcome demands that national defence strategy be revisited with a clear assessment of present conditions, an acceptance that all influencing factors cannot be controlled, and a willingness to accept a range of possible futures. History suggests that the approach reflected in the current strategy should be considered high risk. The application of planning processes such as the development of alternate futures, which

may be able to provide a better outline of the nature of future threats, possible responses and associated force structure and development requirements, should be pursued. Attempting to simplify complex relationships and develop affordable defence capabilities based on interpretations and analysis which suggest the world is becoming a more benign environment are understandable preferences. Such preferences are unlikely to have been the objective when the strategy development process was initiated, but the changing Australian and world circumstances, and the failure to respond to them, imply such an interpretation. While continuing to pursue the alliance and regional partnership goals stated in current Australian national defence strategy, a series of objectives should be developed which include:

- * *Australia's regional and global national security objectives should be tested against a range of alternate futures which characterise the highest priority as well as the most likely threats.* The implication of resource requirements should then be balanced against resource allocations. From this, and in association with acceptable risk management criteria, a series of military objectives should be developed from which an appropriate defence strategy can be defined. This strategy must also be capable of responding to changes in the global and regional environment, and evolving national goals.
- * *The defence strategy should be capable of coping with both plausible threats to Australian national security and the most likely scenarios in which Australian forces will be committed, that is, coalition warfare.* Given that the most likely Australian coalition partner is the U.S., coalition training should be oriented around operations with U.S. forces. Funding should be provided to ensure that

this training can be sustained at a level which ensures capabilities appropriate to coalition warfare. This task should be seen as complementing participation in regional exercise and defence support programs.

- * *As coalition and multilateral defence operations represent the most likely scenario, increased priority should be given to these tasks in relation to joint and combined training objectives and frequency, force structure and doctrine development. Individual Service objectives must compliment joint and coalition requirements. While individual Service core competencies must be maintained, the practice and maintenance of coalition and combined procedures and tactics should form an essential part of Service training.*
- * *Readiness requirements must be tailored to available resources and the defence strategy should allow an appropriate balance to be maintained between capital procurement objectives and readiness.*
- * *The national defence strategy and stated policies should ensure that Australian forces are appropriate in terms of supporting peacetime power projection in support of national objectives and the deterrent requirement of such policies.*

Although modest in terms of their impact on resource allocations, these recommendations are demanding in that they require a willingness to view the world, the Asia-Pacific region. Australian requirements, strategy and objectives from a perspective somewhat different to that which has been supported since the mid-1980s. This change in perspective would not require the significant intellectual and capital investment in current national defence strategy to be thrown away. Indeed, all the activities related to alliance development and regional cooperation are necessary. Nor

are current force structure requirements significantly different from those implied in this paper. The critical change is in accepting that normative forecasts of the future are unlikely to be correct, and that some of the activities undertaken in support of the Australian forecast are contradictory and incomplete in terms of their ability to cope with the changing nature of the region, world, and potential future threats. Failure to consider Australia's national defence strategy from a broader perspective will condemn that strategy to an interpretation which suggests that it reflects more the attitude and desires of Australia's colonial and Cold War experience rather than current reality. In other words, it may be viewed as simply old wine in new bottles.

¹ See Toffler, Alvin and Heidi. War and Anti-War. Survival at the Dawn of the 21st Century. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1993. Their thesis is that the way society makes wealth is the way it will make war. Society is represented as three waves. The first was launched by the agricultural revolution 10,000 years ago and led to people gathering together in one place for mutual support, which also led to a revolution in the way man fought- the second was triggered by the industrial revolution approximately 300 years ago, which resulted in mass production and a further revolution in the style and lethality of warfare; and the third is postulated to have begun in the 1950s with the development of the computer and sophisticated communications which are believed to herald new non-lethal forms of warfare. First and second wave warfare will continue, but developed states will increasingly move towards information warfare.

² Boyd, John, R., COL, USAF Ret'd., has developed a discourse on winning and losing which centres around the ability of organisations or individuals to observe the environment they wish to change, orient themselves to these observations to ensure that all dynamics of the environment are understood, deciding what action must be taken to affect the desired change, and then executing those actions (the OODA loop = Observation, Orientation, Decision, Action). This is a continuing process and the Organisation or individual who can achieve this the quickest, and with the right interpretation and action, will have succeeded in getting inside the opponents OODA loop and will have the strategic advantage.

³ Bell, C., Dependent Ally, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1988, p3.

⁴ Australia provided troops in support of the Maori Wars - 1860s', the Sudan Campaign - 1885, the Boer War - 1899 to 1902, the Boxer Rebellion - 1900, the First World War - 1914 to 1918, and the Second World War - 1939 to 1945. Of the 33 1,000 Australian volunteers who enlisted to fight in the First World War 59,330 were killed (17.9%) and 151,171 were wounded. Figures from Coppell, Bill., Australia in Facts and Figures, Ringwood (Victoria, Australia): Penguin Books Ltd., 1994, p296-p297.

⁵ Established in 1951. Interpreted by Australia for many years as implying immediate US support in response to external threats. The Treaty makes no such commitment. This issue is addressed later in the paper.

⁶ Established in 1954: US initiative to parallel aims of NATO in countering communist expansion in SE Asia, but without implicit obligation to take action - US, UK, FR, Australia and NZ, Pakistan, Philippines and Thailand; now defunct. India, Ceylon, Burma and Indonesia invited to join but declined the offer.

⁷ President Nixon announced in 1969 that, although prepared to honour its treaty commitments, direct United States intervention and military assistance to allies would only be predicated on the basis of an external nuclear threat (also referred to as the Guam Doctrine). Allies were expected to take greater responsibility for their national defence.

⁸ Established in 1971: A UK initiative associated with the withdrawal of British forces from the region; an agreement between partner nations to provide military assistance to Singapore or Malaysia in the event of a threat to the national security of either = Singapore, Malaysia, UK, NZ and Australia. When first implemented this agreement was seen as a convenient device to replace the Anglo-Malayan Defence Agreement (AMDA) which committed the UK to a continuing regional policing role in concert with Australia and New Zealand. The agreement now carries greater significance to regional members as a vehicle to maintain an exchange of dialogue.

⁹ The following definitions are proffered as those generally accepted within Australia:

National Interest: The perceived needs and desires of a sovereign state in relation to other sovereign states which constitute its external environment.

National Power: The inherent capability of a nation that can be brought to bear in pursuit of national objectives, the perceived or actual ability of a nation to exercise its influence.

National Objectives: The fundamental aims and goals of a nation; they are based upon national interests and are the requirements upon which national policies are defined.

National Strategy: The process of using diplomatic, economic, military and moral power to achieve national objectives

- ¹⁰ Generally accepted as including ethnic homogeneity, age distribution, education, population size, morale or national will, and national identity.
- ¹¹ Generally accepted as including geographic location, natural resources, climate, topography, etc.
- ¹² Australia is 66% self sufficient in oil, the world's largest exporter of coal, aluminum and bauxite, 2nd largest exporter of iron ore, 3rd largest producer of gold, has 25% of world uranium deposits, 17% of world's deposits of lead and zinc, and large deposits of nickel, diamonds, manganese, copper and titanium.
- ¹³ 36.8% of the FY93/94 Budget was allocated to social security pay-ments and projects. Defence Annual Report 1993/94, Australian Government Printing Service, Canberra, 1994, data extracted from Graph LI, p327.
- ¹⁴ Data extracted from The World Fact Book, Central Intelligence Agency, 1994, and The New International Atlas Rand McNally, Chicago/New York/San Francisco, 199 1, p296-p299.
- ¹⁵ Australia in Brief, Overseas Information Branch, Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government Printing Service, Canberra 1992, p27
- ¹⁶ Financial year commences 1 July.
- ¹⁷ Political Handbook of the World 1993 edited by Banks, A.S., CSA Publications, State University of New York, Binghamton. July 1993, pg 4.
- ¹⁸ Ross, R., The Far East and Australia 1994, 25th Edition, Europe Publications Ltd., London 1993, p74, Australia-Economy.
- ¹⁹ Unlike the US, the budget process in Australia does not provide an open forum for political and public debate. Based on predictions by the Treasury Dept, the ruling party will form its budget within part-, @ chambers based on its policy priorities; elements may be 'leaked' to test public reaction, but there is no interparty 'political' consensus required or attempted. Although the process of developing and implementing the Federal budget varies to that in the US, influencing factors such as local priorities, fractional and power based interests, and the imminence of an election etc play an equal part.
- ²⁰ AWC DRA Primer 2202, The US National Budget in Perspective, Air University, Maxwell AFB, October 1994, p40.
- ²¹ Williams, M., The Far East and Australia 1994, 25th Edition, Europe Publications Ltd, London, p3. "Population in Asia and the Pacific " (updated by Population Concern, London)
- ²² Population in Asia and the Pacific, p 15.
- ²³ Stated national defence policy does not consider either of these nations to be associated with Australia's defined area of direct military interest, and they are only given passing consideration in terms of the redefined region of prim strategic interest, see Defence of Australia 1987, footnote 19 and 20.
- ²⁴ Population in Asia and the Pacific, p4.
- ²⁵ Population in Asia and the Pacific, p 1 5.
- ²⁶ Population in Asia and the Pacific, p 15.

²⁷ ASEAN - Association of South East Asian Nations: Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines and Brunei.

²⁸ Indonesia and Thailand are predicted to be among the world's largest economies by 2020. China is also predicted to have the largest world economy in approximately the same time frame (various sources differ on the time estimate but not the outcome).

²⁹ Population in Asia and the Pacific, p 17.

³⁰ Table derived from article by Woodall, P., supplement to The Economist - War of the Worlds, 1 October 1994, p4, figure 2 and associated text,: stated source is World Bank forecast based on GDPs at purchasing-power parities.

³¹ Wall Street Journal International Section - World Wire, 13 Apr 95, pA 1 1, note headed Asian Oil Demands to Swell, reports the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) as determining that oil demand by Brunei, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand is expected to increase 60% by the year 2010, with imports rising from the current combined level of 55% to 69% of the total.

³² Edwards, C., Current Economic Trends in Asia and the Pacific, Europe Publications Ltd, 1993, p 15.

³³ US Army Intelligence and Threat Analysis Center Briefing, Air War College, IO March 1995; approval for reference given by AUIN. Outline of US Army Global Forecast, June 1991.

³⁴ USAI Global Security Forecast, October 1993.

³⁵ USAI Current Global Outlook Statement and Security Forecast.

³⁶ USAI Global Security Forecast estimate of the potential for regional conflicts and timeframe projections (only those conflicts relevant to Asian area included):

High Intensity Conflict

1993-2003 N Korea v S Korea
India v Pakistan
2003-2013 China v Japan
China v India
India v Pakistan
2013-2023 China v India
India v Pakistan
Russia v China

Lesser Intensity Conflict

Ethnic Conflicts, Drug Wars Insurgencies
China in Spratlys
Central Asians v Iran

³⁷ Dobb, P., Review of Australia's Defence Capabilities, Australian Government Printing Service, Canberra, 1986. Paul Dobb was appointed as a ministerial assistant with the task of reviewing Australia's defence requirements and making recommendations to the government.

³⁸ Dobb Report, p.xv provides a complete statement of terms of reference. The requirements were further emphasised in a letter to Mr Dobb by the Minister which reiterated that the report would need to provide a basis and rationale for the structure of the ADF.

³⁹ The strategy of denial is defined as a defensive strategy in footnote 1 to p50 of the Dobb report, "Denial is sometimes defined as defensive deterrence. But the inclusion of denial as deterrence is the result of stretching the concept of deterrence. To the extent that a potential aggressor is encouraged to believe that his objectives in attacking Australia cannot be achieved (that is, will be denied), he will have little incentive to attempt to gain them by force and he will thus be deterred." (parenthesis in original)

⁴⁰ Dibb Report, p 1. Of relevance in the interpretation of US obligations related to the ANZUS treaty is the continuing debate as to the current strategic relevance of this treaty and the fact that it implies no implicit obligation on the part of the US to immediately support or defend Australia from external attack. (issue addressed later in paper)

⁴¹ Dibb Report, p3-p4. Area of direct military interest defined as Cocos Is in the west to NZ and the island of the SW Pacific in the east, and from the archipelago and island chain in the north to the Southern Ocean in the south = an area about 10% of the earth's surface. The area of primary strategic interest encompasses SE Asia and the South Pacific generally. All potential threats to Australia are presumed to stem from these areas and be at a level below all out warfare against the main land. The assumption is made that such threats will be signaled by a period of increasing tension and demonstration of intent.

⁴² Dibb Report, p52-p55. Low-level conflict is assumed to be aimed at achieving political rather than military goals. Such conflict is assumed as being deliberately held at low level with objective of causing disproportionate Australian response and cost. The campaign could be protracted with periods of inaction. Escalated low-level conflict would again emphasise achievement of political goals but force levels are assumed to be increased, thus making attacking forces more clearly identifiable. Limits of escalation are stated as being the capabilities available to the regional aggressor.

⁴³ Dibb Report, p5 1.

⁴⁴ Australian Government Policy Information Paper, The Defence of Australia 1987, a report to the Parliament by the Minister for Defence, the Hon K.C. Beazlev Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, March 1987. A brief outline of the Australian Defence objectives identified in the Preface to DOA87 are as follows:

National Self Reliance: is to be achieved within the framework of Australia's alliances and regional associations; is to be based on the realistic assessment of Australia's strengths, weaknesses and deficiencies; and, relies on the skillful mobilisation of Australia's resources - physical, financial and human.

Defence Self-Reliance Aims: to provide Australia the level of military capability to prevent an aggressor from gaining territory or concessions through the use of threat or military force, and, to meet any credible level of threat in Australia's area of direct military interest with a comprehensive array of military capabilities, both defensive and offensive (defence in depth).

Fundamental Objectives of Self Reliance in Relation to Australia's National and International Policy: to maintain and develop Australia's capacity for the independent defence of its land and interests ' to promote strategic stability and security in Australia's region to strengthen Australia's ability to meet mutual obligations shared "with the United States and New Zealand and to enhance Australia's ability, as a member of the western association of nations, to contribute to strategic stability at the global level.

⁴⁵ DOA87, p vii.

⁴⁶ DOA87, p. 12, para 2.14-1 the Minister confirms SE Asia, the SW Pacific and East Indian Ocean as the region of prima strategic interest because, "political, economic and military developments in the area are of fundamental concern to Australia."

⁴⁷ This priority continues to be reflected in the most current Defence policy reflected in Defending Australia - Defence White Paper 1994, released November 1994, AGPS, Canberra, Australia.

⁴⁸ DOA87, p62-p64, outlines a wide range of capabilities to be purchased for all three defence forces which includes, but is not limited to: increasing the present number of surface combatants from 12 to 16 or 17, 6 new submarines,

development of HMAS Stirling as a major new RAN base in Western Australia, army to be more mobile by additional Blackhawk helicopters, greater deployment capability for I Division, modern surveillance and EW capability for army, a national system of air defence and airspace control to be developed, OTHR and AEW&C to be purchased, P-3C and F-111 to be upgraded, B707 to be modified to tanker, an additional airfield to be constructed on Cape York Peninsula.

⁴⁹ Proposed by Dr Paul Dibb in Review of Australia's Defence Capabilities. DOA87 is based in large part on the recommendations of this report. The major departure from Dibb recommendations was the government decision to ensure that the primary defence role, that of defending Australia's sovereign territory, would be accomplished via a strategy of defence in depth. The primary focus is on the surveillance of the sea/air approaches to the North of Australia.

⁵⁰ CDF is the senior uniformed member of the Defence Force and commands Australian Defence Force Headquarters, his position is roughly analogous to CJCS.

⁵¹ The Secret ' is the senior public service member of the Department of Defence. His status should not be confused with the US SECDEF, who is analogous to the Minister for Defence.

⁵² Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Annual Report 1990-91, Australian Government Printing Service, Canberra, 1991, p88.

⁵³ Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia's Regional Security, Ministerial Statement by Senator, the Hon., Evans, G., the Hon., transcript p44, paras 175, 176.

⁵⁴ Evans, G., the Hon., Ministerial Statement, transcript p15, para 58.

⁵⁵ Adsett, G.N., RAN, Journal of the Australian Naval Institute - Australia's Comprehensive Engagement "with SE Asia, Feb 1992, p. 21.

⁵⁶ Defending Australia - Defence White Paper 1994 Government Statement on Defence Policy, presented by the Minister for Defence, the Hon Robert Ray, reproduced by AGPS, Canberra, ACT, November 1994, p16, para'3-15

⁵⁷ DWP94, p26.

⁵⁸ DWP94, p5, para 1-12.

⁵⁹ DWP94, Chapter 4, paras 4-11 to 4-16.

⁶⁰ DWP94, p4, para 1-6-1 also Preface, piii, para 4, "Our strategic circumstances at present are not threatening, but they are likely to become more demanding over the next fifteen years."

⁶¹ DWP94,p23,para4-10.

⁶² DWP94@ p24, para 4-11 to 4-16.

⁶³ DWP94, see Preface and Chap 1, p3-p4.

⁶⁴ DWP94, Minister's Preface and p24, para 4-14.

⁶⁵ DWP94, p95, para 9-1 -1 "Australia's defence alliance with the United States continues to be a key element of our defence policy, and will remain so over the period covered by this White Paper."

⁶⁶ Statement by the Honourable W. G. Haden, then Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1981.

- ⁶⁷ Millar, T.B., Australia's Defence, Melbourne University Press, Victoria, Australia, 1969, p45.
- ⁶⁸ Cavy, A., The Canberra Times, article: US Alliances: Protection or a Hazard, 15 September 1984.
- ⁶⁹ DWP94, p8, para 2-6.
- ⁷⁰ Figures provided by Strategic Concepts and Policy Branch, Strategic Planning and Policy, Directorate J-2/TJSCINCPAC on 22 Mar 95 indicate force level in 1990 as approximately 375,000, and at end of FY94 as approximately 333,000. Figures vary over time as force structure changes in composition, eg, 4TFW to 2.5TFW. Combat force capability, forward deployed and exercise deployed numbers would provide more indicative comparisons than total numbers.
- ⁷¹ Bresnan, J. From Dominos to Dynamos: The Transformation of Southeast Asia, New York, Council for Foreign Relations 1994, Chap 4 - The US Economic Stake: In brief, 60% of foreign firms in Indonesia are US, with total expenditure between 1980 and 1990 of US\$12.7 billion, of which US\$5.9 billion in 1990; vast Indonesian natural gas field off Nantuna Island to be developed by Indonesian government and Exxon at estimated cost of US\$17 billion. US oil firms responsible for 65% of total US assets of US\$7 billion in Malaysia in 1992, and will invest another US\$3.1 billion by 1996. US investments in oil and gas in the region totals almost US\$20 billion. In 1990 US trade with ASEAN amounted to US\$49.5 billion, more than with that with South America or Saudi Arabia. Not only are US exports large to the ASEAN countries in comparison to other regions they are growing faster. US exports to ASEAN are also highly varied, which means that the profits are spread widely across the US. In short, US investment in the ASEAN economies and US trade with them have given it a substantial economic stake.
- ⁷² United States Pacific Command, Asia-Pacific Economic Update, Spring 1994, p4:
- "The Asia-Pacific region is America's largest trading partner. In 1993, [US]\$384B out of a total of [US]\$1,045B in US merchandise exports and imports were exchanged with the Asia-Pacific region; this accounted for 37% of total US two-way merchandise trade, the largest percentage with any region in the world. US trade with the Asia-Pacific region has exceeded trade with the European Union (EU) since 1979. ...By the year 2000, US trade across the Pacific is projected to be double that of our trade across the Atlantic. "*
- ⁷³ Chain, Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines and Malaysia all lay claim to the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea, with China having twice used military force to support its claim.
- ⁷⁴ See Tramoundanis, D., Squadron Leader, Royal Australian Air Force, Air Power Studies Centre Paper No12, Defence Self Reliance and the Sustainment of Operations, April 1993. The paper presents a well reasoned concern that combat sustainment for the RAAF may be limited by stockpile policies, decreasing Australian industry capability, reliance on overseas sources, and under utilisation of the Defence Science and technology Organisation.
- ⁷⁵ DWP94, p 155, Fremantle Patrol Boats to be replaced, consideration of replacement of DDGs early next century, additional infantry battalion to be raised, Kiowa helicopters to be replaced and additional helicopters to improve land force capability,, to be purchased (attack helo), C I 30E to be replaced, F/A- I 8 to be upgraded, purchase AEW&C (first proposed in DOA97), lead-in fighter acquisition, options to replace the Caribou to be considered, more naval elements to Western Australia, Army units to Darwin, and a new field training area in northern Australia.
- ⁷⁶ Dibb Review, p 172.
- ⁷⁷ FSR91 recommended changes to the Australian Defence Force (ADF) up to the year 2000. The guiding objectives of FSR91 were to: Maximize combat capability by reducing the administrative tail-increase naval basing in Western Australia, Army in Northern Australia, and improving deployment capability for the RAAF, and off-setting active force structure against an enlarged and more capable reserve force. The financial support for these initiatives, and for the continued support of DOA87, was to be achieved by reducing active force numbers, and through the use of commercial and civilian support wherever possible (on the premise that it would be cheaper). Commercialisation would not be extended to combat units.

⁷⁸ Woodman, S., Australian Security Planning at the Crossroads: The Challenge of the Nineties, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Working paper 27 1, June 1993, p 1 5.

⁷⁹ DWP94, p159, para S.35, indicates that Defence spending will be sustained at approximately 2% of GDP

⁸⁰ DWP94 p22. para4.5.

⁸¹ DWP94@ p22, para 4-5.

⁸² DWP94, p5, para 1-2.

⁸³ An example would include having procured a TADIL Link- II data link capability for RAN Seahawk helicopters vice the unique link currently fitted, thus making the Seahawk, and the FFG, a more credible and capable coalition platform. A further major requirement in this area is to ensure that sufficient combined training opportunities, particularly with the most likely coalition partner, i.e., U.S. forces, are provided to maintain operationally significant skills. The requirement for and exposure to such training varies across the ADF.

⁸⁴ CIA World Book 1994-95, Brassey's, Washington and London, 1992, indicates that Australia's rate of economic growth was lower than those countries it defined as being within its region of interest (less than half that of any regional neighbour). Also, the Singaporean government white paper Defence of Singapore 1992-93, Singapore Ministry of Defence, 1992, p46, indicates that Defence spending will be 6% of GDP. The Malaysian Defence Minister has stated that defence expenditure is likely to increase to 6% of GNP from the current 2.5% in the next 10 to 15 years.

⁸⁵ DWP94, p4, paras 1-7 and 1-8.

⁸⁶ DWP94@ p 1 5, para 3 -1 I

⁸⁷ See Nair, V. K., War in the Gulf.- Lessons for the Third World, Lancer International, New Delhi, 199 1. The book is a study of the lessons learned from the Gulf War, including the role information technology and warfare played in that war. For those third world countries and lesser powers who cannot afford the more technologically advanced platforms and weapons, the role of information warfare is advanced as a method of creating confusion and countering capabilities inherent in military organizations such as those of the US. As a consequence of these observations India, and the Indian Armed forces, have developed an industry base and military doctrine to support the application of such principles.

⁸⁸ DWP94, p23, paras 4-8, 4-10; "An adversary would need extensive amphibious and air capabilities to land and support a substantial land force, and strong sea and air capabilities to protect this force from reaction by Australian forces. ...we are confident that we would have sufficient warning time to adapt and expand our own forces to defend Australia against a major attack of this sort." The last statement implies there may be other forms of major attack but none are identified.

⁸⁹ For example, since 1990 the RAAF has conducted major reorganizations of Air Force Office (twice), Air Command, Logistics Command, airman and officer trade and category structure, base structure and administration.

⁹⁰ This document identifies required readiness levels for all ADF units against assigned tasks.

⁹¹ For example, the military *coups detat* in Fiji, despite having significant diplomatic and military representation in the region. The subsequent stance taken by Australia antagonized Fiji to the extent that Australia lost influence with that country for some time. Similarly, the inability to predict the revolt in Bougainville (an Australian mining company was taken over and the island continues to attempt to break away from Papua New Guinea). Similar situations in countries such as Vanuatu suggest an inability,, to read regional intent or perspective.

⁹² Simson, S.W., The Regionalisation of Defence in Southeast Asia, p 15; suggests that the reason initiatives such as the formation of a Malacca Straits defence pact failed was because of such mistrust between Malaya, Singapore and Indonesia.

⁹³ Miller, T. B., Foreign Policy - Some Australian Reflections, Georgian House, Melbourne, Australia, 1972, p x, p4 1, p43.

⁹⁴ Australia's Regional Security Environment', address by Senator the Hon. Gareth Evans, Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade to the Conference on Strategic Studies in a Changing World, ANU Canberra, 31 July 1991 . transcript p9.

⁹⁵ See Shambaugh, D., Current History, Vol 93, No 587, Dec 94, p425, article Pacific Security and the Pacific Cent , in which he states that although China has offered to negotiate over claims associated with the Spratlys, it steadfastly maintains such claims (even though the islands are some 800 miles from China) and has shown a willingness to use force in support of its claims.

⁹⁶ ADM Macke, CINCPAC, is reported by Reuters as reiterating the US position of remaining neutral on territorial claims during a visit to Singapore 7 Mar 95. The Far Eastern Economic Review, 13 Oct 94, article: Foreign Relations - "Show of Force" by Navan Chanda, states that the US oil company Crestone Energy Corp. announced on 19 Apr 94 that it was beginning work at the Wan'an Bei 21 field, a concession leased from China in 1992. The Mobil Oil company has a similar agreement with Vietnam for the Blue Dragon field, which is west of the Crestone lease. China has stated that it will provide military protection to Crestone from interference by other countries in the disputed area. When the Crestone leased research vessel entered the area of its concession it was intercepted by Vietnamese gunboats and escorted away. The Crestone President, Randall Thompson is reported as being annoyed and stating, "The vessel was supposed to be backed up [by the Chinese naval , but then, didn't go." How the proposal of Chinese naval support to US national commercial operations fits the definition of neutrality is not clear. The 28 Sep 92 edition of the Oil and Gas Journal, p28, states that, "Foreign companies, especially from the US, have figured heavily in China's ambitious exploration efforts in the SCS." The article goes on to name a number of US companies already involved in the region and the associated heavy capital investment. The entire situation suggests a potential future full of complex economic, political and possibly military choices for the US.

⁹⁷ Hooker and Waddell, Naval War College Review, 1992, p84, article: The Future of Conventional Deterrence.

⁹⁸ Singapore and Malaysia hold regular exercises with Australia" UK and NZ under the auspices of the Five Power Defence Arrangement. Thailand participates with the US in the Cobra Gold series of exercise, and with the RAN/RAAF as part of AUSTHAI. The Indonesian navy has recently commenced limited training exercises with RAN ships under the exercise name AUSTIND. Other countries conduct exercises with external partners or internal nations infrequently. There is no defined basis for common procurement goals, standardized equipment, doctrine or language. Combined operations would be constrained by these limitations.

⁹⁹ New York Times, 5 Apr 95, International Section, pA8, reports that the dispute over the Spratly Islands appeared to grow more serious when the Philippines announced [last week] that they had torn down or blown up Chinese markers on several of the Spratly Islands and seized four Chinese trawlers in retaliation to the recent Chinese act of taking over an island in the group claimed by the Philippines. Taiwan is also accused of firing on Vietnamese transports which approached the largest of the Spratly Islands. The article goes on to state that "Southeast Asian leaders have long worried that China would someday use the Spratlys as a springboard to assert control over the entire South China Sea - tuning it, as Asian diplomats often say, into a 'Chinese Lake'."

¹⁰⁰ Simon, S.W., The Regionalisation of Defense in Southeast Asia, Arizona State University, March 1992; Prepared for Asian Security Issues in Transition to the Twenty-First Century, Defense Academic Research Support Program (DARSP) and the National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR).

¹⁰¹ Shambaugh, D., Current History , Vol93, No587, Dec94, p428, article: Pacific Security in the Pacific Century.

¹⁰² Michael Antolik, Contemporary Southeast Asia, Vol 16, No2, September 1994, article: The ASEAN Regional Forum: The Spirit of Constructive Engagements. Observation made by Singaporean Ambassador-at-Large, Tommy T.B. Koh.

¹⁰³ Michael Antolik, Contemporary Southeast Asia, Vol 16, No2, September 1994, article: The ASEAN Regional Forum: The Spirit of Constructive Engagement p 118-119: In July 1990 Australia proposed an additional forum to ASEAN to "build confidence and patterns of cooperation, not only between old friends but between old adversaries"; Canada proposed a Conference on Security and Cooperation in a European-type organization; in 1991 Australia argued for a consultative body that could forestall, "the sort of precautionary worst case thinking which so often characterizes strategic planning.. [that could in turn generate destabilizing arms races in die region"; Japan proposed the development of a consultative forum, "what we would like to see is expanded, deepened discussion on political and security matters." None of these proposal has resulted in the desired objectives being accepted.

¹⁰⁴ Defence Industry and Aerospace Report, No20, Vol9, article: Regional Security Concerns Fuel Continuing Arms Build Up, 9 Oct 90, p27.

¹⁰⁵ US DoD, A Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim: &" to Congress, US Gov Printing Office, Washington DC, Apr 90, p2.

¹⁰⁶ Simon, S.W.,The Regionalisation of Defense in Southeast Asia, Arizona State University; Paper prepared for a workshop sponsored by the Defence Academic Research Program (DARSP) and the National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR), March 1992, pl3,

¹⁰⁷ US DoD, A Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim: Report to Congress, US Gov Printing Office, Washington DC, Apr 90, p4.

¹⁰⁸ The Spratly Islands are claimed in their entirety by the PRC, Taiwan and Vietnam, with the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei each claiming some of the islands, and all six countries have maintained armed forces on some of the islands. The PRC and Vietnam also claim the Paracel Islands. Both of these island groups sit astride primary shipping routes through the SCS. Indonesia and Vietnam dispute continental shelf boundaries around the Indonesian owned Natuna Islands, with potential oil and gas revenues again stimulating the desire to control the area.

¹⁰⁹ Australian Regional Security Environment: Address by Senator Gareth Evans to the Conference on Strategic Studies in a Changing World, Australian National University, 31 July 1991

¹¹⁰ Evans, G., the Hon., 1989 Ministerial Statement.

¹¹¹ Adsett, G.N., Australia's Comprehensive Engagement in South-East Asia, Journal of the Australian Naval Institute, February 1992, p27.

¹¹² Transcript of Australia's Regional Security Environment: address by the Hon., Senator Gareth Evans, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, to the Conference on Strategic Studies in a Changing World, Australian National University, 31 July 199, p6.

¹¹³ Transcript p2.

¹¹⁴ Transcript, p5.

¹¹⁵ DWP94, p9, para 2-12

¹¹⁶ Branigin, W., Washington Times | Feb 95, pA 1 8, report : China Takes Over Philippine Claimed Area of Disputed Island Group. The report outlines the Chinese occupation of Mischief Reef, which is claimed by the

Philippines (reef is approximately 150km from Philippine island of Palawan and 800km from Chinese mainland). Senator Orlando Mercado, the chairman of the Philippine Senate's defence committee, is claimed to have stated that by occupying the reef China appears to be aggressively enforcing its 1992 claim to the entire South China Sea.

¹¹⁷ Ben Barber, Washington Times, 7 Mar 95, p 13, report: Beijing Eyes South China Sea with Sub Purchase. Reports the Chinese-Russian agreement for the Chinese purchase of 10 Soviet Kilo class submarine, negotiation for a further six, and a total requirement over five years for 22.

¹¹⁸ Fisher, R., Washington Times, 6 Mar 95, p 17, report: Ignoring China's Mischief at Sea. Describes US administration's lack of response as indicating, "its not our problem."

¹¹⁹ DWP94, p IO, para 2.16.

¹²⁰ DWP94, P. IO. Para 2-18.

¹²¹ Simson, S.W., The Regionalisation of Defense in Southeast Asia, p 19.

¹²² Discussion Paper - When Waves Collide: Conflict in the Next Century, Richard Szafranski, Colonel, USAF, AWC, 1994, P. 1.

¹²³ Taylor, C.W., A World 2010: A New Order of Nations, Carlisle Barracks, PA, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 1992, p79-p90.

¹²⁴ There are three generally accepted methods of forecasting: Extrapolation, which takes data and projects hands; normative, which envisions a future end-state or state of nature and postulates the data that would be required to achieve that state; and alternative futures, which attempts to determine major dimensions that condition or determine the future environment, uses trends or extrapolations as tests, and then defines a range of plausible futures. The metric for all forecasting associated with the development of national security policy is to ensure that there are "no surprises" hidden in the postulated future.

¹²⁵ Acknowledgment is made of the assistance provided by COL Joseph Englebrecht, USAF, faculty member, USAF Air War College, in developing a fundamental appreciation of the concept of alternate futures. This approach was used by the Air War College in the development of Spacecraft 2020, a USAF research project which looked at how the medium of space can be best exploited in the future. A significant outcome of using this approach was that it identified a number of high leverage technologies which could be pursued to advantage, and which may not otherwise have been apparent.

¹²⁶ As an example, Indonesia has attempted to act as an unbiased mediator in relation to the Spratly Islands.

¹²⁷ DWP94, p24, para 4-11 to 4-16.

¹²⁸ Timeframe identified in DWP94, Minister's Preface and p24, para 4.14.

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GLOSSARY

- ADF - Australian Defence Force
- ADMI - Area of Direct Military Interest (Australian)
- AGPS - Australian Government Publishing Service
- ANZUS - Australia, New Zealand, United States (Treaty)
- AMM - ASEAN Ministerial Meetings
- APEC - Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
- APSI - Area of Primary Strategic Interest (Australian)
- ARF - ASEAN Regional Forum
- ASEAN - Association of South East Asian Nations
- CDF - Chief of (Australian) Defence Force
- DOA87 - Defence of Australia 1987 (Government White Paper)
- DWP94* - Defending Australia, Defence White Paper 1994
- FPDA - Five Power Defence Force Agreement
- FR - France
- GDP - Gross Domestic Product
- GNP - Gross National Product
- NZ - New Zealand
- OECD - Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development
- OTHR - Over the Horizon Radar (HF backscatter)
- PMC - (ASEAN) Post Ministerial Meetings
- SCS - South China Sea
- RAAF - Royal Australian Air Force
- RAN - Royal Australian Navy
- SEATO - South East Asia Treaty Organization
- UK - United Kingdom
- US - United States of America