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Editorial

For the first issue of the millennium, we present a collection that is both retrospective and introspective in an attempt to take stock of how far we have come before we press on with the challenges ahead. Aptly so, as in the Orwellian view:

Who controls the past controls the future...

Who controls the present, controls the past.

The Army 21 segment continues in this issue with the theme - Impact of Technology. LTC Hugh Lim in *Integrating Technology into 21st Century Armies: An SAF Perspective*, grapples with whether technology is the principal force of change and how armies can better manage the change process. BG Ong Boon Hwee's paper, *Challenges in the Land Battlefield*, looks at how technology has shaped the battlefield and the technological demands in today's battlefield.

France's Defeat in the 1940 Campaign is an insightful account by MAJ Tan Teck Guan on why the french faltered in spite of the Maginot Line and their WW I-tested arms, doctrines and strategy. Yet another analytical piece on strategy is MAJ Peter V Barnett's *British Strategy in the Falklands War* which opines that Briain's unconciliatory bargaining position strengthened the case for a military resolution to the conflict. *Pearl Harbor: Strategic Misperceptions* by MAJ Yip Chee Kiong sheds light on how ethno-centric thinking and a failure to accurately size up the adversary led to the unfortunate attack, which many, on hindsight, say was unnecessary and could have been avoided. *In Maritime Strategy in the Post-Cold War Era*, MAJ Tan Wee Ngee looks at the relevance of Mahan's and Corbett's century-old treatise and prescribes a complement of both for today's highly complex maritime environment.

MAJ Ng Chee Meng in *The Role of War in Internationa Relations* looks at war from the realist's and liberalist's perspectives and concludes that war is far from obsolete: there is little sign of a declining influence of war on international relations. *Deterrence as an Instrument of State Policy in the New World Order* by CPT Lim Sok Bee argues that for deterrence to be viable as an instrument, it has to be applied in combination with other instruments of state policy.

On a final note, we would like to invite comments, suggestions or counter-arguments on any of the published articles. All letters to the Editor which are published will be paid $80 each. Happy reading.

Letter to the Editor

I write to this to congratulate you and the *POINTER* team for an excellent job done on the Millennium Commemorative Issue. It has been an interesting read. The younger and "middle-aged" generation like mine would have never seen some of these articles had it not been for this issue. Each article in the collection has value despite its age. How else would we have been able to read what our CDF had written as an LTA! Your team must have indeed taken much effort to carefully select the finer articles of the decades. The Millennium Issue is truly a commendable effort. Congratulations to the team.

Ms Hindocha Nita

Physiotherapist

Military Medical Institute

Loewen Road Camp

14 Feb 2000

Integrating Technology into 21st Century Armies - An SAF Perspective

by LTC Hugh Lim U Yang

The development of armies has always been a balance between the social, political, organisational and technological change. How each army responds to these factors varies tremendously, both in scale and timing. Technology, *per se*, presents armies with opportunities, whilst in the hands of their adversaries, it poses a threat to their relevance or effectiveness.

We are in the midst of what many military scholars call a Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA). There is a sense that the whole nature of warfare will be redefined be precision-guided weapons, global communications and information technology.

Soldiers, scientists, engineers and academics are undecided to what extent this spells a sea change in the nature of the 21st century conflict. Some view these as technology enablers for traditional military operations. Others predict that the unequal rate of development between military forces implies that the future conflicts will be asymmetrical in nature and anything but conventional.

Technology as the Principal Force of Change

The world is at the beginning of a point of inflexion between one dominant form of warfare - industrial age in nature - and the next, arising from the Information Age. A new form of warfare is going to obsolete the existing form, but not necessarily in all fields of conflict, and probably not all at once. We do not really know how long it will take before the dominant model of war shifts to a new form.

Alvin and Heidi Toffler introduced the idea of the Third Wave warfare in their book, *War and Anti-War*. They described the emergence of a new war-form, linked to the emergence of the Third Wave of Civilisation. In 1993, the Tofflers wrote that since the civilisation brought by the Third Wave had not reached its mature form, the Third Wave war-form has not reached full development either. They predicted clashes would continue between nations employing different war forms and some nations would continue to use more than one mode of warfare.

Our armies are at different points along the development path. Some of us may choose to shift efforts to master the Third Wave warfare instead of continuing to refine industrial age competencies. How quickly we do so reflects much on leadership and resource availability. Most importantly, we must precede changes in acquisition approach with changes in our thinking.

Historically, there were earlier periods where the introduction of new technologies such as repeating rifles; mobile artillery; the telegraph and the radio; tanks; and aircraft, dramatically altered the nature of war. However, it took decades before some of these technologies were fully embraced and integrated into military thinking. Throughout the last century, developments in rifles and field artillery progressed at different rates. Military doctrine was unable to fully account for the devastating impact these would have on mass armies till WW I. The Americans learned through the four years of their Civil War, but Europe remained steeped in the thinking of the Napoleonic era.

Tanks first appeared in WW I but military thought on their impact remained divided right up to WW II. Conservatives held that heavy tanks would remain infantry support weapons while light tanks would serve in a cavalry role. Such thinking reinforced the organisation of armies by their traditional branches. By the beginning of WW II, only the Germans had substantially reorganised to take advantage of the mobility of

tank forces, and employed them decisively with the Luftwaffe using *Blitzkrieg* tactics. At this time, some armies in Europe were still employing horse cavalry against Germany's armoured forces.

It is clear that the potential for technology-driven change does not automatically result in a renaissance in military thinking or practice. The reasons for the differing rates of change can be attributed to the interplay between technology and the broader geo-political, socio-economic and organisational circumstances of each army. Is there any reason for us to expect any different today?

One possible driver for a faster rate of change is of course, the very technology which is fermenting so much discussion- namely, information technology. There are now greater opportunities for knowledge sharing between armies. Over and above the technology, there are multilateral information sharing and co-operative technology agreements which facilitate rapid exchange of ideas. To the extent that armies are prepared to share knowledge, there is indeed the potential for faster development of military thought. Apart from developments in technology, the shift in the geopolitical situation has fermented several other influencing factors:

- **Economics.** The end of the Cold war has resulted in a shrinking of defence and R&D budgets. Consequently, there is much greater emphasis on "dual use" technologies. In the field of electronics and information technology, there are significant opportunities for such dual use. Indeed, in some areas, the commercial world is driving standards and products. Commercial initiatives in artificial intelligence and advanced composites also offer tremendous potential for military and civilian use.
- **Organisation.** Some armies have moved away from large, conscript-based forces towards leaner, all regular forces. With a reduced threat of large-scale invasion, the roles for some European armies have been redefined to cover "out-of-area" intervention operations. A premium is placed on technologies which enable small yet capable forces to be inserted into trouble spots as quickly as possible.
- **Social.** Armies in developed countries can draw from a much better educated and technically savvy population. The knowledge-based economy will produce the skills for a knowledge-based army. At the same time, in order to compete for new recruits with technology growth areas, armies must position themselves to offer careers and an education with a strong technology base. An industrial age, mass-produced image will simply not do.
- **Political.** The increasing reach of the mass media and a rise in the civilian population's aversion to casualties has produced the socio-political pressure for programs to develop long range, precision munitions which offer the promise of waging bloodless wars with fewer casualties among friendly forces.

How Armies Can Manage Technological Change

Armies in the Asia-Pacific may be facing several or all of these factors. Much of today's literature on RMA, however, may not really be reflective of the circumstances faced by the armies in this region. The main impact of a unipolar world for Asian countries appears to have been:

- Increased access to industrial age military technology as defence industries contend with reduced domestic demand or compete for hard currency.
- Limited access to cutting-edge military technologies which leading nations may not wish to see proliferated too readily.

Armies in this region have to think carefully about how we should mange our resources to bring on board new technologies for the 21st century. If we are not careful, we could end up following an incremental path, buying more and more industrial age technology, only to find it obsolete as new forms of warfare emerge.

For Singapore, technology is a multiplier, both at the individual-and the force-levels. The challenge we face is how to absorb technology into our force such that we integrate fighting concepts, the training of our soldiers, and the intersection with other emerging technologies. In an era of rapid change, I believe there are three factors critical for successful technology integration:

- Process
- Products
- People

Process

Over the last two decades, our Army has evolved from being mainly a buyer of military hardware to a co-developer of systems capabilities in partnership with our in-house engineers and local industry. We have put in place a holistic process to identify both immediate operational needs and longer term technology requirements. Such a process requires us to adopt a systems perspective to develop both the hardware and software - namely, doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures - which allow us to maximise the effectiveness of our hardware.

Market forces based on asymmetry of information may not always yield the best solution for our operational requirements. In the course of developing our FH2000 *Howitzer* and the *Bionix* Infantry Fighting Vehicle, regular dialogue between the users and engineers resulted in an effective way of ensuring that operational requirements are continually integrated with the design of the new systems. The different parties are able to better appreciate each other's needs and constraints. Although it is not an elixir for all problems, it has enabled us to avoid an adversarial working environment which can lead to slippage and cost-overruns.

This tri-partite relationship has encouraged us to adopt a similar approach to establish future requirements. In the SAF, we term this the "Ops-Tech" process which seeks to bring soldiers and engineers together to identify operational requirements, and technology opportunities. This process is a two-way street:

- In one direction, we have what we call "Ops Pull". In this part of the process, technologists try to identify technological solutions for problems identified by the operator. In doing so, we define long-term technology goals to solve existing operational problems or to achieve new military capabilities. Based on these goals, we determine the near-term development projects and medium-term research priorities which must be pursued.
- In the other direction, operators benefit from "Techno Push". Technologists highlight new or emerging technologies which have the potential of such technologies and decide whether to invest exploratory development efforts to assess their feasibility.

One cannot overstate the importance of stretching our limited funds by investing in technologies and systems which offer the greatest returns. This is especially important for armies which do not have the resources to finance basic research. Our focus is mainly on funding-applied research which shows promise for high military pay-offs, and full-scale development of high-payoff systems which we cannot buy readily off the market. The aim of the Ops-Tech process is, therefore, for operators and technologists to collectively identify the most critical operational gaps for which a technological solution is needed, and whether any emerging or developed technologies can fulfil the needs.

Products

Having identified high payoff areas for the army to invest in, we adopt an evolutionary approach to manage the introduction of new systems into the army in order to hedge against the rapid rise and obsolescence of new technologies. We have adopted a cascading strategy in our equipping and upgrading programmes. This has fostered a long-term perspective amongst out force-planners and weapons staff since we now have to think in terms of upgrading paths and generations of equipment, instead of a single-acquisition decision. This approach yields three distinct advantages.

- A cascading approach allows our army to synergise R&D efforts with equipping plans and ensure that future technology can be inserted onto existing and future platforms.
- Such a strategy allows our army to draw upon the experience gained in operating equipment, such that further improvements can be made during subsequent acquisitions.

- Acquiring equipment in phases sustains the local industrial base, and allows us to maximise the development expertise built up earlier, to continually upgrade and maintain our systems.

People

A knowledge-based army's most important asset for technology integration is its people. In Singapore, it comprises our National Servicemen, regulars, in-house defence engineers, university researchers and industrial engineers.

One of the most important pre-requisites for successful technology integration is a strong technology foundation amongst soldiers. This facilitates smoother technology integration down to the last man. Through our National Service system, we enjoy a regular infusion of school leavers who enter the army with a high level of technical competency gained from the school system.

At the same time, our army needs systems which allow for easy operation by NSmen, who have limited training time each year. This is an additional challenge in our acquisition process. However, we benefit from having many NSmen amongst our defence engineers and scientists who can visualise the operational needs much clearer from their exposure during the annual in-camp training.

Amongst our regulars, we have also seen the need to upgrade the technology content of their professional military education. We are implementing a Mil-Tech dual-track career scheme which allows us to groom combat officers with a strong engineering foundation. Out Mil-Tech officers will serve as the key drivers for Ups-Pull. Another driver for this initiative is the fact that technology cycles have become shorter. A good proportion of our combat officers are science or engineering graduates. However, without continual upgrading of their knowledge of technology, it is all too easy to become outdated and archaic in one's thinking.

The third group of players who contribute to an effective technology integration effort are our in-house defence engineers, without whom we would not be able to develop cutting-edge concepts. Some of these engineers, particularly in the fields of C4I, are an integral part of the development effort. Others co-ordinate and source for the best component technologies world-wide together with our defence industries.

The last group whom we actively manage are our industrial engineers and university researchers. Ultimately, it is this group of people who provide us the final product. As we have evolved from merely buying products to investing in technology development, we have to increase our sophistication in how we allocate R&D funds. This is an evolving process for the SAF and something we will pay close attention to in the next few years. We have learnt to pay close attention to how our defence industries are building up core expertise by grooming good development engineers through co-operative projects with more advanced institutions and companies.

Partnership - The Way Ahead

In a knowledge age, partnership is the key to successful technology integration. There are three aspects of partnership:

- Partnership between soldiers and technologists
- Partnership between the different Services.

    The concept of dual use allows us to leverage efforts undertaken by the commercial world and vice versa. But for the SAF, we also leverage another concept - tri-service use, which means that we prioritise limited R&D dollars to finance projects which can be used by all three services. This philosophy forces us to uptimise from a systems perspective rather than a service bias, and has fostered an even stronger joint culture to emerge in the SAF. In an era where information

operations and electronic warfare transcend land, sea and air, we expect greater commonality between the requirements of our army, navy and airforce.

- Partnership between nations

  In this era of limited resources, we need to consider how to pool our operations and technical know-how to develop capabilities to leverage our comparative advantages. As an example, predominantly mechanised armies with a small infantry element may benefit from partnerships with armies which are mainly infantry but with small mechanised forces. Spreading R&D investment over a wider pool of potential users will see us being more willing to commit the funds in the first place. compared to going it alone.

Conclusion

We cannot look at technology in isolation. Technology provides the promise (or the threat), but it is the interplay between political will, domestic influences, and organisational capacity to digest change which will determine how soon it delivers.

Many macro factors lie beyond our influence. However, we can help ourselves by bridging the knowledge gaps that often exist between the decision-makers, technologists and soldiers. As soldiers, we need to identify where our main efforts should be, But we also maintain supporting efforts and reserves. So it must be in managing technological change. Apart from having our feelers our, we must consider several courses of Ops-Tech action and how to leverage different partnership to achieve these.

To successfully integrate new technologies in the army, a systems approach is required to manage not only the technology itself but also the concept of operations, training and doctrine, organisation, administration and logistics. The army that is able to manage all these issues will be in good shape for the 21st century battlefield.

This paper was delivered at the 23rd Pacific Armies Management Seminar held from 6 to 10 Sep 99 at the Marina Mandarin Hotel which was attended by some 104 delegates from across the Pacific.

LTC Hugh Lim U Yang is presently holding the appointment of ACGS (Plans), G5 Army. He holds a Bachelor of Engineering (Hons 1st Class) in Engineering Science and Industrial Management from the University of Liverpool and an MSc (Management of Technology) from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is also a graduate of the US Army Command and General Staff College.

Challenges in the Land Battlefield

by BG Ong Boon Hwee

This paper highlights the interaction between the technology and fighting, how technology shapes the battlefield, and the demands the battlefield have on technology.

That technology has tremendous impact on war-fighting remains undisputed but it underscores two themes:

- It is the appropriate combination of technologies at the right time that results in the desirable outcome in the battlefield.
- It is the sound application of technology rather than its possession that makes the difference in the battlefield.

To illustrate, take the familiar but intricate triangle of firepower, protection and mobility. Looking back into history, warfare in its most rudimentary form evolved from unarmed combat to the use of weapons to hit and throw at one's opponent. Firepower development was rooted in clubs, stones, slings, bows, javelins, spears - all part of this cycle of evolving technology. Like firepower, protection had its own evolutionary path, in shields, helmets, body covers, etc. However, in 1000 BC, when the Assyrians for the first time combined mobility with firepower and protection, a whole new battlefield was opened up. The Assyrians were armed with bows and arrows, spears and slings, and protected by large shields. Soldiers on foot, on horseback, in horse-drawn chariots, would simultaneously launch a mass of projectiles against the enemy. They then moved in prescribed formations to destroy the remaining enemy forces. By combining massive power and movement, the Assyrians introduced tactics and system-level fighting. This continues to be fundamental to an effective military force today.

The German use of armour in WW II resulting in the stunning success of the German *blitzkrieg* stemmed directly from their sound application of lessons drawn from WW I. The British introduced the tank in its maiden battle in 1916. The first tanks represented a technological breakthrough against trench warfare. But, they had limited mobility and lacked an effective fighting concept. Consequently, there were heavy losses. During the inter-war period, opinions on the operational potential of the tank diverged. By and large, the western armies then, with the exception of Germany, had forgone the opportunities inherent in the tank. By contrast, the German General Staff, relying on the same lessons from WW I, drew applications to organise a modern tank force. That tank force, combining mobility, firepower, protection, together with shock effect and flexibility, revolutionised the battlefield, with its lightning warfare.

In the modern battlefield, land warfare has taken a quantum leap within this century. The evolutionary process seems to have moved light years away from the linear, static, trench-based, high casualties, attrition land battles that dominated the major wars of early 20th century. Since WW II, and especially in the recent three decades, land war-fighting has moved at a breath-taking pace in the direction of manoeuvre warfare.

The land battle today is characterised by fast-paced manoeuvre, in close co-ordination with long-range firepower. The emphasis is on the use of agility and tempo, to seek positional advantage on the battlefield, so as to dislocate the opponent and cause their paralysis at both the physical and psychological dimension. Manoeuvre warfare does not mean only movement, and no hard fighting. It is not shadow-boxing. There is indeed a paradigm shift from an attrition-based warfare. Instead of moving forces to locations to slog it out with massive firepower, manoeuvre warfare aims to fight only selected critical battles. Fighting is to facilitate movement, to quickly cause the enemy to collapse. In manoeuvre warfare lingo, it is called attacking the opponent's centre of gravity. It involves attacking this decision cycle.

Such war-fighting could not be constrained by a linear battlefield. It calls for fighting the close, deep and rear battles at the same time. Well co-ordinated and synchronised, this creates a dilemma for the opponent in both time and space.

More than ever before, land warfare today is characterised by fighting at the system level. War is conducted at the strategic, operational and tactical level. At the operational and tactical level, fighting has evolved way past combined arms operations into multi-dimensional integration of land, air and sea means to enhance mobility and firepower in the land battlefield.

What facilitated the dramatic transformation on the land battlefield this century? Amongst the significant factors are the two themes highlighted earlier. The effective combination of maturing technologies have provided the military the force capable of fighting a high tempo, manoeuvre-based war in a non-linear, multi-dimensional, multi-levels battlefield. Technologies in diverse fields are fused together in platforms and systems. The synergy of which is enhanced by the imaginative application through sound fighting concepts. If a warrior from the turn of the century were to fight in today's battlefield, he would be amazed at the technology at his disposal today. If the same warrior were to return to the command and staff colleges of today, he would be fascinated by the conceptualisation and the doctrinal development in the manoeuvre warfare and the operational art of war.

The best and most relevant case that reinforces the two themes is that of the development in mechanised warfare. The modern tanks and a whole array of fighting vehicles have developed by leaps and bounds since its inception in WW I. Dissect a modern fighting vehicle, and you would find the advancement in technology embedded in every aspect that makes up the potent fighting machine. There are significant technological development in engine, transmission, suspension, protection, fire-control, ammunition, communication and navigational instruments.

The increasing sophistication of the fighting machines is matched only by the growing influence of the armour formations in land warfare. In WW I, only small number of rudimentary tanks were experimented. By WW II, the effect of the armoured formations were already considerable, particularly in the European theatre. The growth of mechanised fighting has not looked back since. Three out of the five Israeli-Arab wars in the Middle Easy were waged by 13,000 tanks, and the mechanised forces decided the land war. In the recent Gulf War in 1991, machanised forces played a central role in the ground campaign. *Operation Desert Storm* saw the manoeuvre of two mechanised corps some 300 miles to position themselves for the attack into Iraq and Kuwait. Each corps has more than 30,000 vehicles. Once launched, the two mechanised corps drove more than 100 miles, and settled the war in less than 10 hours. In the process, the coalition forces rendered ineffective 43 Iraqi Divisions, destroyed some 4,000 tanks and 2,000 APCs, and captured 80,000 prisoners.

The combined-arms mechanised formations, with integrated support from air and sea forces, would continue to be the decisive force in the land battlefield into the foreseeable future. Brassey's encyclopedia of land forces and warfare terms the combined arms mechanised formation as the pivotal force in conventional warfare of the future.

This view is of course not without challenge from its detractors who are always asking, "Is the tank dead?" Their skepticism over the role of the mechanised formations invariably relate to their appreciation of the development in counter-armour weaponry, the attack helicopters and long-range precision weapons. Many of these views, however miss the two themes highlighted here. It is the combination of technologies, together with its sound application in fighting that counts on the battlefield. The mechanised formations, operating on increasingly sophisticated platforms, would continue to influence land warfare into the foreseeable future due to the following reasons:

- The mechanised forces embody both assault power and staying power.
- No other weapon system combines mobility, firepower, protection, flexibility and shock effect, capable of carrying out break-through battles, attacks, advance and pursuit, reconnaissance and holding ground; and able to operate in all-weather, round the clock and under fire.

- The mechanised platforms when appropriately configured, could provide strategic mobility, operational mobility and tactical mobility.
- The mechanised forces, instead of being replaced by attack helicopters and long-range precision weapons, could work in synergy with emerging weapon systems to become even more effective.
- Technological development in protection, firepower and mobility are coming together to produce the future fighting vehicles which are more survivable, more lethal, more dependable and more user-friendly.
- Mechanised platforms are versatile enough to be tailored to meet the force requirement of individual countries, taking into consideration the terrain, threat and force make-up.

Together with the continuing role of the mechanised forces in the land battlefield, we will see the on-going interaction between technology and fighting develop in ever more exciting ways.

On the other hand, mechanised fighting will push at technology to provide the edge in an increasingly complicated, fast-paced and vulnerable environment. Fighters would look to platform designers for answers on how to exploit an information-dominant arena, how to survive top-down anti-armour threats, how to co-ordinate ever-growing masses in swift manoeuvres and how to neutralise the enemy faster, more accurately and from greater distances.

On the other hand, technology is going to push very hard at the fighters to adjust themselves, to refine their fighting methods, to restructure their forces. The development in information technology threatens the man-in-loop with an information overload. The speed and lethality of firepower increase the threat of fracticide. The 24-hour battlefield, made possible by night-vision devices, stretches the human endurance. The technical performance of future platforms may outpace human limits. It is important to emphasise the centrality of the crew in all design consideration. It is the fighters who are going to live, fight and hope to survive in those fighting vehicles. Platform and system designers must not ignore the fact that however appealing the technology, it is the survivability and effectiveness of the fighters operating on the battlefield that matters.

The interaction between technology and war-fighting would continue to shape the land battlefield into the next millennium. Whatever the development of technology may be, the edge in the battlefield would still reside with the side that better combines technologies and applies them effectively in war-fighting. I have no doubt that we would still be talking of the mechanised formation, fighting on highly sophisticated platforms, as the decisive force in the land battlefield in 10 years' time.

This paper was presented at the 8th Land Platform Technology Seminar held on 11 Feb 99.

BG Ong Boon Hwee is presently Comd 25 Div and Chief Armour Officer. He holds a Bachelor of Social Science (First Class Honours) in Economics from the National University of Singapore and a Master in Military Arts and Science from the US Command and General Staff College in Leavenworth.

France's Defeat in the 1940 Campaign

by MAJ Tan Teck Guan

"Five times within a century, in 1814, 1815, 1870, 1914, and 1918, the people of Paris had heard the thunder of Prussian artillery and thrice watched the Germans parade through the streets as conquerors."

William Shirer[1]

The nightmares of German invasions, which had plagued France for more than a century, were to return and haunt them once again in 1940. On 1 September 1939, German troops invaded Poland. Two days later, Britain and France reluctantly declared war on Germany. Europe was once again plunged into war. The Treaty of Versailles had given Europe just 20 years of peace - a realisation of Marshal Ferinand Foch's dire prophecy of 1919.[2]

In the early dawn of 10 May 1940, some eight months after the declaration of war, German forces in a co-ordinated effort swept across the frontiers of Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg. The speed and ease at which the Germans overran the Low Countries astonished the world. By 14 June, the mighty German armies were already at the doorsteps of Paris. And on 22 June, just six weeks after the invasion, Marshal Pétain, on behalf of France, signed the armistice with the jubilant Germans.[3]

The German conquest of the Low Countries and France was hailed as a splendid example of blitzkrieg in modern military history. Even the Germans were amazed at the ease at which they had shattered the Allied defences. What were the reasons behind Germany's "miraculous" victory? Why had the French military, previously regarded among the world's best-prepared forces, collapsed so rapidly? This paper aims to address these questions, specifically, the reasons[4] behind the rapid fall of France in 1940.

This paper will briefly compare the military strategies adopted by both France and Germany in the 1940 Campaign and shed some light on some of the fundamental flaws in the French strategy, which ultimately led to her defeat at the hands of the Germans.

All military strategies are influenced to a certain extent by doctrinal considerations. The strategies adopted by France and Germany in 1940 were no exception.[5] The paper will also look at some of the French doctrines and how poor military leadership and the WW I experience had influenced the development (or rather stagnation) of these doctrines during the inter-war period.

The Shield

Throughout the inter-war period, the French military leadership had held strongly to the conclusion that Belgium would remain Germany's main invasion route in the next war. The French had believed that with the construction of the Maginot Line[6] along their north-eastern frontier, the Germans would be encouraged to divert their main attack through Belgium, and thus attempt a repeat of their 1914 *Schlieffen* Plan. The French had also erroneously ruled out the possibility of an invasion through the Ardennes. The French pre-war assessment was that the Ardennes region, with its heavy forests and steep hills, would pose a significant hindrance to the rapid movement of large motorised forces. This assessment remained unchanged throughout the inter-war period. These flawed conclusions consequently shaped France's strategy in the 1940 Campaign.

The goal in the French strategy in the 1940 Campaign was to avoid defeat, rather than achieve immediate victory. The French planned to rush the bulk of their most modern and mobile forces into Belgium to establish a forward defence along the Dyle River, while placing only minimum forces along the Ardennes and

their north-eastern frontier. By occupying prepared entrenched positions along the Dyle line, the French believed that they could half the German advance. Subsequently, after having sufficiently weakened the Germans, the French intended to launch the counter-offensive to drive back the invaders. This plan came to be known as the Dyle Plan.[7]

The Sword

While the French intent was to avoid defeat initially, the German strategy in 1940 sought to achieve a swift and decisive victory over the Allies. The German High Command emphasised a preference for a short war and the importance of annihilating the Allied forces.[8] After much deliberation, the Germans rationalised that the annihilation of the Allied forces could only be achieved by an outflanking manoeuvre to bypass their main defences in Belgium. This fundamental conclusion formed the basis for the German invasion plan in 1940.

The German strategy in the 1940 Campaign was to launch a secondary effort to seize Belgium and Holland, so as to deceive the Allies into believing that the main offensive was coming through Belgium. In doing so, the Germans hoped to entice the Allied forces to move forward into Belgium. In the meantime, a massive force comprising five field armies, spearheaded by three *panzer*corps, would rapidly traverse the bulk of the Allied forces that had been sent forward into Belgium. This plan became known as the Manstein Plan, named after its chief architect - General Erich von Manstein.

Cracks in the Shield?

Tragically, France's strategy of sending forces into Belgium played directly into the hands of the Germans. The tactical weakness of her strategy was further magnified when the French Commander-in-Chief, General Gamelin, decided to throw his entire reserves into Holland to link up with the Dutch forces there. With the bulk of her forces forward in Belgium and without any operational reserves, the French were unable to contain the main German offensive pouring through the lightly-defended Ardennes region. By the evening of 15 May, the Germans had ruptured the Allied front completely. By 20 May, the German *panzer* corps had reached the English Channel and had successfully entrapped the Allied armies in Belgium. After the frantic withdrawal of the Allied forces through Dunkirk, the rest of the campaign was a stroll for the Germans. Although there were some initial tenacious resistance, the French defences soon collapsed. On 22 June 1940, just six weeks after the invasion, France capitulated.[9]

From this brief review of the opposing strategies, it is evident that there were at least two fundamental flaws in the French strategy that had directly contributed to France's defeat in 1940. The first was the fallacious assumption that the Germans would again invade through Belgium *à la Schlieffen* in 1914. Throughout the inter-war years, the French military leaders were misguided by the belief that the Ardennes was impenetrable to motorised forces. "This sector is not dangerous", Marshall Pétain had declared confidently in 1934.[10]

The second, and more important flaw was the lack of reserves in the French defence. This constituted a grave violation of a fundamental principle of defence - maintenance of reserve. If only the French had sufficient reserves to disrupt the German crossing of the Meuse at Sedan, the entire course of the war might have been very different.[11] At this juncture, it is important to note that the French 1940 doctrines on defence actually dictated that reserves must be maintained to meet enemy penetration into their defence lines.[12] Therefore, the decision to commit the entire French reserves into Holland represented a failure of judgement on the part of the French military leaders, and not a weakness of the French doctrines.

With obvious weaknesses in the French strategy, it is probably very tempting to conclude that the 1940 Campaign was lost due to these strategic flaws. However, a glimpse at the tomes of literature on the 1940 Campaign would suggest otherwise. France's defeat in 1940 has been attributed to many other factors.

Leadership Failure

"What we lack in numbers, we will make up for in quality: in the standards of discipline, dedication and leadership."

SM Lee Kuan Yew[13]

This is exactly what the French failed to do in 1940. Indeed, the inter-war period witnessed the steady decline of the mighty French Army. The French Army was withering awaym not just because of dwindling manpower and a shrinking budget, but more significantly, because of its atrocious leadership[14] and the poor quality of its soldiers.

During the inter-war period, the French military was basically run by veterans of the Great War, who were made generals during the war when advancement was inevitably rapid. Unfortunately after the war, these generals continued to cling on to their posts instead of passing on the younger, more vigorous officers. One such veteran was Marshal Pétain who held the post of Commander-in-Chief for 13 years after the war until his retirement in 1931, at a ripe age of 75. Even then, he remained on the War Council and continued to dominate French military thoughts and policies right up to the eve of WW II. Likewise, General Weygand, who succeeded Pétain in 1931, and General Gamelin, who held the post of Commander-in-Chief from 1935 to 1940, were all veterans who had fought in the Great War.[15]

With veterans of the previous war remaining at the helm of the French military, it was hardly surprising that the development of post-war French military doctrines were greatly influenced by their experiences in the Great War. Sadly, many of these veteran leaders continued to stubbornly hold on to ideas and doctrines that had brought them success during the previous war. This eventually led to a serious stagnation of ideas and complacency within the French military.[16]

In essence, the French military degenerated into a tragic state of inertia after the Great War. In this state of inertia, the French military minds were closed to new innovations and new tactics. Technological advances, which had made possible faster planes, heavily armoured tanks and radio communication, were received with much scepticism. Other than the conversion of five infantry divisions and a cavalry division into light mechanised divisions, the French military of 1940 had virtually shown no progress since the last war.[17]

With the dark clouds of war looming over the horizon, it was not difficult to discern the growing uneasiness over the fighting capabilities of the French soldiers. Unfortunately, the quality of the French soldiers in 1940 was a far cry from that of their forefathers who had died willingly by the thousands in the infernos of the Great War. Poor training, inadequate battle preparation, inept leadership and complacency resulting from the "Maginot Line complex" had adversely drained the morale, cohesion and discipline of the troops. Why then had the French High Command done practically nothing to improve the pathetic state of the army? General Gamelin, in a subsequent apology, confessed: "...I spent my time exclusively with staff officers, I was not in sufficiently close touch with the spirit of the country and the troops."[18]

French Doctrines - Progression or Regression?

As explained in the preceding section, the development of French military doctrines almost came to a grinding halt after the Great War. The few advances and changes that were made to the French doctrines during the inter-war period were either insufficient or in the wrong direction. When promulgated in 1936, the new Manual of Instruction, although containing some doctrinal improvements over the 1921 edition, proclaimed that despite the technological advances made in weaponry "...the doctrine objectively fixed at the end of the war (1918) by the eminent chiefs who had held high commands must remain the charter for the tactical employment of large units".[19]This was a shocking confession that France was prepared to go to war with doctrines formulated based on her WW I experience, In short, the FRench military in 1940 was organised, equipped and trained to fight a war similar to that of the western front in 1918.[20]

Unfortunately for France, this was precisely the type of war that Germany wanted to avoid in 1940. In the 1940 Campaign, the Germans revolutionised warfare with their *blitzkrieg* concept of fighting by exploiting the speed and firepower of tanks, mobile artillery and airplanes to achieve a short, violent lightning war - a complete opposite of what the French had envisaged. Naturally, the French doctrines, which emphasised static defence and "methodical battle", were ill-suited and too rigid for the paid and often intense pace of mobile warfare that the germans unleashed upon them in 1940.[21]

Obsession with Defence

French and the German doctrines in 1940 differed sharply in several key aspects. While the French doctrines strongly emphasised the defensive and the strength of firepower, the German doctrines emphasised the offensive and the importance of mobility and flexibility.[22]

France's obsession with defence and firepower can be explained by her bitter experience in the Great War. For France, the Great War was practically a brutal demonstration on the effectiveness of modern firepower. In that war, France lost 1.4 million soldiers. Another 4.2 million were seriously maimed.[23] Following these terrible losses, post-war France was bent on abandoning the philosophy of *offensive à outrance*[24] in favour of a more balanced emphasis on defence. The French were determined that the holocaust of 1914 to 1918 caused by excessive emphasis on the offensive should never again be repeated in future wars. Moreover, the 10-month battle at Verdun in 1916 had convinced the French that a continuous line of trenches and an immense amount of firepower could hold out against any attack. These lessons had convinced post-war France that defence was the only feasible strategy, not only to win the next war, but also to prevent the mindless slaughter of her youths.[25]

Another major impetus for France to revert to the defensive was the reduction in the terms of military service during the inter-war period. Since the French Revolution, the French system of national defence rested upon the philosophy of the nation in arms, whereby the bulk of her soldiers are mobilised only in times of national peril. It was therefore, politically impossible for France to justify a large standing peacetime army. Consequently, the terms of military service were reduced in 1921, 1923 and 1928 to two years, 19 months and one year respectively. This effectively halved France's standing army from 41 divisions in 192 to only 20 divisions in 1928. With only a small standing army, the French army could only hope to hold back any surprise German invasion while awaiting the mobilisation of its reservists.[26]

The construction of the Maginot Line along France's north-eastern border was a physical manifestation of her obsession with defence and the "continuous front".[27] Unfortunately, after siphoning off a disproportionate share from the military's coffers during the lean depression years of the 1930s, the Maginot Line turned out to be no more than an engineering fear of questionable military value in the 1940 Campaign. The trouble with the Maginot Line was that it was in the wrong place. In the 1940 Campaign, nearly half the French Army was deployed in support of the Line, and they remained there only to be bypassed by the Germans attacking through the Ardennes. These forces could otherwise have been employed as reserves that were grossly lacking in France's defence.[28]

Moreover, the French doctrines of static defence and the "continuous front" were already tactically obsolete even before the Maginot Line was completed in 1935. By 1918, both the Germans and the Allies had already mastered the techniques of breaking through so-called "impenetrable" trench-lines and fixed defences.[29] The German establishment of the *panzer* divisions in the 1930s and the ease at which the *panzers* had ruptured Austria's and Czechoslovakia's defences in early 1939 should have convinced France to rethink her defensive doctrines. Unfortunately for France, this was not the case. In March 1935, in a heated debate over the establishment of an armoured force for offensive roles, General Maurin, the Minister of War retorted: "How can anyone believe that we are still thinking of the offensive when we have spent so many billions to establish a fortified front!"[30]

Employment of Tanks and Airplanes

Contrary to popular beliefs, the Allies and the Germans possessed roughly the same number of tanks in May 1940.[31] In fact, the French *SOMUA* S-35 tank was widely regarded as the best tank on the battlefield of May 1940. The key difference between the two countries was not in the quantity or the quality of their tanks, but rather, the tactical employment of these tanks.[32]

Although the French recognised the tank as one of the most important weapons indroduced since WW I, they firmly believed that the primary function of the tank was to augment the firepower of the infantry. The employment of tanks in the French Army during the inter-war period was mostly aptly described in the following extract from the *French Military Review* (December 1938):

"Not even the most modern tanks can ever lead the fighting by themselves and for themselves. Their mission must always to be to participate along with the fire of the artillery and heavy infantry arms in the protection and the support of attacks..."[33]

It was only during the Polish Campaign in September 1939, when the awesome might of the German *panzer* divisions finally convinced France of the need to establish her own independent armoured divisions. The first two divisions were created in January 1940, while a third was only added in April 1940. Unfortunately, these hastily formed divisions suffered a lack of equipment and training, and were simply no match for the well-organised *panzer* divisions.[34]

As with the tanks, the French failed to develop a viable doctrine for the deployment of airplanes. Little thought had been given to air co-operation with the ground forces.[35] Probably, the most serious fault with the French air doctrine during the inter-war period was its failure to appreciate the importance of dive-bombers despite the lessons from the Polish Campaign. As at May 1940, France possessed a mere 50 dive-bombers.[36]

In terms of equipment, the French Air Force was also inferior to the *Luftwaffe*, in both quantity and quality. The French Air Force entered the 1940 Campaign with only 1,200 aircraft against the German total of 3,200 aircraft. Moreover, the bulk of France's aircraft were obsolete equipment, accumulated from the 1920s and early 1930s, and were inferior in both speed and range to those manufactured in Germany. Unlike the German aircraft, the bulk of the French aircraft were not equipped with radio communication: once the aircraft were air-borne, they were beyond contact.[37]

Centralisation and the "Methodical Battle"

An indispensable part of the French doctrine was its step-by-step approach to battle, termed the "methodical battle". The "methodical battle" closely resembled the WW I procedures. Under this method, all units and weapons were carefully marshalled and then employed in combat according to strictly schedules timetables and phase lines. Under the "methodical battle", decision-making was centralised at higher level command so as to co-ordinate the actions of the numerous subordinate units, There was little need for decentralisation and lower-level officers were expected to display obedience rather than initiative and flexibility.[38]

The rapid collapse of France in 1940 was a clear indication that the French centrally controlled operation were too rigid for the mobile battlefield of 1940. The French emphasis on obedience and centralisation had also fostered a military leadership that lacked the proper flexibility and responsiveness to counter the unexpected German penetration through the Ardennes.[39]

Conclusion

Having examined some of the key aspects of the French doctrines, it is apparent that the French doctrines of 1940 were influenced to a large extent by their experiences in WW I. To attribute France's humiliating defeat in 1940 solely to her employment of obsolete doctrines and equipment would be overly simplistic: the use of

outdated doctrines and equipment certainly played an important part in explaining the 1940 collapse of France.

Ultimately, the French defeat in the 1940 Campaign is attributed to her ill-conceived strategy which was based on fallacious assumptions, her poorly-led military forces, and her obsolete tactical and operational-level doctrines which were inadequate for the mobile war Germany thrust upon her in 1940.[40]

Endnotes

1 William Shirer, *Collapse of the Third Republic*, Cox&Wilson Ltd, 1970, p126

2 Foch had predicted in 1919 that the Treaty of Versailles is not a peace treaty but "an armistice for twenty years". William Shirer, *op. cit.*, p154.

3 Robert Doughty, *The Seeds of Disaster - The Development of French Army Doctrine 1919-1939*, Archon Books, 1985, p1.

4 A limitation of this paper is that it will focus only on the military reasons behind the fall of France in 1940. Economics, political and social factors, though played an important part in explaining the fall of France, will not be addressed.

5 Robert Doughty, *The Breaking Point - Sedan and the Fall of France 1940*, Archon Books, 1990, p27.

6 Named after the French's Minister of War, André Maginot, the Maginot Line was essentially a series of defensive fortifications constructed along France's north-eastern frontier. It was designed primarily to stop a surprise German invasion of Alsace and Lorraine where the bulk of France's natural resources and industrial centres were located. Anthony Kemp, *The Maginot Line - Myth and Reality*, Warnes Publishers, 1981, pp24-42 provides detailed insights into the rationales behind the construction of the Maginot Line.

7 Robert Doughty, *Breaking Point, op. cit.*, pp8-15.

8 *ibid*, pp19-26

9 Geoffery Parker, *Cambridge Illustrated History of Warfare*, Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp308-310.

10 William Shirer, *op. cit.*, p167.

11 Robert Doughty, *Breaking Point, op. cit.*, p18.

12 *ibid*, p29.

13 *SAF Leadership Handbook*, SAF Printing Centre, 1995, p1.

14 William Shirer*, op. cit.*, p156.

15 *ibid*, pp154-155.

16 Brian Bond, *Why France Fell*, in Army Quarterly & Defence Journal, Vol.98, p85.

17 Alistair Horne, *To Lose a Battle - France 1940*, Macmillan, 1969, pp30-31.

18 *ibid*, pp91-93.

19 William Shirer, *op. cit.*, pp162-163.

20 Robert Doughty, *Seeds of Disaster, op. cit.*, pp11-12.

21 *ibid*, pp3-4.

22 Robert Doughty, *Breaking Point, op. cit.*, -27.

23 Barry Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine*, Cornell University Press, 1984, p107.

24 The French's WW I philosophy of *offensive à outrance* emphasised the breaking of the enemy's will to fight by ferocious infantry assaults and finally closing-in to finish off the fight with the bayonets. This philosophy was carried to the extreme in 1914-1916 resulting in appalling losses in human lives. Robert Doughty, *Seeds of Disaster, op. cit.,* pp72-74.

25 William Shirer, *op. cit.,* pp163-164.

26 Robert Doughty, *Seeds of Disaster, op. cit.,* pp14-22.

27 Barry Posen, *op. cit.,* p 107.

28 I.D.P.Thorne, Maginot and Foch: Tout Comprendre, in *Army Quarterly & Defence Journal*, Vol.120, pp452-453.

29 *ibid*, p452.

30 William Shirer, *op. cit.,* p168.

31 In fact, the Allies enjoyed a slight numerical advantage over the Germans in May 1940. The Allies possessed a total of 2,689 tanks against the German's total of 2,439 tanks. James Stokesbury, *A Short History of World War II*, New York, 1980, p93.

32 Robert Doughty, *Breaking Point, op. cit.,* p3.

33 William Shirer, *op. cit.*, p159.

34 Eliot Cohen & John Gooch, *Military Misfortunes - The Anatomy of Failure in War,* Collier Macmillan, 1990, p212.

35 Brian Bind, *op. cit.*, p86.

36 Alistair Horne, *op. cit.*, p72.

37 *ibid*, pp70-73.

38 Robert Doughty, *Breaking Point, op. cit.*, pp27-29.

39 Robert Doughty, *Seeds of Disaster, op. cit.*, pp4-5.

40 Robert Doughty, *Breaking Point, op. cit.*, p1.

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13 Thorne I.D.P., Maginot and Foch: Tout Comprendre, in *Army Quarterly & Defence Journal*, Vol. 120, No. 4, October 1990.

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MAJ Tan Teck Guan is presently the S3 in 3 SIB. He holds a Bachelor of Business Administration and attended the 30th Command & Staff College Course at SCSC in 1999.

British Strategy in the Falklands War

by MAJ Peter Vaughan Barnett

Strategy is the art by which one achieves one's political aims and objectives through the use of the political, economic, diplomatic and military means at one's disposal. These elements of a nation's power are either employed in whole or in any combination to and in the required degree to achieve the policy goals. The aim of strategy should be to reach the desired outcome under the most advantageous circumstances. Since in a war or conflict any serious battle is generally considered costly in terms of manpower and resources, it follows that the aim should be to try and avoid this and still achieve the desired objectives.[1]

Strategy can be categorised into three broad areas:

- Grand
- Military
- Operational / tactical-level

Strategy Defined

Grand strategy concerns the policy of government for pursuing aims and objectives and revolves around the timely and measured use of a nation's influence and resources to achieve them. In terms of war or conflict, it is the type, manner and extent to which a government plans to employ its physical or psychological resources to achieve the policy objectives of the war and the peace thereafter. It is the manner in which these psychological and physical pressures are co-ordinated and interwoven through he use of international diplomacy and mobilisation of civil will, economic and military resources that is the essence of grand strategy.

Military strategy is "the art and science of employing the armed forces of a nation or alliance to secure policy objectives by the application or threat of force," according to John F. Antal.[2] It is concerned with the employment and allocation of military forces, their type, size and composition and establishes campaign goals and conditions for the use of force within theatres of war or operations. It is shaped and executed in accordance with the grand strategy and overall national policy but remains under the purview of those highest within the military organisation. The degree to which it is featured in the grand strategy is determined by the resources available and those of the enemy, the time frame for action, the effects on international opinion and the level of military action which is politically acceptable to the civil population.[3]

Strategic military goals are central to achieving grand strategic aims and will determine the extent of the military action, for instance, whether enemy forces are destroyed or a political, economic and psychological objective is achieved through the capture of a strategic piece of terrain e.g. the enemy's industrial heartland.

Operational strategy and tactics is where operational plans are formulated and translated into action by military forces executing missions on the ground. For this discussion, the analysis of strategy employed by Britain in the Falklands will be confined to the grand and military strategies.

Strategy at all levels can be broadly employed under two main themes: "direct" or "indirect", depending on whether the military force plays a principal or auxiliary role. When a direct strategy is employed, the use or threat to use military force is considered the most effective means of action to achieve desired policy goals, either due to its relative superiority or because no other strategy was deemed adequately effective. Though the principal element of this strategic theme is militaristic in nature, it is still supported by other actions in the fields of politics, psychology, economics and diplomacy to constitute a "total" but not solely military strategy.

Strategies that employ an indirect theme aim to achieve a strategic outcome through the minimum use of military force and resources. It occurs generally "outside" the physical area of contention and has as its object the dominance of own will over that of the enemy's through the application of psychological action. It is a form of strategy that avoids the enemy strengths whilst seeking out to exploit his weaknesses and vulnerabilities so as to reduce the likelihood of his resistance, be it physical or psychological in nature, and by so doing maintain or strengthen one's own positions.[4]

Indirect strategies seek to dislocate both psychologically through the exploitation of courses that are least expected thereby meeting with least opposition from the enemy. The aim is to keep the opponent off-balance whilst maintaining your own flexibility to act, reduce the options or courses of action available to him by seizing the initiative, in a sometimes sudden and unexpected action. This creates a strategic or military paralysis in one's own favour that eventually leads to the achievement of policy aims and objectives.[5]

This discussion on the strategy employed by the British in the Falklands conflict will be analysed from events and actions taken after the Argentinian scrap metal crew landed on South Georgia on 19 March 1982. This was the first overtly hostile "military" action that signalled the start of the war.

Grand Strategy

The British national policy towards the Falklands conflict was shaped by internal and external factors. Contrary to the attempt by the US to appear neutral in the mediation efforts, the British believed the US would ultimately take their side on the issue. Secretary of State Haig from the onset of his "shuttle diplomacy' had been operating on the premise the Argentine aggression could not be rewarded as it would serve as a dangerous precedent and bad example to other states contemplating the use of force to settle territorial disputes with serious consequences for future world order. Their openly declared support would later assist in diplomatic efforts to isolate Argentina and prove critical to the success of the military operation. At home, the issue was an emotive one involving national honour which would not permit the government to act in a conciliatory manner towards the aggressors. These factors underscored the national policy objectives formulated by the British Cabinet after the landing at south Georgia and subsequently on the Falklands on 2 April 1982. Britain sought firstly a cease-fire and permanent withdrawal of Argentinian forces. Secondly, it wanted to restore British authority there either in whole or in part. Thirdly, it wanted a guarantee of the local population's rights and their institutions. Fourthly, it desired a third party involvement in the implementation of a settlement. Fifth, Argentina was to revert to access and communication rights as governed by the 1971 bilateral agreements. Finally, Britain wanted an interim agreement which would not pre-determine the final outcome of sovereignty negotiations.

Britain's grand strategy to achieve these objectives ultimately hinged on the threat and willingness to use force. This was the principal element of their strategy in the conflict and even though a diplomatic solution was pursued and preferable to war, Britain was committed to the use of force if and when it failed. The readiness of the British to use force as its principal grand strategic element was demonstrated during the conflict by the speed at which the British Task Force was assembled and dispatched after the invasion (the British Carrier group left for the South Atlantic on 5 April only 3 days after invasion) and the sinking of Argentine battleship, *Belgrano*, on 2 May, a significant escalation after which there was little chance of an Argentine backdown. The willingness of the British to come to a negotiated settlement was affected by their readiness to use force to achieve their objectives. The British belief that a military confrontation would probably have to be the final recourse is borne out by the impression that Argentina herself did not believe that Britain was prepared to use force to retake the Falklands. The lack of significant defensive preparations on the island and perceptions as vocalised by Galtieri, the head of the Argentine Military Junta and Anaya, the head of the Navy, during Haig's mediation efforts that Britain as a democracy would be unable to accept the casualties in a physical confrontation, seem to support this impression. A military show of force and threatening postures by the British were likely to have little impact on negotiations with Argentina. A military solution the the invasion was probably always the planned and likely outcome as the Task Force sailed into the south Atlantic.

Mediation efforts were destined to be an uphill struggle and Haig's emphasis to the British was to allow the Argentinians to withdraw with national honour intact by way of compromise. To the British, the overriding consideration was on e of aggression and any lessening of Britain's stance as suggested by Haig just seems to have made them more inflexible and forthright on the issue. Britain clung stubbornly to the pre-conditions for negotiations i.e. Argentina's withdrawal, self-determination for the islands' inhabitants and at the minimum, some form of interim joint administration of the islands. However, as the Task Force drew nearer to its objective, a series of British actions and ultimatums served to challenge argentine pride and resolve restricting the leeway it had to compromise and back away from the conflict. The recapture of South Georgia on 25 April, the establishment of the 200-mile Total Exclusion Zone (TEZ) around the islands on 30 April, the bombing of Port Stanley and sinking of the *General Belgrano* on 1 to 2 May and the extension of the TEZ to 12 miles off Argentina's coast on 7 May seemed to indicate British resolve to an eventual full-scale military action unless it received what it wanted. The British warning that a Argentine breach of the imposed TEZ would be construed as an abandonment of peaceful methods of resolution in favour of a military one was again a provocative move and showed British skepticism of diplomatic efforts, and the UN or the International Court of Justice's intervention would result in the withdrawal of Argentinian forces.[6]

Britain pursued a direct form of grand strategy in its handling of the crisis. This was demonstrated by the coherent manner in which it integrated the political, economic, diplomatic and military elements of the strategy. From the beginning of the crisis, the British Cabinet never seriously considered a totally non-military response even though it was recognised that any military organisation was likely to be hazardous and without assured success. Admiral Sir Henry Leach, Britain's First Sea Lord managed to convince the government that military options were available and would hinge on the nation's ability to mobilize the necessary transportation to get a force to the South Atlantic.[7] Parliamentary political opposition to the government wanted to embarrass the government after the events of 2 April.[8] Their stirrings of nationalism served to shape and reinforce the government's strategy already decided after events of the 2 April but had the added effect of giving the government less freedom now to compromise and come to a negotiated settlement. Nationalistic rhetoric galvanised media and public opinion, further limiting the options of the Cabinet. Once a strategy based on a military option took shape, Britain engaged in a diplomatic and economic offensive to support and ensure its success should mediations fail.

The initial diplomatic measures to obtain international and domestic support included breaking off diplomatic relations and when Sir Anthony Parsons, the British Ambassador to the UN, managed to get the Security Council to pass Resolution 502 on 3 April which demanded "an immediate cessation of hostilities" and "an immediate withdrawal of all Argentine forces from the Falkland Islands". This and ARticle 51 of the UN charter which allows for the "inherent right of individual or collective self defence if an armed attack occurs against a member of the United Nations" would be used as legal justification for any use of force later and reduce the likelihood of demands that the Task Force be recalled or delayed. The success of Britain's diplomatic efforts can be attributed to its manipulation and use of international law and issues of morality. Britain managed to convince its allies both in the West and Commonwealth that should Argentina be allowed to flout these laws and set a dangerous precedent, there would be serious consequences for the future security of all states.[9]

On the economic front, Britain froze Argentine financial assets worth $1 billion in Britain and imposed its own trade embargo on 6 April. On 9 April Britain again managed to rally the support of the European Community's (EC) Council of Ministers which agreed to impose economic sanctions against Argentina which included a import ban and suspension of trade preferences.[10] These economic pressures did not serve to put Argentina under much financial pressure, although as a major exporter with mounting foreign debts their position was certainly weakened, alienating them politically from the rest of the world with its associated demoralising psychological effects. This rallying of the EC's support behind Britain help to dissuade other Latin American countries from getting too involved in their support for Argentina. The economic sanctions of most importance were those associated with arms sales. The immediate freezing of German planned construction of two frigates and France's supply of *Super Etendard* jets and *Exocet* missiles to Argentina would assist Britain when military operations finally began.[11]

The British government after having garnered parliamentary and public opinion, sailed the Task Force. It obtained legitimacy and moral high ground in the form of Resolution 502 and the use of Article 51 and

enforced financial, trade and arms embargoes, it could now maintain a tough line in mediation efforts. Britain could afford not to achieve a negotiated settlement since failure here would lead to the use of force to regain the islands. US Secretary of State Haig commenced his diplomatic efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict on 8 April. Britain demonstrated a virtually uncompromising stance throughout and every step the Task Force took towards the Falklands, it upped the military stakes. On Haig's first meeting in London, he received Britain's terms and as he was enroute to Washington, the War Cabinet declared the TEZ around the islands. When Haig returned to London with Argentina's position on sovereignty, Thatcher reiterated her nation's stand that Argentine troop withdrawal was a pre-requisite to any negotiations and then proceeded to warn Argentina against any attempt to violate the integrity of the TEZ or it would be construed as an abandonment of diplomatic efforts to resolve the issue. Argentina rejected Haig's 5 point plan on 19 April. He then reworked Foreign Minister Costa Mendez's proposal and sent it to London where this too was rejected. Galtieri, attempting to move onto the diplomatic offensive, pursued a Rio Meeting by the OAS, restated his rejection of British proposals and insisted on a guarantee of sovereignty. Britain again rejected Argentine proposals and responded with the recapture of South Georgia on 25 April and again on 28 April, with an extension of the TEZ to apply to all traffic of all nations. The US seeing that its diplomatic efforts to find a peaceful solution had failed, announced full support for Britain on 30 April which included a condemnation of Argentina for armed aggression, imposition of partial economic and arms sanctions against her and material support to Britain for any armed conflict. Peru's initiative on 2 May seemed a last chance for peace but as it was being considered, the British submarine, *HMS Conqueror*, torpedoed and sank the Argentinian cruiser, *ARA General Belgrano*. Argentina dropped all further consideration of the Peruvian mediation. Whether the motive for her sinking was purely military can be debated. This event and other escalatory activities throughout the mediation process seemed to suggest a lack of emphasis by Britain to achieving a peaceful negotiated settlement. Although mediation efforts by Peru and the UN continued, the sinking of the *Belgrano* and later, the British ship, *HMS Sheffield*, seemed to spell the end of any spirit of compromise.[12]

Military Strategy

The British military strategy during the Falklands conflict was one born of necessity. The magnitude of the task, the need to move a force and maintain communications over 7,000 nautical miles, the lack of resources in terms of aircraft and early warning systems and an approaching South Atlantic winter, obliged military planners to adopt a more indirect strategy to the retaking of the Falklands.

The first important military consideration was to isolate the forces on the island from the Argentinian mainland. This was to try and prevent reinforcements and disrupt their liens of communications. The TEZ 200 miles around the island policed by British nuclear submarines was an effective strategy for the sea. However, the runway at Port Stanley proved harder to control and was still a source for resupplies until the Argentine surrender. The British *Vulcan* bombers, operating from Ascension Island, could not effectively put the runway out of use. The success of their efforts is academic, the establishment of the TEZ and the bombing of the runway were indirect methods to affect Argentine morale on the islands and effect an early victory without having to engage in direct conflict.

Fearing that the cruiser, *General Belgrano*, was part of a larger carrier base force searching for the British Task Force, orders were given to attack her. When she was sunk on 2 May, 360 lives were lost. The intention was to eliminate a threat to the Task Force, but the result was more far-reaching. This blow against the Argentinian navy was one from which they never recovered: they returned to port and did not participate for the rest of the War. The military intent was clear: to remove the threat and affect the Argentinian navy's effectiveness to support the conflict. The retirement to port was an unexpected outcome but demonstrated the effect of a sudden and decisive blow on the Argentine naval command which dislocated and paralysed them into inactivity.

The Falklands War saw the benefits that can be derived from the proper deployment of special operations forces. The elite units trained in unconventional warfare operations for operating behind enemy lines, was an effective weapon in tactical intelligence-gathering and sabotage. During the conflict, the British Special Air Services (SAS) and Special Boat Squadron demonstrated how small and highly-trained groups could inflict

damage and affect enemy morale, disproportionate to their size. An SAS raiding party managed to destroy and ammunition dump, stores and 11 aircraft.

On 21 May, an amphibious landing was conducted at Port San Carlos Water off the Falklands Sound. This was executed despite the fact that the British did not have total air superiority. Growing fears of critical resource attrition after the sinking of the *Sheffield* and loss of aircraft, the reducing combat effectiveness of troops left on board the ships and the encroaching winter forced the decision to land. San Carlos was assessed to provide the best protection for the landing from a potential submarine threat and the surrounding hills made it difficult for the Argentine airforce to engage the British ships with *Exocet* and bombs. The bay, located 50 miles from Port Stanley which was thought by the Argentinians to be too far from the capital, was undefended, allowing the British to land sizeable forces with very little loss. To the Argentinians, this was unexpected: in their analysis, the landing was to have taken place closer to Port Stanley. This indirect approach reduced the potential for British losses during the amphubious landing.[33]

Conclusion

Britain's grand strategy in the Falklands was shaped by the prevailing domestic situation and its international alliances. The government faced humiliation arising from the initial invasion and stiff pressure from the parliamentary opposition to act and recover national prestige. The media and the population, swayed by the tide of nationalistic fervor, obliged the conservative government, and British Cabinet in particular, to act decisively to remove the aggressors from "British soil", perhaps even to punish them for their affront to British pride and sovereignty. The Conservatives, facing an impending general election, and waning public support, needed a foreign policy victory and not a stalemate in the South Atlantic, if it was to remain in power. Britain actively pursued and obtained the diplomatic support for the legitimacy and moral high ground to pursue a direct strategy demanded by these domestic pressures.

US support, crucial for any military action, was believed to be ultimately available when required due to the "special" relationship built up between these two nations. When the US finally declared their backing for the British, the military resources made available to them and the psychological effect of increasing international isolation of Argentina did much to strengthen Britain's military position.

Britain's unconciliatory bargaining position during mediation efforts, its actions to enhance its strategic military position and increase military pressure on the Argentina demonstrated a willingness to utilise the military option. This constitutes a direct form of grand strategy to achieve its national policy objectives. The political, diplomatic and economic elements of this strategy served to bolster and enhance the principal element - a final military resolution to the conflict.

The indirect approach to Britain's military strategy was based on necessity. The long line of communications to be maintained, lack of adequate and appropriate military means forced Britain to adopt an indirect strategy to reduce attrition and achieve an eventual military victory. Their success can be attributed to the effect use of dislocating psychological measures and pursuing the "line of least resistance and expectation".

In the final analysis, Britain adopted a strategy that was more "direct" then "indirect" during the Falklands War. The emphasis to use military force to resolve the crisis and its effect on Britain's willingness to compromise to use other means demonstrated an essentially "direct " strategy.

Endnotes

1 Strategy and Grand Strategy by BH Liddel Hart Chpt XIX Maneuver va Attrition - A Historical Perspective by Maj. John F. Antal.

2 From Maneuver vs Attrition - A Historical Perspective by Maj. John F. Antal.

3 Strategy of Action by Andre Beaufre.

4 Strategy of Action by Andre Beaufre Chpt V.

5 Strategy and Grand Strategy by BH Liddel Hart Chpt XIX.

6 The Falkland's War: Lessons for strategy, Diplomacy and international Law - Alberto R. Coll / Anthony C. Arend Chpt VII.

7 Britain and the Falklands War by Lawrence Freedman Chpt IV.

8 As Above Chpt VII.

9 As in note 6 Chpt XV.

10 Britain and the Falklands War by Lawrence Freedman Chpt IV.

11 The Battle for the Falklands by Max Hastings & Simon Jenkins Chpt VI.

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MAJ Peter Vaughan Barnett is presently Hd GS, HQ ARMCEG. He is a Field Engineer Officer by vocation and attended the 30th Command and Staff Cource at SCSC in 1999.

Pearl Harbor: Strategic Misperceptions

by MAJ Yip Chee Kiong

"Not even a system schemed out in total depravity to produce all the wrong times could have organised such compounding error and misfortune."[1]

Sunday, 7 Dec 1941, 0755 hours. 183 planes from the naval aviation forces of the Empire of Japan stormed the United States Pacific Fleet Centre at Pearl Harbor. This was followed closely by another wave of a 167-plane attack an hour later. The outcome: 18 out of the 96 US warships in the harbour were sunk or seriously damaged, 188 of the 394 US aircraft on the ground were destroyed with an additional 159 aircraft damaged, and a staggering 2,403 US military lives lost with another 1,178 injured.

Lacking information on the whereabouts of the three US aircraft carriers, Admiral Nagumo, the Japanese tactical commander, cancelled a third wave of attack on Pearl Harbor. During the attack, all three Pacific Fleet aircraft carriers were not at Pearl Harbor. Of the three, one had returned to the continent for maintenance work whilst the remaining two were involved in an exercise out at sea. These "missing" aircraft carriers indirectly saved the Pacific Fleet submarines, important maintenance facilities and critical fuel supplies at Pearl Harbor from total annihilation.

This single act of unannounced aggression is widely accepted as the very event to have uprooted the US military from the tranquil continent of North America into the cauldron of WW II. As Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, Imperial Commander of the Japanese Combined Fleet said, "We have awakened a sleeping giant and have instilled in him a terrible resolve."[2]

Why would Japan attack such a concentration of American power nearly 3,500 miles away while its real objectives in the Far East were near at hand and almost defenceless? Could this infamous Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor have been avoided? To answer these questions, one needs firstly to appreciate the prevailing political climate and events that many experts believe led to or directly influenced Japan's conception of the pre-emptive strike against the Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, Oahu, Hawaii, USA.

US Perspective of Japan

To trace the main causes of the Pearl Harbor attack, one cannot disregard the status of the US-Japan bilateral relations prior to the war.

Throughout the pre-Pearl Harbor years, the US had failed to comprehend the Japanese concept of international law and morality which were very different from the US perspective. The US political leaders, having witnessed the success of the 1930 Naval Disarmament Conference in London and Japan's improvement in her foreign policy towards China in the late 1930s, misinterpreted the political situation in Japan as improving.

Similarly, when Japan decided to join Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy in the tri-partite 'Axis' alliance of collective support in fighting wars in 1940, the US conclusion was a clear-cut Japanese ambition for a three-power world. On the contrary, Japan joined the 'alliance' primarily in the hope of unifying national opinion, deterrence and clarifying the course of the country's future,[3] and no so much for regional dominance.

By sanctioning a harsh economic embargo of strategic goods in response, the US strongly believed that the economic reprisals would force Japan to collapse under American pressure. These goods comprised hi-grade scrap metal and fuel effective from 26 July 1940, and included all forms of iron, copper and brass from January 1941 and finally culminated in a complete embargo on petroleum on 5 September 1941 onwards.

US Threat Misperception

The Japanese cried foul over the cut-off of 'essential' goods imposed upon them.[4] However, the hardliners in Washington failed to realise the impact such a policy would have on Japan. Instead of their intended aim of deterring Japan from pursuing an expansionist policy, the sanctions exacerbated bilateral relations, encouraged Japan's expansion southward and provoked Japanese hardliners to risk war with the US. The psychology of the Japanese military, Japan's decision-making process and her economic realities were misunderstood by the US hardliners.

The mentality of the entire War Department in Washington was that Japan would not attack Pearl Harbor. This was based primarily on three accounts:

- Japan had an inferior ratio of capital ships (5 Britain: 5 United States: 3 Japan), the result from an agreement adopted in the 1921-22 Washington Naval Conference.
- The general US mindset that Japan had limited military capabilities and was especially inexperienced in employing air power.
- The strong US belief that there were sufficient peace-favouring forces within the ruling factions of Japan to counter any desire for external wars.

Washington's assessments of Japan's reactions were based on analyses of Japan's upper-level policy-makers. The US did not realise the vital involvement of the middle-echelon military officers in the formulation of Japanese foreign policy. This group, being more adventurous in nature, was more contemptuous of compromise and more militaristic.[5]

Washington also lacked an appreciation of the Japanese psyche. This psyche, as presented by Hideki Tojo, was that "sometimes a man has to jump with his eyes closed, from the temple of Kiyomizu into the ravine below". This indicated that the Japanese had this inclination to make key decisions under extreme and sometimes illogical conditions. The Japanese would rather choose "death rather than humiliation".[6] Conventional notions of deterrence assumed by the Americans that nations would sacrifice more the prevent losses than to achieve gains, and this aggressors would not risk as much as those who aim to preserve the *status quo*, was wrongly applied to the Japanese.

According to Ambassador Grew, "Japan is a nation of hard warriors, still inculcated with the samurai do-or-die spirit, which had by tradition and inheritance, become ingrained in the race."[7]Grew was someone who came closest to understanding the Japanese psyche but whose concerns fell on the deaf ears of the US hardliners. Pressure would prompt "an all-out, do-or-die attempt, actually risking national *hara-kiri* ... a suicidal struggle with the US. While national sanity dictates against such action, Japanese sanity cannot be measured by American standards of logic".[8]

Nobody in Washington had rationalised that Japan's expansionism was designed more for the survival of a regime than an ambition to conquer Asia. It was for their own continued existence in a situation surrounded by great, hostile powers. To submit to the harsh US demands would destroy Japan's pride and endanger Japan's right to exist.

"Should Japan submit to [US] demands, not only would Japan's prestige be entirely destroyed and the solution of the China Affair rendered impossible, but Japan's existence itself would be endangered."[9]

However, there were no indications that pointed to the Americans believing that the sanctions would force Japan to wage war. Roosevelt's primary concern with the then British Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill, was clearly not to start a war with Japan. This was indicated in his letter to the Philippines High Commissioner on 31 Dec 1940.

"We, of course, do not want to be drawn into a war with Japan - we do not want to be drawn into any war anywhere...We have no indention of being 'sucked into' a war with Japan any more than we have of being

'sucked into' a war with Germany ...Whether there will come to us war with either or both of the countries will depend far more upon what the do than upon what we deliberately refrain from doing."[10]

In his 'face-saving' official report on the Pearl Harbor failure, the US Secretary of War felt that particularly during October, towards end-November 1941, Commanding Officer of the Hawaiian Department, Lieutenant General Walter C Short, was repeatedly advised of the critical events which were developing. On 27 Nov, the latter was also warned by Washington that an attack by Japan on the US might occur and hostilities were possible at any moment.[11] Though some parties, if any, may have considered an attack on Pearl Harbor as the most dangerous enemy's course of action, most thought it was highly improbable as compared to the options of a Japanese attack in the Russian Maritime Provinces or in Southeast Asia. This could be easily illustrated by the fact that 'Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the then US President, left almost all of Far Easter matters to his Secretary of State and put his interest in the European and Atlantic regions. At that time, the Germans were rapidly turning most of continental Europe into 'Nazi-land'. Great Britain was soon fighting with 'her back against the Atlantic wall'. The Roosevelt administration then viewed with great uneasiness the meteoric rise of Germany's might. The administration was morally obligated to help her allies in Europe despite mounting American pressures from both the Congress and the isolationist American public. In comparison to the German threat, which was very real, the Japanese threat seemed "remote and manageable".

Japan's Perception and Reaction

As underlined by Clausewitz, political goal is so often the main cause for wars. It is first important to appreciate the political goal of the Japanese in WW II. Throughout the 1920's, Japan suffered a severe economic recession. Unlike the west, she lacked strategic resources. Coupled with high tariffs imposed by the west, she was unable to export her products to enable her to earn revenue for the procurement of those scarce resources. The idea of seizing these resources from the continent rather than foregoing her ambition of becoming a rich and powerful industrial nation had begun to gain popularity. Japan felt that through power politics, following proven Western democracy's acceptance of their own imperialism and colonisation, her conquests would be justified and accepted by the world community. Her belief was that the world power structure would stabilise into three major fields of influence: Japan controlling the Far East and Southeast Asia; Germany and Italy controlling Soviet Russia, Europe and the Mediterranean countries the US controlling the Americas.

Japan's Foreign Minister Matsuoka believed that the tri-partite alliance would enhance Japan's position and frustrate the US intention to intervene in her southern expansion and lesson the possibility of an outbreak of war with the US. Thus when the US imposed severe economic sanctions on Japan, the Japanese public were deeply shocked and many viewed it as an incision upon their 'lifeline'.

The Japanese army's general staff argued strongly for strengthening the southern expansion policy. The conviction was a matter of life and death for Japan due to the US implementation of a complete embargo. Most of the Japanese leaders believed that their empire should expand or they must face death. They assumed that unless the US capitulated diplomatically, war was inevitable because the Asian outlooks of the two nations seemed irreconcilable. Viewed from this perspective, the enforcing American pressure was actually 'twisting the Japanese arms' into looking abroad for survival instead of giving in to it.

Although war, as a result of the tri-partite agreement, seemed inevitable, there were those within the Japanese government, including Admiral Yamamoto, who foresaw an unfavourable end for Japan. However, their voices were drowned by the overzealous military dictates that wanted the southern conquest to bail Japan out of the crisis. The feudal social structures, still existent in Japan that time, did not help their non-aggression cause either.

"Japan has no other wat than to wage war....to secure her esixtence and self-defence."[12]

The Japanese military leaders hadintentionally avoided the controversial factor of how to satisfactorily terminate the war although they had promoted it. They were fully aware that they could hardly afford a long

car with a great shortfall in ferrous metals and liquid fuel. Coal imports due to shipping losses would also lead to a decline in general industries. More importantly, their naval shipbuilding capacity and naval strength was estimated to be less than a third and about a half respectively of those of the adversary by 1943. As Admiral Yamamoto aptly surfaced to Prime Minister Konoye in September 1941:

"If I am told to fight regardless of consequence, I shall run wild considerably for the first sixth months or a year, but I have utterly no confidence for the second and third years."[13]

However, the majority believed that somehow a successful Japanese assault on Pearl Harbor would, not only eliminate the possibility of American intervention in her southern venture, but also lead to such a decline in American morale that she would be willing to negotiate peace terms with the Japanese Empire. The middle-echelon of naval officers were resolved to go to war as they were apprehensive of the fact that the limited existing supply of oil would turn the Japanese navy into a "white elephant". The idea of war against the US had already been etched in the minds of the majority of Yamamoto's comrades - a classic example of Schumpeter's Theory of Imperialism.

Having mentioned the presence of a majority mandate for war against the US, it must be noted that many would have preferred peace if given a choice. To further support the argument of the Japanese southern expansion as a last-ditch survival option - on 25 November 1941, when Admiral Yamamoto issued the order to proceed with the Pearl Harbor operation, it was with a provision to call it off if diplomatic negotiations somehow proved successful.

Miscalculation by the Japanese

The Japanese considerations for expansion were based on several conclusions:

- The Russian threat on her Manchurian front would be neutralised by the continued success of Germany in Europe which might spill over into the Soviet Union.
- Great Britain, very much preoccupied with her own survival, would not have the war-making potential to cover beyond the British Isles.
- The Allied forces available for immediate deployment in the Pacific were not capable of stooping the fully-trained and mobilised forces from occupying the western Pacific rim within three to four months.
- With the Burma Road severed, China would be isolated and forced to negotiate.
- The US, committed to aiding Great Britain, and weakened by the attack on Pearl Harbor, would also be unable to mobilise sufficient strength to go on the offensive for 18 months to two years, during which the defence perimeter could be strengthened.

Meanwhile, Japan would speedily extract and ship the essential materials to Japan for processing, to sustain and strengthen her industrial and military machiens. The weakness of democracy would make it impossible for the US to dwell into a protracted war against the stubborn Japanese defences. The US, as a consequence, would compromise and allow Japan to retain a substantial portion of her initial territorial gains.

The choice of an attack on Pearl Harbor was indeed the worst possible course to have been adopted by the Japanese to achieve supremacy in the Asia-Pacific region. Japan did not realise that she had been categorised as a second-priority threat by the Allied forces. This reason can be supported by Rainbow No. 5 (a revised, two-ocean threat, US war plan) which was endorsed at the US-British Staff Conversations of March 1941. In this plan, Germany was perceived as the leader of the 'Axis' alliance and therefore was to be defeated first with limited Allied forces. In the event Japan entered the warm the Allied military strategy was to adopt a defensive stand in the Far East till the defeat of Germany.

Lessons Learnt

Having examined the circumstances leading to the Pearl Harbor attack from both countries' perspectives, it is indicative that reciprocal misperceptions and ethno-centric thinking created the opportunity for a 'Pearl Harbor'. As the Japanese looked upon Western political philosophy as hypocrisy, the Americans were ignorant of the *Bushido* code of honour with their misplaced contempt of Japanese incompetence.

"War is a matter of vital importance to the State; the province of life and death; the road to survival or extinction. **It must be <u>thoroughly</u> pondered and analysed."**

The first half of the Sun Zi's teaching cited above aptly reflects Japan's predicament in launching the Pacific campaign. If she had scrutinised the second statement as well, she might have arrived at a more accurate threat perception. Had the Japanese been able to assess that the US was unlikely to defend the Philippines if attacked, the Pearl Harbor attack could have been avoided.

Joseph C Grew, the US Ambassador to Japan, in a statement prior to the Pearl Harbor attack, had said, "The vicious circle of reprisals and counter-reprisals is on. The obvious conclusion is eventual war."[15] Had the US heeded Ambassador Grew's advice not to discount a Japanese attack, the disaster might have been avoided.

From the circumstances and arguments presented above, it is apparent that both the US and Japan had wrongly perceived each other's intentions. It was difficult to dispel misperceptions as the situations unfolding were complex, and the information available was and still is ambiguous.

"The inability of the US political, diplomatic and military establishments to recognise the capabilities of Japan and the weaknesses in the US defence planning as well as a collective list of mall coincidences and failures that would in any analysis appear to be extremely unlikely to occur in concert."[16]

The common understanding of intelligence often addresses the enemy's strength and weakness, their activities, doctrines but rarely dwell into the enemy's thinking. The US ignorance of the Japanese psyche of dying rather than accept defeat was perhaps the missing or neglected factor in their appreciation of the enemy. It therefore augurs well in strategic planning to consider this factor in our derivation of the likely enemy's courses of action. By cornering the Japanese with the stringent embargo, the US literally sowed the seeds for the Pearl Harbor attack. Had they been able to have a deeper understanding of the other's culture and tradition, Pearl Harbor could have been avoided.

On the same argument, Japan's mindset of the US likely interference in her southern expansion also reflected a wrong perception of her potential adversary. Had they studied the mentality of the Americans against fighting wars in two separate theatres concurrently, and had they not made the attack on Pearl Harbor as part of their campaign plan, they could have had an arguably easier southern conquest, free from American reprisals. This episode indicates that a careful and in-depth study of the enemy's likely reaction based on one's own action and non-action is important in governing the way a war is to take shape.

The US failure to accord sufficient attention to Japan through mutually-compomising measures left Japan looking towards Germany and Italy for security in the form of the 'Axis' alliance. From this perspective, it might be prudent to engage one's potential rival in bilateral relations with the intention of providing assistance to get her our of her crisis than to be at loggerheads against her. In short, it might be more cost-effective to examine how a state can help its potential rival state meet the latter's national interests without sacrificing its own interest, instead of facing the uncertainties and costly sacrifices of war (be it monetary cost or human lives).

Players in the operational and tactical arenas can minimise the effects in the likes of Pearl Harbor by being vigilant in detecting 'telling' hostile indicators and reacting to the best of their ability. As "prevention is always better than cure", the avoidance of such an attack would definitely be more predictable and

manageable if the hostility can be diffused through bilateral negotiations by empathetic politicians from both camps.

To rely solely on operational intelligence alone for indications of belligerent intentions is largely insufficient. The intelligence system is likely to be muddled by "the fog of war". Many a time, the other side may not go through the same chain of thought as we perceive. This could be due to their society's traits, culture or leadership, amongst other factors. As proven by history, America's failure to comprehend the Japanese way of thought, led to the failure to anticipate the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Understanding leadership is important, as seen in the uncertainties resulting from the 'irrational' Hitler in WW II, Khrushev in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, Saddam in the Gulf War, and Miloslevic in Kosovo. It is however obvious that understanding the psychology of the "Saddams" is always difficult, even impossible. Without an in-depth understanding of these key factors of the potential adversary, one is likely to be surprised. This is more so in today's context where high-tech weapons such as ballistic missiles, submarine-launch cruise missiles and even information warfare easily offer options for a surprise attack by the enemy.

Conclusion

It is thus vital for nations today to continuously engage each other closely in constructive discussions on bilateral relations and conflicts due to dissimilar interests. This will improve the appreciation of each other's problems and sensitive issues and more importantly, their rationale. Understanding each other's interests will educate us on each other's "trip-wires" and "threshold of pain", critical factors which can trigger a war.

One must also be prepared for the most dangerous course of hostile action by the enemy as well as other contingencies These may come in the form of response time available based on the result of time and space. real-time relative combat power, operational readiness, availability of timely and accurare intellidenge and the means toovercome our own identified weakness.

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Maritime Strategy in the Post-Cold War Era

by MAJ Tan Wee Ngee

For a good part of the 20th century, major navies of the world had gained such disproportionate prominence that sea power[1] was sought almost entirely for its own sake. The period prior to both world wars was characterised by the spiralling race for battleships with bigger hulls, larger-calibre guns and longer ranges.[2] Similarly, though to a lesser extent, the naval build-up in the Atlantic reflected the US-Soviet antagonism during the Cold War. With the dismantling of the Soviet fleet after the Cold War, however, the utility of the war-fighting fleet became markedly diminished. It was perhaps here that the navies of the west were restored to their rightful place as mere policy instruments of the state, together with other elements such as shipping, resource mining, fishery and environmental control. Today, the conception of a holistic maritime strategy[3], through which a nation brings to bear all these maritime elements in pursuit of a grand strategy, has gained its due relevance in an era where oceanic demands are increasingly complex and diverse.

Maritime strategy is, however, not a novel concept peculiar only to this age. Navies shipping and colonies were in fact the hallmarks of a nation's "greatness" about a century ago. Alfred T Mahan and Julian Corbett, two great naval strategists at the time, provided a clear conceptual linkage between sea power and a nation's well-being. Mahan espoused a theory of national power based on sea power, while Corbett underscored the connection between naval strategy and policy. But given the vast technological, social and political changes that have occurred since then, it is instinctive for many to decry these maritime apostles. Are their century-old theories relevant today, or have they simply faded into some mere historical reminiscences?

This essay focuses on the theoretical contributions made by Mahan and Corbett towards maritime strategy and appraises their relevance in the pst-Cold War context. The global political transformation brought about by the end of the Cold War, the ascendancy of new maritime concerns, and the technological developments over the century have invariably outmoded some of their tactical principles. The essence of their maritime approach, which elucidates the utility of the sea in securing national well-being and prosperity, however, remains as valid in the modern world today as in their age of fighting sails and sprawling colonies.

Mahan's and Corbett's Contribution to Maritime Strategy

Mahan's and Corbett's greatest theoretical contribution was in providing a coherent framework for naval strategists to think about maritime strategy, which in the past had been no more than some chronological narratives or loose derivatives of land warfare.[4] Their theories made an unequivocal connection between the utility of the sea and the broader national and political prerogatives. Mahan, in particular, expounded that dominance at sea, from the historical perspective, has always accrued prosperity and power to a nation. He argued that sea power, comprising a powerful fleet to acquire colonies and secure markets, and a strong commerce will lead to increased wealth, national strength, and consequently, increased capacity to house a larger population.[5] In this connection, he noted six elements that would confer an enormous advantage on a nation: geographical position, physical conformation or seaboard, extent of territory, population size, national character and character of government.[6] By defining these basic components of power which would give countries an "overpowering power on the sea" and hence national "greatness", Mahan propounded a generalised theory of power politics.[7]

Similarly, Corbett stressed the utilitarian nature of the maritime dimension in supporting the primacy of politics, Unlike Mahan who believe in an absolute dominance of the sea, Corbett saw the sea as merely a means to serve a higher end. He acknowledged that the military is only one option in dealing with an adversarial situation, and even if war is resorted to, it may itself be "limited by contingent".[8] A corollary to this is Corbett's belief that the core of a war is really about competing economic strengths - not so much

military power - and that crippling the enemy's finances may in fact lead to his demise more expeditiously.[9] Toward this end, the navy, Corbett stressed, is but a part of a maritime strategy whose efficacy lies in its instrumentality - together with other means - to achieve political ends.

Both theorists were absorbed with the "command of the sea". Mahan argued that this should be unequivocal, absolute and spanned a "great common" to shut out the enemy from their shores.[10] To achieve this goal, he emphasised the need for the acquisition of a superior fleet of armoured battleships, or capital ships, to seek out and annihilate the enemy's fighting fleet.[11] In other words, the "decisive battle" at sea should be the main focus of a navy. Corbett, on the other hand, stressed that there will always be imponderables in naval warfare, or what he called "friction at sea". His conception of the "working control of the sea" to merely secure communications and a safe passage through it underscored this perceived vulnerability.[12] Command of the sea would, at best, be relative and local, not absolute.

From here, Corbett differed from Mahan's somewhat deterministic approach. He moved away from the sanctity of the "decisive battle" to stress also on the importance of commerce protection and the use of blockade.[13] Decisive engagement, he added, may not be necessary so long as the enemy was kept at bay, in the port, as a "fleet-in-being". His utilitarian approach in maritime strategy is also evident in his accentuation of the role of land forces and the employment of amphibious operations in securing the overall victory in a campaign. After all, the war at sea - just as on land - is but a political act, an inspiration Corbett drew from Clausewitz.

Relevance of Mahan's and Corbett's Maritime Theories

Some argue that Mahan and Corbett were largely products of their time, and that their maritime assertions became obsolete even before the ink on their theories could dry up.[14] As their writings reflect the circumstances of their time, it follows that they may not apply in our radically transformed era. Fighting sails have since given way to nuclear-powered submarines, and the supreme utility of the sea challenged by the advent of railways and air transportation, as well as the alternative hypothesis from Mackinder that land power, not maritime power, constitutes the roots of national power.[15] Perhaps the most discernible - and irreversible - change is the global socio-political structure over the century. In the age of colonialism and global power rivalry, the classical maritime theories provided the *raison d'être* for major powers of that time to be armed to their teeth.[16] At a time when landward movement was slow and inefficient, the ability to secure overseas ports and markets gave a nation a distinctive strategic advantage. But with the end of colonialism, the sea no longer holds the panacea for great power status and world influence, thrusting Mahan's imperialistic theory of sea dominance into obsolescence.

While the merchantilistic drive by empires to compete for overseas possessions in the Mahanian age may well be anachronistic, Mahan's and Corbett's emphasis on the connectivity between foreign and home bases is still, if not more, important for a nation's well-being today. We can argue that it is only a contextual change: the competitive nature of acquiring overseas possessions is now replaced with a more co-operative approach that has evolved with the growing internationalisation of marine activities. But the essence of the regional or global connectivity should not be denigrated. One can perhaps now relate the role of colonies, as perceived by Mahan, to port access rights, diplomacy calls, joint maritime ventures, alliance relationships and a co-operative approach by neighbouring countries to regional security, all of which are important because they facilitate the mutuality of state interests.[17] Similarly, in war, the establishment of forward operating bases along captured territories allows, as in the case of the US forces' trans-Pacific westward thrust to threaten Imperial Japan during the Pacific War, strategic and operational objectives to be attained. To dismiss away this oceanic connectivity because of its imperialistic overtures is to throw the baby out together with the bath water.

Technological changes, too, have a considerable impact on Mahan's and Corbett's maritime principles. To begin with, both theorists did not quite see the potential useful-ness of submarines. In both world wars, while the navies were pre-occupied by an inflated worth of the main battleship fleets, it was the German U-boats that came quite close to being the decisive issue.[18] Today, their potency as a strike force that can deliver considerable munitions onto sub-merged, floating or even land targets far exceeds the ancillary role

prescribed to them by the theorists. Further, the advent of naval aviation redefined the shape of naval warfare and, together with the submarines, invalidated Mahan's proposition that the battleship was not the centrepiece of the war at sea. In the Pacific War, for example, "non-contact" battles were waged between opposing naval fleets. Finally, long-range radar, infra-red and space sensors significantly increased the vulnerability of the surface fleet, making the decisive engagement at sea difficult and illusive. The sum effect: the tactical application of Mahan's capital ship theory and his obsession with "big battle" mentality may no longer be congruent with today's technological environment.

While technology has shaped naval warfare in a significant way, it has not nullified the need to control or dominate the local seas in order to ensure friendly shipping or the seaward means to project combat power during a conflict, the essence of Mahan and Corvett's theories. new technologies, particularly in the areas of aviation, missile and underwater sensors and weapons, have complicated the naval mission.[19] Bur far from threatening the demise of the various sea instruments, these technologies actually add to the lethality of seapower. Adversaries will now have to content with a more complex "package" of war-fighting capabilities which are seaborne, with greater reach and longer staing power. Colin Gray makes a strong case the the coming of the railroad, air, missile, nuclear and space eras did not "demote" the strategic value of sea power, as the sea, on its own, possesses a certain enduring qualities which gives the side that harnesses it a "leverage: for victory.[20] This "leverage" translates into the ability to protract a conflict in favour of the maritime state, to shape geostrategic terms of engagement and in terms of manoeuvre, to isolate, "landlock", coerce, divert, or surprise the enemy.[21] The fact that all developed countries maintain a navy of some sort attests to its continuing role as an important deterrent factor, and an enabler of victory should deterrence fail. In this sense, the technologically superior air arm may have displaced the once proud eminence of the navy, but it could not dislodge the utility of the sea-going fleet for the purposes of averting, containing or resolving conflicts.

In peacetime, seapower continues to be a strategic imperative today. Much of this is due to the immutable facts of geography: that the oceans cover three quarters of the earth; and 75 percent of the world's population lives within 175 kilometres from the coast.[22] Land and air access or transportation, however technologically advanced, is still not able to replace the convenience and efficiency with which the bulk of the world's trade and communications is traversed over the sea. More importantly, the seas surrounding a particular land mass represents an incontrovertible emblem of national sovereignty, over which numerous wars have been waged in the past. The potential for an armed conflict increases when known or even suspected seabed resources are at stake, as in the case of the Spratly Islands. Given these circumstances, it becomes instinctive for states to possess a Mananian kind of naval supremacy, at least over territorial waters, in order to secure its national interests, especially the preservation of its political an territorial integrity, and the freedom of access the seas provide.

In the post-Cold War era, a more holistic maritime approach becomes relevant than in the past, as opposed to the narrower focus on naval strategy. The demise of the Soviet Union has left the western navies without a clear foe to focus their security efforts on. Some even postulated that for the US Navy, sea control has largely become a "given".[23] This however, did not quite bear out during the Gulf War in 1991 when Iraq employed extensive sea denial measures. The need for trans-Atlantic sea control is no longer its top priority. With the diminishing utility of the military as nations have generally become more reluctant to use force in conflict resolution, a true naval war in Mahanian force-on-force terms is now quite inconceivable, since it was already rare in the past.[24] In fact, the Mahanian paradigm of a violent clash at sea may now be a facing its greatest risk of obsolescence.

Samuel Huntington asked in the 50s, "What do navies do when they have an undisputed command of the sea?"[25] Today, the navies' predicament is similar; if the battle at sea is not forthcoming, it is really left standing without a clear mission. Yet at the same time, it has to deal with unconventional conflicts in the form of national liberation wars, boundary disputes, illegal immigration, ethnic and religious separatism and even terrorism. The firing of missiles into suspected terrorist camps in Sudan in 1998 from an offshore US submarine, the endless spates of clashes amongst the Chinese, Philippine, Malaysian and Vietnamese naval authorities over alleged "trespasses" in the vicinity of the Spratlys and the recent stepped-up patrols by Singapore's coast guard against illegal immigrants, are all reflective of the change in the nature of the naval mission in the post-Cold War era. The US Navy, in particular, has re-oriented its focus from power at sea to

power *from the sea* in order to be able to project power expeditiously to the littoral waters on the landward side.[26] This invariably makes the navy more of an instrument of political influence and a shaper of the security environment than an outright fighting machine. Indeed, for naval strategy, the end of the Cold War has been aptly termed the "midwife" of change.[27]

For the other developed or developing countries, the navy has regained its utilitarian role in supporting policy in situations where limited application of force may be required. It can be used to put some form of limited pressure on major opponents to force political concessions or achieve certain objectives, eg, use of open or close blockages, deny use of critical sea lanes. "Gunboat" diplomacy, "visibility" in forward presence and the ability to be deployed rapidly as an initial response force to avert, contain or deal with an off-shore contingency situation[28] are important tenets of the navy as a policy instrument. This is in a large part due to the inherent qualities of sea power: it is flexible, non-committal and not encumbered by treaties; it operates on a neutral medium has long staying power but few liabilities; and probably most importantly, it is easily extractable. The versatility and ability to poise or posit near the crisis area, for as long as the situation requires, while political options are being deliberated, or to evacuate one's own nationals from a conflict zone are particularly useful in a highly fluid political environment where adverse situations can unfold rapidly. Whether it is the "routing" of the US carrier *Nimitz* near the Straits of Taiwan during the Sino-Taiwan crisis in Mar 1996, or South Korea's recent engagement of seemingly hostile northern vessels in the Yellow Sea, the sea-going fleets possess that efficacy to send strong political signals to a potential belligerent, In peacetime, these qualities also allow naval engagements to express certain political intent without the need to be drawn in, particularly in the areas of defence relationship with other countries. Naval diplomacy, joint naval development projects, joint training and international maritime assistance are but some examples. These shades of naval force application underscore the utility of sea power, in what Corbett called a "major strategy", as a continuation of politics.[29]

Corbett also believed that naval action alone was insufficient; a maritime strategy that links its integral parts to national objectives is needed. This is perhaps more important now than before. Resurfaced maritime concerns such as competing resource claims, fishing rights and boundary disputes, suppressed in the past by the Cold War security imperative, often require countries to manage them coherently. The UN Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in 1982 only serves to exacerbate these issues. Maritime issues have also transcended national boundaries into the "infungible" sea environment. Pollution, piracy, trans-national crime, smuggling and illegal immigration - all of which have the propensity to become serious security concerns - affect the commons spanning neighbouring countries which would require some form of co-operation. Corbett called this a "problem of co-ordination" in the maritime environment[30], which is now increasingly needed in a world of complex commercial linkages and rising social disorders. The navy, despite all its glamorous array of weaponry, is unable to resolve the issue alone. Both military and non-military maritime resources need to be directed to concertedly secure a nations' grand strategy.

Finally, as in the days of Mahan and Corbett, the security of the sea still remains the key to national survival and prosperity. Shipping, resources and sea-borne communications form the backbone of most economies, whether agricultural or industrial-based. The bulk of the US trade with the Asia-Pacific countries is done by sea and Japan is also dependent on the sea for its resources and shipping its manufactured products. The Straits of Malacca, which sees about 200 ship movements a day, is one of the busiest channels in the world today.[31] With so much national stake in sea-borne activities in highly economically interdependent world, the protection of sea lanes and ports becomes nothing less than a strategic imperative. Herbert Rosinski's timeless dictum that "merchant shipping is the ultimate key to strategy" has been abundantly borne out by history, whether in peace or war.[32] The command of the sea and the maintenance of rights of free passage on Mahan's "great common", therefore, remain vital to national survival and economic development. This will enable one to exert its freedom of sea access and movement, and during a conflict, deny the belligerent nation from doing so. This brings to mind Corbett's faith in the sea as a primary strategic weapon to exert "overwhelming economic pressure" on an opponent and "cripple" his finances.[33] One can easily contemplate such adverse scenarios in the Asia-Pacific region. The recent escalating China-Taiwan antagonism over the latter's bid for independence[34], the contesting claims over Spratly Islands, and the potentially explosive historical, racial and religious animosities between some Southeast Asian countries are some possibilities that may have grave consequences. With the ever present need for sea control over these maritime

tinderboxes and the protection of sea lanes to ensure the increased volume of shipping in this region, Mahan can be said to be well and alive in the Asia-Pacific region.[35]

Conclusion

It has been said that "if you want a new idea, read an old book".[36] Indeed, Mahan and Corbett's century-old treatise on the importance of maritime strategy in securing one's national interests is still much read and applied today While their euphemisms such as sea dominance, colonies and the impeccable role of the battleship may no longer be relevant, but their essence of sea control, oceanic connectivity and naval utility remain the mainstay of maritime strategy today. And while one may be more inclined to favour Corbett's utilitarian approach over Mahan's rather deterministic approach, a complement of both would perhaps provide a more useful insight into today's highly complex maritime strategy driven by broad national interests will continue to provide many a track for maritime development, and a point of reference for some who perilously choose to depart from it.

Endnotes

1 Sea power will be defined as the "power one obtains from a capacity to use the sea for commercial and military purposes" as in Grove, Eric, "Sea Power in the Twenty First Century", *Journal of the Australian Naval Institute***, Aug/Oct 1995, pp 8.**

2 For a more detailed account of the naval arms race during that period, see Graham S Gerald, *The Politics of Naval Supremacy: Studies in British Maritime Ascendancy***, Cambridge 1965, pp 6-8.**

3 I will be using Corbett's definition of mari time strategy as "principles governing a war in which the sea is a substantial factor". Gooch, John, "Maritime Command: Mahan and Corbett" in Gray Colin (ed), *Seapower and Strategy***, Annapolis, Md: Naval Institute Press, 1989, pp 39.**

4 *Ibid***, pp 28.**

5 See Crowl, A Philip, "Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian" in Peter Paret (ed), *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age***, Oxford University Press, 1994, pp 451.**

6 Gooch, *op cit***, pp 32-34.**

7 *Ibid***, pp 33.**

8 *Ibid***, pp 38.**

9 *Ibid***, pp 43.**

10 Crowl, *op cit***, pp 450-452.**

11 Hattendorf, B John (ed), *The Influence of History on Mahan,* **US Naval War College Historical Monograph Series No 9, 1991.**

12 Gooch, *op cit***, pp 39-40.**

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21 *Ibid*, pp 289.

22 Grove, Eric, "Sea Power in the Twenty First Century", *Journal of the Australian Naval Institute*, Aug/Oct 1995, pp 8.

23 Haydon, Peter and Griffiths, Ann (eds), *Maritime Security and Conflict Resolution at Sea in the Post-Cold War Era*, Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, Dalhousie University, 1994, pp 138.

24 Breemer, Jan, "The End of Naval Strategy", *ibid*, pp 135-142.

25 As quoted in Till, Geoffery, "Maritime Strategy and the Twenty-First Century", *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol 17, No 1, Maritime 1994, pp 186.

26 Rhosdes, Edward, "..."From the Sea" and Back Again: Naval Power in the Second American Century", *Naval War College Review*, Spring 1999, Vol LII, No 2, pp 13-20.

27 *Ibid*, pp 16.

28 "Forward...From the Sea", *op cit*, pp 5.

29 Gooch, *op cit*, pp 39-40

30 Haydon, *op cit*, pp 10.

31 Guoxing, Ji, "Maritime Security Mechanisms for the Asian-Pacific Region", Center for International Security and Arms Control, Stanford University, Feb 1994, pp 2.

32 As quoted in Gray, S Colin, "Sea Power: The Great Enabler", *Naval War College Review*, Winter 1994, Vol XLVII, No 1, pp 21.

33 Gooch, *op cit*, pp 40.

34 "China's Possible Counters...", *Straits Times*, 16 Jul 1999.

35 Grove, *op cit*, pp 8.

36 Stevens, *op cit*, pp 61.

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MAJ Tan Wee Ngee, is presently CO (Designate) 123 Squadron, Sembawang Air Base. He holds an MA in Strategic Studies from the Australian National University (1997) and a Bachelor of Business Administration (Hons) (1988).

The Role of War in International Relations

by MAJ Ng Chee Meng

War has been an integral part of human history. The development of war has mirrored the development of human society. The political, social, economical and technological advancement of society has transformed primitive, tribal type wars into wars that are highly organised and deadly. The persistence of war in human culture gives a good indication that war will continue to be intricately webbed within the intercourse of states and cultures. However, with the recent end of the Cold War, there are those who postulate that promising trends in human development signal a fundamental transformation in human society and international relations. The growing rationality and the interdependence of states, coupled with an increasing cost of using war as a means to policy ends, may eventually make war obsolete in international relations. This transformation in international relations is giving hope that war will have a waning role and eventually by removed as an instrument of policy by other means.

The above viewpoints are brief representations of the realist and liberal outlook of the international political landscape. Against this backdrop, this paper aims to explore the arguments, possibilities and rationale of both liberals and realists to determine whether war will always feature in the intercourse of international relations.

War Defined

What exactly constitutes war? According to Hedley Bull, war is organised violence waged between political entities.[1] Violence, organised or otherwise, in itself does not constitute war. For example, law enforcement, although carried out in the name of a political unit employing violence is not war because it is directed against individuals and not another political unit.[2] In other words, war is organised violence wielded by a political entity and directed against another political entity and these entities are sovereign states (civil and other wars are excluded in the scope of the paper.

Liberal view: Declining Role of War in International Relations

In recent years, there is growing optimism that international relations is entering a new era. With the rapid transformation in the post-WW OO political landscape. The German reunification, the dramatic collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the dissolution of the former Soviet Union have encouraged many in the field of international studies to characterise the present state of international affairs as a new paradigm, a new era.[3] This series of tumultuous international events culminated in the Allied Coalition victory against Iraq in the 1991 Persian Gulf War. With President Bush's famous "New World Order" victorious declaration, the "new era" ideas have been entrenched in the minds of many. As a result, there are many "new era" arguments to the effect that war will cease to have a major role in international relations. For discussion here, these liberal ideas are grouped under four main arguments. These arguments include:

- Interdependence of states
- Cost-benefit analysis of war,
- Common security approach offering a break from the reinforcing feedback trap of the security dilemma[4],
- Possibility of a world order based on international law and the UN Charter.[5]

Interdependence

The concept of interdependence of states recognises that the world today is intricately webbed by a myriad of linkages between governments and a host of other non-state actors including IGOs, INGOs, MNCs and influential individuals.[6] The theory acknowledges that these non-state actors assert increasing influence on the domain of political interaction so much so that international relations today is no longer a pure state-

centric intercourse.[7] The interdependence theory implies the erosion of state sovereignty in international relations and as a result, increases stability and reduces the likelihood of war.

In the contemporary interdependent world, there are multi-layers of interaction between governments and the people in various official and non-official capacities.[8] These interactions arguably promote better understanding and an appreciation of differing views. The channels of communication thus available and the growing empathy between states in consistent interaction serve to reduce the likelihood of war. Furthermore, in this complex interdependent landscape, traditional security issues are intertwined with a variety of foreign policy matters like trade practices, population control, pollution control and energy resources. This intermingling of issues mean that there is no clear or consistent hierarchies in which security matters take top priority.[9]The growing awareness that mutual benefits can be best served by co-operation in various spheres of interests has made the employment of force to settle difference highly unlikely and undesirable in international relations. With this theory of interdependence between states, there appears to be cause for optimism that war will no longer feature in international relations.

Cost-Benefit Analysis - Decreasing Utility of War

The second argument for war cessation in international relations contends that in a rational world, war as an instrument of policy is approaching obsolescence. This is due to the escalating costs of policies resorting to war and the corresponding reduction in foreign policy purposes that war can achieve.[10] The cost-benefit approach has an underlying assumption that states are rational in their decisions when faced with the reality of the situation.

Throughout history, war's benefits have generally outweighed the material and human costs for the voctor.[11] However, the computation is not quite so clear today - it is argued that the costs of actually going to war in many cases would exceed the benefits regardless of victory or defeat.[12]This is especially so with the advent of nuclear weapons. In the developed world, states embarking on war to achieve policy ends face the certain prospect of shouldering astronomical financial costs and in the worst case, financial ruin. The stark reality of spiralling military costs must surely restrain the use of force as a last resort in international relations. The idea of the decreasing utility of war is aptly summarised by David Starr Jordan of Stanford University: "Future war is impossible because the nations cannot afford it".[13] As a tool of policy achievement, especially in a nuclear arena, war today seems to be greatly unwise and in the cost-benefit equation, unprofitable.

Common Security

The third argument that war may be on the wane is the emerging possibility of common security. The common security approach in international relations is founded on the principle that the security of a state is no longer an independent issue but necessarily entwined to the security of other nations in a condition of security interdependence.[14] Accordingly, this state of common security ensures that the long-term interests of participating of nations are better served in a holistic approach to security.

The main attraction of the common security approach is that it provides a possibility out of the security dilemma trap. The reinforcing spiral of the security dilemma is a main cause of war between states. Instead of embarking on an arms race at exorbitant costs, common security seeks to maintain a satisfactory level of deterrence while posing little offensive threat to neighbouring states.[15] Proponents of common security argue that the probability of war will diminish as political stability gradually evolves over time as the security dilemma winds down.[16] As a result of such a rational approach to security, it is argued that the vicious cycle of threat of war will be broken and all nations will be more secure. In the long-term therefore, there will be less wars and less security associated human and material costs.

World Government in Collective Security

The fourth argument that war may no longer be a permanent feature in international relations is the emerging potential of the United Nations (UN) functioning as a World Government (WG). This concept is an extension of the collective security argument on a global scale. It argues that the presence of a world governing body, in name and in practice, will remove or alleviate the 'self-help' nature in the international system and provide an element of collective security. The presence of such a body based on international law removes the ambiguity of competing interpretation of different legal systems in the inter-national system today. More importantly, this real presence of a WG makes available an enforcement force to police and ensure states adhere to international laws.

The potential of the UN assuming its intended role appeared most likely after the UN-backed coalition victory over Iraq in the Persian Gulf. For the first time since the Cold War stalemate, the allied powers were able to co-operate in the containment and punishment of naked aggression. The collective effort by a host of allied member nations against Iraq was viewed by some to be the dawn of a new era in which the UN could fulfil its security role as spelt out in the UN Charter.[17]Preseident Bush reinforced this suggestion of a New World Order when he said, "We are no in sight of a UN that performs as envisioned by its founders".[18] This statement aptly summarised the mood of the moment when the world witnessed an empowered UN putting right a wrong: war may indeed by a bygone feature in international relations.

Realist View: War a Feature in International Relations

Is the international landscape truly undergoing a fundamental change into a new era? There are also compelling opposing arguments supported by empirical historical evidence suggesting the persistence of war in international relations. It is therefore timely to be reminded that there were past declarations of 'new eras' that proved to be false dawns.

Historical Trends of War

After the Napoleonic turmoil in the early 19th century, the allied victors convened the Congress of Vienna in 1814 to plan the post-war world. A 'new era' was proclaimed and Europe achieved the longest period of peace on the continent, lasting a 100 years (with the only exception of the Crimean War in 1854).[19] However, WW I followed, shattering the supposed new era. When WW I ended in 1918, Prime Minister Lloyd George optimistically declared the war's end on November 11 in the hope that the armistice with Germany would be the end of all the wars.[20] This war, the war to end all wars, culminated in the even more catastrophic WW II.

Is the Persian Gulf really a harbinger of a New World Order? Are we in a new dawn in international relations? The promise of a new era may be too premature.

The history of war antedates the very concept of states and international relations. The evidence of history has regularly supported the more pessimistic claims that man cannot escape from the scourge of wars. Any simple survey of history will point out the consistency of war in human intercourse regardless of the various institutions attempting to regulate these interactions. So long as Clausewitz's famous dictum, that war being the continuation of policy remains true, the reliable gauge of human history clearly points to war being a feature in international relations.

Interdependence

The idea of interdependence between nations is not a new one. As early as the mid-19th century, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels had already seen interdependence in their famous *Communist Manifesto*:

In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal interdependence of nations.... National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible ...[21]

Interdependence in theory reduces the likelihood of war. However, historical testimony has shown that war has not diminished despite the logical attractiveness of states' interdependence. Germany was one of Britain's and the Soviet's best trading partner prior to the outbreak of WW II.[22]Germany was also Britain's premier trading partner prior to WW I. Interdependency did not prevent the outbreak of the two wars. The contemporary world has certainly not fulfilled the optimism of interdependence.

There is little doubt as to the importance of interdependence today. However, there is need for caution before one asserts that interdependence will transform international relations definitively and make war obsolete as a tool of policy. The state-centric paradigm is still evident in international relations and the state remains the ultimate authority to direct or restrict interstate interactions.[23] Politics has demonstrated her pre-eminent position in trade, travel opportunities and even sports. The boycott of international events like the Olympics to show state displeasure is not an unusual phenomenon. In events of greater grievances, the threat of force and war is still very much under the authority of the state, regardless of interdependence.

Furthermore, although interdependence is becoming increasingly important in international relations, interdependence in itself can become a source of contention and friction.[24]Interdependence between states is hardly ever an equal relationship. It usually entails a state having leverage on another despite both sharing some forms of dependence on each other. In the contemporary world, the Middle-Eastern oil crisis in the 70s is a prime example of unequal interdependence that had all the potential of triggering war.[25] As a result of interdependence and globalisation of production, private capital flows and raw materials, it can be argued that the trans-national global market has in itself become a source of insecurity and inter-state friction.[26] The increased reliance of states on scarce resources and the associated competition may lead to a war of "access" to these resources. This was the case in the onset of hostilities in the Pacific in WW II. Interdependence does not exclude the possibility of war.

Irrationality in Cost-Benefit Approach

The cost-benefit approach assumes that states act rationally under ideal conditions. This is a flawed assumption. Human actors in the international scene are not always rational. In a relative sense, 'rationality' can be blurred by the cultural divides to an extent where supposedly rational thinking in one society may be regarded as irrational behaviour in another. Likewise, values dear to one state may have a different significance to another. One state's estimate of another's rationality and values may not always be accurate. Noise in the real world worsens matters. Signals become blurred and inaccurate information is presented for decision-making. In addition, human beings being creatures of bias, often subjectively select information to support a certain viewpoint. Contradictory evidence is discarded or rationalised away. There is disparity between theory and the real world. As a result, the inaccurate assumption of rationality in all human action undermines the cost-benefit approach.

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor is a case in point. The Japanese cabinet perceived the attack to destroy American naval power in Pearl Harbor to be vital in their overall strategy so safeguard national security and retain their national prestige in the political world. Based on measures of cost-benefits, it was wholly irrational for Japan to wage a war with the US given the latter's immense war industrial potential. Yamamoto's assessment that Japan had slim chances of victory was presented to the cabinet but rationalised away by notions of a quick victory and speedy peace negotiations. By a pure cost-benefit approach in a perfect world, the immense costs and the unlikely victory should have averted the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. In the real world, it did not - the 'irrational' need to achieve national prestige by all means superceded the costs of war and strangled alternative approaches to national security.

The Security Dilemma Versus Common Security

The common security concept is intended to provide an escape from the security dilemma. Common security presupposes states act out of a sense of common interests. However, in an anarchical international system characterised by self-help, the validity of this premise is questionable. A more accurate representation of states' motives is probably captured in Kenneth Waltz's assertion that states' behaviour is governed solely from self-interest calculations of prudence and expediency in inter-state realtions.[27] This state of affairs clearly reveals the fragility of common security arrangements.

A security dilemma is a potential cause of war. The fundamental distrust between states and the uncertainty of each other's intentions result in vicious detrimental cycles of arms accumulation.[28] Within this framework of international relations, even a benign intention of increasing one's own security may end up in insecurity for all. And as John Herz puts it, "ultimately, somewhere, conflicts caused by the security dilemma are bound to emerge among political units of power'.[29] The *modus operandi* in international relations today is still very much that of self-help. Although common security arrangements like the Concert of Europe are possible, the historical evidence of their eventual demise reinforces the argument that the security dilemma persists.[30] The self-interest of states undermines common interests and over time, corrupts the very arrangements that were to bring greater security. The very essence of the security dilemma still plagues common security efforts and this systemic problem inherent in international relations increases the likelihood of war, accidental or intentional.

Improbability of World Governance

The spectacle of an impressive allied victory in the 1991 Gulf War gave hope in many quarters that the UN would be revitalised to undertake its envisioned role according to the UN Charter. However, such efforts at seeking a New World Order are not new. The first attempt was the League of Nations in the aftermath of WW I. The abstention of the US reduced the effectiveness of this League and the start of WW II destroyed it. After WW II, the second attempt in the form of the UN was hindered by the Cold War for 45 years and its effectiveness was greatly curbed and limited.[31] This attempt after the Gulf War, is the third attempt at organising a WG structure. However, the initial promise that the UN could be galvanised into such a governing position has fizzled out and the political world remains very much in anarchy today.

There is little evidence that states today are willing to subjugate their sovereignty to a WG.[32] The UN in considered by many smaller states to be biased and structured for the convenience and expediency of the great powers in the Security Council. The UN is often seen to be a vehicle for the great powers to pursue their self-interests under the guise of global consensus. Smaller states see evidence of the great powers welcoming undemocratic UN resolutions when these are expedient for their self-interests and rejecting democratic ones when they are harmful to their policy goals.[33] This inconsistency in UN fairness and effectiveness impress upon the smaller states the continued need for self-determination and self-protection. In other words, the self-help mindset remains and anarchy prevails. And according to Martin Wight, this lack of a WG is the fundamental cause of war.[34]

Conclusion

The international scene has indeed changed dramatically over the last decade. Recent political events like the end of the Cold War and the Persian Gulf War have somewhat re-moulded the political landscape. Nonetheless, these events are only snapshots of the political scene. They do not serve as a sufficient base to lend credible support to the liberal or rational arguments presented earlier in the paper. These so-called liberal arguments ignore the broader lessons of history and wrongly focus on the abstract. The most fundamental failure in the liberal hypothesis is the assertion that a reduction of war reduction has yet to be borne out in the real world. John Mueller, a strong proponent of the liberal viewpoint, concedes that besides major wars like nuclear ones, "wars ... are still far from obsolete and have killed millions since 1945".[35]

The present world is still very realist. The very structure of the present international system hinders the promulgation of liberal ideas. The anarchy of the international system demands that states adopt a self-help approach to ensure their national security and preserve their self-interests. The dynamics of anarchy is a powerful obstruction for any meaningful and sustained experimentation of liberal viewpoints. The fundamental causes of war are hence inherent in power politics and there is no sign that such a state-centric paradigm is about to collapse.

"To look for a continuation o harmony between a number of independent, unconnected sovereignties... would be to disregard the uniform course of human events, and to set at defiance the accumulated experience of the ages".[36]

Alexander Hamilton to the Thirteen States

Alexander Hamilton's address remains a relevant reminder for all of us. It is still too early to be overly optimistic of any paradigm change to be a feature in international relations and an instrument of policy of last resort.

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MAJ Ng Chee Meng is currently CO 144 SQN, PLAB. He holds a Bachelor of Science (Electrical Engineering) from the USAF Academy. A Fighter pilot by vocation, he attended the 30th Command and Staff Course at SCSC in 1999.

Deterrence as an Instrument of State Policy in the New World Order

by CPT Lim Sok Bee

In the adjudication of criminal justice, fines, capital punishment, and imprisonment are deterrent measures that the legislature enforces on criminals or potential criminals from committing or repeating crimes. Likewise, in international politics, deterrence in the form of a threat of military retaliation or other forms of 'punishment' which seeks to prevent certain undesirable actions by adversaries or potential adversaries.

Deterrence can be defined as a process of making an influence using the presence of a threat. Deterrence can either be in the active or the passive form. In the active form, sometimes called compellence, it involves the use of threats by state 'A' to get state 'B' to stop or undo an action already in progress. Passive deterrence occurs when state 'A' is able to dissuade state 'B' from carrying out action which it has not begun, but which 'A' has reason to believe 'B' is considering.[1]

Deterrence may be categorised as general and immediate.[2] In general deterrence, it is the possibility of war occurring which cause states to maintain armed forces to dissuade potential attackers from considering aggression albeit an absence of any conditions or indicators of aggression of one state against any particular enemies. In contrast, states are said to be in an immediate deterrence condition when they are actively contemplating war or, probably preparing for it. As active and immediate deterrence deal with actions and reactions immediately preceeding a war this paper will confine the discussion to the concept of passive and general deterrence as an instrument of state policy.

Deterrence as Instrument of State Policy

For deterrence to work the deterring state must not only have sufficient capability \but the resolve to carry out the threat of retaliation, similar to a judge empowered by the Act of Parliament and/or customary law to adjudicate on the cases and mete out punishment. Sufficient capability does not lie with the possession of superior weapon systems or armed forces alone. The probability of being believed depends very much on the credibility of the threat which means that potential aggressors must be impressed that the threatened retaliation will be carried out if proboked.[3] Credibility of the threat is, in turn, dependent on it bring communicated either by words or actions, and also the threat must commensurate with the contended issue. Finally, deterrence assumes the states are rational in calculating the probable costs and benefits of going to war.[4]

Viability

'State' as defined by William Clinton Olson is:

"*... a legal and territorial expression, involving a population politically organised under one government in one place with* **sovereign rights***, even though it may have possessions elsewhere*."[5]

It is, therefore, presumed that the fundamental driving force of states is the preservation of sovereignty which, *inter alia*, involves a spectrum of needs ranging from the very basic struggle for survival to protection of state interest, material or ideological. Thus, peace and security become the main concern of states to further their pursuit to preserve sovereignty and attain other goals.

In an international system made up of many sovereign states, with no enforceable system of law

among them, each state judges its grievances and ambitions according to its own reasons and desires. Conflict, often leading to war, is bound to occur. To achieve a favourable outcome from such conflicts a state has to rely on its own devices. A state will resort to force to attain its goals if, after weighing the chances of success, it still decides that those goals are more important than the pleasures of peace.[6] Since any state may use force at any time, all states must, thus, be ready to counter an attack with force or face the possibility of being eliminated. As a result, war becomes an instrument of the state for the settlement of disputes.

To discuss the viability of any state policy and its instruments, it is necessary to look at relations among states - international relations. It is the relations and interactions among states in the international system that help determine the need for most state policies and their viability. The most dominant theory of international politics will have to be realism. Realism, whether classical or new, share certain basic assumptions. The theory of realism dates back to the times of Thucydides, and it has been recognised that states are the main actors in international relations. To the realists, the system is ruled not by agreement or law among states but by power. Anarchy is the main feature of the international system. States are differentiated within the system according to their power capabilities, defined in terms of territory, natural resources, population and ultimately, economic and military might. Smaller states may therefore form alliances to balance against an upcoming threat, but individual states can only rely on its own devices. Self-protection and the maintenance of security become the foremost preoccupation of states as a result of this insecurity. Such is achieved through "self-help" in the absence of a superior law-enforcing mechanism among the states. Therefore, states have to at least maintain their relative power position in the system for pure deterrence purposes.[7]

The most rational way to ensure some security is by deterrence, whether by accumulating power internally or by aligning with external sources. Because of the play of the security dilemma, a state will only be secure when its military capability equals if not exceeds that of its neighbours. In an anarchic system, where the very existence of the state is threatened, it is not difficult to understand why states tend to put security as a priority over other goals.[8]

At the other end of the spectrum, institutionalists offer a different argument on how institutions push states away from war and help foster stability.[9] Liberal institutionalists assert that institutions are an important cause of international stability as the latter establish rules of the game in international politics by setting out common standards of appropriate behaviour although they do not directly address the question of whether institutions cause peace.[10] For these theories, world politics is anarchic only insofar as there is no world government, this does not entail absence of governance through international institutions or conflict regulation through regimes.[11]Consequently, liberal institutionalism through cooperation presents the possibility for war to be removed as an option for states thereby rendering deterrence as unnecessary as an instrument of state policy.

Although the collective security theory challenges realist thinking about state behavior it agrees that force will continue to matter in world politics and the need to guard against potential aggressors. It advocates that force should not be used to maximise the individual state's gains or to change *status quo* and such violation should be retaliated with a joint overwhelming force of all participating states. For this to work, states should trust each other to renounce aggression and be confident that other states will come to their rescue should they be subject to aggression.[12] To overwhelm the aggressor, states that are part of a collective security agreement need to maintain a credible force, either severally or jointly with each other.

Deterrence in the New World Order

In the old world order, liberalism was born of the League of Nations in the 1920s after WW I when it was thought that the establishment of a strong international organisation would resolve issues and end conflicts. However, due to the failure of the League of Nations, realism was revived in the 1950s and has survived to this day although there is some evidence pointing towards liberal institutionalism

taking centre-stage in the post-Cold War era.

The Cold War was characterised by the bipolar world of the US on the one side and the Soviet Union on the other. The prevalent alliance was towards bloc discipline or alliances with either of these two superpowers. The rivalry between the two major powers and the various wars that occurred during the period were either supported by one on each side or there were proxy wars o the two big powers. Since the end of WW II, the Soviet Union had ambitions in various states and hence caused all states to either find an ally in the US or form their own armed forces to deter against any ambitious adversaries which may have Soviet backing.

Another realist characteristic of Cold War deterrence is the 'balance of terror'. Admiral Sir Julian Oswald GCB ADC aptly summarised the Cold War deterrence in the following statement[13],

During the Cold War, our potential enemy was one whose military doctrine, albeit derived from a repugnant political philosophy, made use of a form of rational cost-benefit analysis that was understood and to some extent shared by the West. Our deterrent posture exploited the reasonable fear that entailed risks of retaliation that would exceed any possible gains.[14]

With the end of the Cold War, it was thought or hoped by many that a New World Order would emerge. It started with George Bush announcing on 11 September 1990. the beginning of a new era,"...free from the threat of terror, stronger in the pursuit of justice, and more secure in the quest for peace, an era in which the nations of the world can prosper and live in harmony".[15]

Again, looking from the realist point, since sovereignty is maintained through the constant struggle of states to acquire power and security in an anarchic world by resorting to self-help and force of arms, *world order* refers primarily to the structure or distribution of power among states. The New World Order is characterised by the evolving structure of global power. With the demise of Soviet Union, there has been a period of rapid power transitions. The possible orders of balance of power range from multi-polarity to unipolar hegemony. This trend is towards multi-polarity with Japan and Germany becoming significant economic and military powers and at the same time see the rise of regional powers like India and China. However, the balance of power is unequal among the five great powers and thus, not truly multi-polar.

The unipolar possibility presents the US as the only true superpower as it has global assets in all dimensions of power. However, there are many security, economic and political goals that the US is unable to achieve by itself. There are still possibilities that the distribution of the current tri-polar economic power may become quadripolar in the new millennium. Therefore, in the realist sense of superpower capabilities of political, economic and military strength altogether, it does not appear to be a universally accepted meaning of the New World Order. Nonetheless, as long as there is no sole superpower to ensure that every state interacts by its rules, states will still struggle to achieve political, economic and military dominance over each other rendering deterrence as relevant as it was in the last 50 years.

With the shift from two superpowers to several great powers, such distribution gives rise to more intense regional politics rather than global politics. As regions are more autonomous and the impact of conflicts among regional powers like India and China are less on the other superpowers, rivalries among regional powers would tend to be confined to the region.[16] As regional powers increase in their influence, frequencies and intensities of regional conflicts would also increase. Again, without an overall regional power, states within the region will have to resort to their own means to safeguard their national interests against aggressive or potentially aggressive neighbours. To deter the regional powers, states would align themselves with others in a collective security arrangement.

Beyond such a global power structure, there are three broad paradigm changes affecting international

security, as put forth by Major General Banerjee[17], that are of significance:

- The pattern of conflict in today's world is moving away from inter-state, to intra-state, often with a large element of external involvement. Force is projected through proxy wars, state-sponsored terrorism or the like, often exploiting an internal weakness.[18] Therefore, deterrence in the classical sense of state against state is not viable against such exploits.
- The other common conflict is religious strife, particularly Islamic revivalism. Religion is a potent motivating factor and is often used to hide other ethnic, political or economic issues. Such exploits are also difficult to deal with the military option.
- With the increasing importance of economics in international relations, geo-politics may be replaced by geo-economics as a measure of strength. Hence, states are beginning to view neighbouring countries as opportunities for mutual economic cooperation and not as potential aggressors or threats, thereby reducing the need for military dominance.

Power has become more multi-dimensional, structures more complex, and states themselves more permeable. This added complexity means that the world order must rest on more than the traditional military balance of power alone.[19] The realist view of world order although still necessary, does not take into account long-term societal changes such as the play of economic power, drug trade, AIDS, global warming, and trans-national exchange of technology and information. With the rapid increase in the relevance of these societal changes, there is an accelerated erosion of the classical conception of realism.

Some liberals have, therefore, argued that economic power has replaced military power as the central medium of international politics. But this is overstated as the realists have rightly pointed out the economic instruments still cannot compete with military forces in their coercive and deterrent effects. This was clearly shown in the Gulf War that economic sanctions could not compel Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait until the multi-nation military action was taken. A state may be strong economically but if it does not maintain a viable deterrent force to guard and protect its economic power, its economic dominance or survival may by easily threatened.

Liberals further argue that conflicts and their prevention are determined not only by the balance of power among states but also by the domestic structure of states, their values, identities, and cultures, and by international institutions for conflict resolution. Hence, institutions such as the UN can help prevent conflict and establish order by stabilising expectations, creating a sense of continuity and a feeling the current cooperation will be reciprocated in the future. Order to the liberals is tied to values such as democracy and human rights, as well as to institutions.[20] They advocate that democracies do not go to war with other democracies and if all states subscribe to this ideology, it will bring about the end of conflict. Although liberal institutional order was demonstrated in the Gulf War where the breakdown of bi-polarity led to cooperation between Russia and the US in applying the UN doctrine of collective security against Iraq, it should be noted that it was the use of force that ultimately resolved the conflict.

Other than using a forum like the UN to resolve conflicts, a state may engage other states economically or politically by ensuring that the other states having a stake in their well-being would reconsider any adverse action they may be contemplating against it. This is the view taken by those who advocate interdependence or globalisation. The forums though which such engagements can be fostered include World Trade Organisation, Asia-Pacific Economic Conference and the European Community, just to name a few. There are more direct cooperation like the Growth Triangle between Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia. However, such engagements may be a potential source of conflict themselves and the reasons for such disputes may range from unequal benefits reaped by any of the parties to a failure of ventures. Even if these disputes are economic in nature, it will still require a strong military force to deter an unreasonable partner from escalating unmet economic demands into conflicts the using force. This clearly supports the need for states to have a deterrent force so as to dissuade the coercing state to use force. If the particular economic interest has a global

impact, it is certain that the superpower would interfere and flex their military muscle to 'persuade' in their interest. In such a case, it is not enough for states to have deterrent force but be able to exploit diplomatic relations with the superpowers in their favour.

Diplomacy, as an instrument of state policy, is as old as deterrence itself.[21] Although it is vital for a state to maintain a deterrent force, it must also make as many friends as possible and maintain good relations with neighbours and states beyond, in particular, superpowers as part of the entire security policy of defence diplomacy[22] which is combined with a strong and credible deterrence capability, and good relations with other countries as her two-part security equation.

Other than the traditional security issues, environmental issues are increasingly becoming the focus of a number of international disputes in recent years. Environmental problems such as global warming, depletion of the ozone layer or pollution are issues that are slowly being recognised by states as issues of national security - called environmental security.[23] Environmental security is rarely something which can be resolved by way of deterrence. There is no way Singapore or ASEAN can stop Indonesia in burning up its forests or for Finland to stop Russia in emitting sulfur dioxide except through cooperative measures that are beneficial to all in the medium-or long-run. Besides dangling carrots in front of 'offending' states, it requires a loud, persuasive voice backed by the strong economic, political and military might of the demanding state to bring the former to the negotiating table.

For a state to be able to protect its sovereignty and pursue its other national interest in the world today, it not only has to maintain deterrence as a state policy, it has to subscribe to other instruments like diplomacy, collective security and cooperation. Singapore has embarked on a Total Defence strategy as her national policy as she recognises she is vulnerable, not only to military threats, but also to exploitation in the economic, social, political and psychological aspects. Singapore maintains a deterrent force for military defence with a physical and technological capability as a show of her intent to deter any potential threat. Psychological defence is aimed at dissuading potential adversaries from adversely influencing Singapore's citizens from their nationalistic loyalty. Economic defence aims to positively enhance common interests with many countries and build a resilience against adverse influence. Political defence is achieved through maintaining an uncorrupt and upright government that will not sway to external pressures or be subject to populace discontent. Social defence dissuades potential adversaries from exploiting racial or religious issues to create internal conflicts and also builds resilience against possible spillovers of such conflicts in the region.

Conclusion

The New World Order is not one that falls squarely in either of the two traditional views of international politics. The world will still be anarchic. Order will be provided by the realists' balance of power among states with an increasing importance accorded to the liberals' evolving international institutions but not overtaken by the latter.[24] Deterrence on its own should not be taken as an instrument that is viable to dissuade aggression or the use of force. Interactions among states are not shaped by any single factor be it economic interest, bilateral relations, military might, political influence or cultural influence. In international relations, many factors at work concurrently shape and determine the action of one state *vis-à-vis* another state. Often, there are many mechanisms at work in the face of a crisis - diplomatic, economic, political as well as military measures taken by one or all parties. To halt an adversary from proceeding with a hostile act, it is often difficult to attribute the success of persuasion to any particular measure.

For any instrument of state policy to be viable, it has to be applied in combination with other instruments to achieve a balanced emphasis on each.

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CPT Lim Sok Bee is an instructor at the School of Artillery. She attended the 30th Command and Staff Course at SCSC in 1999.

Book Review:

Between Two Oceans

Reviewed by LTA (NS) Toh Boon Ho

Between Two Oceans aims to offer a general military history of Singapore from circa 1275 to 1971. It is fair to say that the authors have turned in a creditable piece with this effort: it is the best general military history of Singapore to date. *Between Two Oceans* would be a useful addition to the books recommended under the Malayan Campaign in the *The SAF Professional Reading Programme* (second edition). Malcolm Murfett offers a concise account of the "Singapore Strategy" during the inter-war period in Chapter 6. In Chapters 7, 8 and Appendix 3, Brian Farrel not only presents a good summary of the existing scholarship, but also puts forward a convincing re-interpretation of events which stand out in an overcrowded academic field.

For the SAF officer who is hard-pressed for time or in need of a quick revision guide to the Malayan Campaign component of the Officer Cadet Course, Chapters 6 to 8 adequately sums up the existing literature. It also provides the latest scholarship findings on the Malayan Campaign. Brian Farrell raises the issue on how grand strategy contradicted with campaign strategy during the Malayan Campaign. Dealt a bad hand, Malaya Command compounded its own difficulties with poor command decisions. In a damning indictment of the defence of Singapore, Farrell pinpoints the crucial cause for Singapore's rapid collapse to an abject failure in military leadership.

Notwithstanding John Miksic's contribution on pre-British Singapore and the Southeast Asian concept of warfare in Chapter 1, the central theme of the book is primarily on Britain's role in the defence of Singapore. The consistent pattern revealed by the authors indicate Britain's reluctance to invest adequate resources in the defence of Singapore. Despite the significant financial contributions by the Straits Settlements and the Malay states to the imperial treasury, the defences of the local colonies were woefully inadequate. To underscore this point, Chiang Ming Shun highlights the onerous burdens shouldered by the Straits Settlements in contrast to other colonies within the empire.[1] In other words, the Straits Settlements, Singapore included, were subsidising the defence of other colonies to their own detriment. Even in the post-World War I period, when strategic considerations necessitated the establishment of a naval base in Singapore, London opted for the cheaper "Red Scheme" instead of the ideal, but more expensive "Green Scheme". Acceptance of this scheme effectively compromised the "Singapore Strategy" which envisaged the despatch of the British main fleet to Singapore in the event of hostilities in the Far East. The Treasury's parsimony ensured that the naval base would be ill-equipped to handle the enormous logistical demands of a relief battle fleet, if it ever arrived.

A most damning indictment of Britain's negligence in defence preparations was clearly shown in the outbreak of the 1915 Singapore Mutiny. The British preoccupation with the internal security threat posed by the transient migrant population was evident throughout the 19th century. Hence, a military garrison was provided as a defence against domestic disturbances. Yet, in 1915, the resident military garrison betrayed its trust by revolting against the population it had pledged to defend. Only the timely aid from neighbouring allies and the unplanned spontaneity of the Mutiny prevented the fall of Singapore into the hands of the mutineers.

The infamous fall of Singapore in February 1942 further highlights the inadequacy of British defence preparations against an external attack. Inadequate troop levels, indifferently-trained and generally poorly-led military forces constituted what in reality was a big bluff. Inherent command contradictions from grand strategy down to the tactical level ultimately compromised the British defence of Singapore.

To sum up this pattern of inadequate defences, the hurried nature of the British military withdrawal from Singapore in 1971 forced the fledging SAF to undertake Singapore's external defence almost overnight. Amidst the general negative regional security environment underscored by the termination of the

Confrontation in 1966 with Indonesia and the deepening American military quagmire in Vietnam, Britain's abandonment of Singapore to its fate owed much to its deteriorating economic malaise which made adherence to the "East of Suez" commitment untenable.

On all three occasions, Britain was distracted by more pressing problems nearer home: the primacy of the Western Front in the war against Germany; the grave German threat to the metropole in 1941, leading to the inadequate defence of the far Eastern colonies against the determined Japanese predation; and the inopportune truncation of British defence responsibilities at a critical juncture when Singapore was still vulnerable and recovering from the shock of sudden independence with all its attendant responsibilities. These three cases reveal only one thing: To quote Brian Farrell,

...when you are a distant bastion of empire, you may seem crucial today, but you can become expendable tomorrow. The only people who will always regard your security as the overriging priority are your own.[2]

This is why the current slogan of the Army is so apt: *always ready, always here*. When it comes to the crunch, we can only count on ourselves to see us through the adversity, whatever the odds, whatever the outcome. This is perhaps one of the most important insights provided by *Between Two Oceans*.

Notwithstanding its merits, the book suffers from certain flaws. Despite the release of onfficual government documentary records, Chapter 11 is too reliant upon secondary literature. The scholarship could have been improved if recourse to documentary sources had been made. Contrast the extensive use of archival sources in the earlier chapters and Appendix 3. Another point of contention centres on Japanese aerial capabilities. Farrell offers the conventional view that the British and Commonwealth air forces were poorly equipped and largely crewed by inexperienced pilots. In contrast, the Japanese air force was favourably appraised in his chapters.[3] A.D. Harvey disputes this contention.[4] He argues that the Japanese airfract were only marginally superior in certain technical respects *vis-à-vis* the Allied air opposition. The "formidable" and "ubiquitous" *Zero* naval fighter was both under-represented in actual combat establishments and only enjoyed a slim technical advantage over its opponents. Japanese aircraft, in Harvey's opinion, were over-rated and their performance, over-hyped. The decisive factor lay in the combat skills of Japanese aviators relative to their Allied counterparts.

Harvey, however, concurs with Farrell's contention that the air campaign was secondary to the land campaign. In fact, the rapid "progress of the Japanese advance on land throughout the South-East Asia offensive generally helped to achieve air superiority rather than depended on it."[5]

Yet, Harvey misses two crucial contributions of the Japanese air force to the Malayan Campaign. Strategically, the threat of the Japanese air force operating against Allied reinforcement convoys from the newly captured Northern Malayan airfields on the West Coast prompted the routing of Allied shipping through the less dangerous Sunda Straits which necessarily delayed the crucial reinforcement of Malayan Command. Second, Japanese air superiority enabled Yamashita to execute amphibious hooks down the flanks which totally unhinged various British defensive positions for fear of being cut off. These are issues that Farrell adequately addresses.

Between Two Oceans should head the officer's reading programme list. It is definitely worth the eight-year wait.

The abovementioned title is available for borrowing at the **SAFTI MI Library**. *The catalog references are:*

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Brian Farrel

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Endnotes

1 See Ch. 5, Table 2: Colonial Contributions, p. 121.

2 See p. 328.

3 See pp. 193, 214.

4 A.D. Harvey, "Army Air Force and Navy Air Force: Japanese Aviation and the Opening Phase of the War in the Far East", *War in History* 6, 2 (1999), 174-204.

5 Ibid., p. 194.

LTA (NS) Toh Boon Ho is currently a staff officer in Central National Education Office (CNEO). He holds a BA (Hons) from the National University of Singapore.