

# **POINTER**

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## Editorial

*POINTER* celebrates its 25th year in print this year - a significant milestone for what began as a compilation of articles on the methods and techniques of instruction. It has since evolved as a journal education and providing a forum and conduit for SAF officers to publish and discuss research on defence, security and professional issues. To mark the coming of age, *POINTER* has undergone a subtle facelift on its cover in an attempt to bring you the highlights at a glance. Beginning with this issue, the back cover of *POINTER* will feature works received in the Defence Art Competition between 1990 and 1996, to showcase the SAF as viewed in the eyes of talented Singaporeans.

Cover enhancement aside, this issue proves to be yet another varied collection with regional security issues getting some prominence. BG Stephen Wong highlights in *Asia-Pacific Security At the Turn of the Century* that building and maintaining a strong security architecture is the key to meeting the challenges in the fast-evolving Asia-Pacific security landscape. This paper was presented at the 4th AFR Meeting of Heads of Defence University/Colleges/Institutions held in Beijing from 6 to 8 Sep 2000. Dr Khoo How San discusses the 'neighbourhood watch group' concept in ASEAN in *Role of Defence Military in Regional Security Cooperation: An Interpretation of the ASEAN Practice. In Globalisation and Its Impact on Security in Southeast Asia*, MAJ Ronnie Lim takes the view that the state of the security environment in ASEAN is not directly influenced by globalisation due to the host of conflict-avoiding measures in place.

COL Noel Cheah in *Application of the Just War Tradition in Contemporary Wars Between States* posits that the just war tradition would offer a prescriptive model and working guide to decisionmakers on the conduct of a war. *Media Barrage!* by MAJ Irvin Lim Fang Jau gives an insight on the pervasive power of the media in various theatres, highlighting in the process, the importance of good perception management.

Mr Elvis Chung Chee Wei relooks the ill-fated Operation *Barbarossa* and offers alternative strategies Hitler could have pursued in *Hitler's Strategic Follies: Operation Barbarossa. Low-intensity Conflict* by MAJ Hong Kian Wah examines the effectiveness of conventional forces in democratic countries in countering illegitimate arms-organised groups. MAJ Lawrence Ng argues that to create an environment of enduring peace and stability, there needs to be systemic-level interaction where norms, rules and ideas are created in *Conditions For Peace and Stability in the Middle East. Logistics - A Combat Multiplier*, a joint effort by MAJ Ng Chan Cheok and MAJ Ng Tion Huat, highlights how the state of logistics war critical in determining success during the Korean and Gulf Wars, and looks at how logistics can be a combat multiplier in the SAF.

Budding book reviewers will be pleased to note that the rates for book reviews have been raised to \$120 in an attempt to encourage better quality reviews. So keep those reviews coming.

Those who would like quick access to book reviews can visit the revamped SAF Professional Reading Programme site at: [http://safti.mindef/safti/lib/reading\\_programme](http://safti.mindef/safti/lib/reading_programme)

Besides book reviews, the site now offers information on related works, including those available on CD-ROMs, website addresses, video and audio tapes.

Until the next issue, happy reading!

## Letter to the Editor

After reading the Jan-Mar 2000 issue of *POINTER* with its focus on technology, I wonder why armies today are so engrossed with the prospect of employing technology in war, indulging in the new information age and having a technology-savvy army that exemplifies the military "revolution".

Yes, technology will continue to play a vital role in conceptualising the operational frameworks employed by men to think about war. Technology can be a force multiplier. It can propel change in any army that embraces it but technology is an elusive factor: it is a double-edge sword. Let me offer some food for thought on technology and war.

Everyone will remember how the Y2K bug sent chills down our spines with its potentially crippling effect on computer systems world-wide and how the world held its breath in the early minutes at the dawn of the new millennium. Coupled with this threat, the advent in technology also presents new dangers: hackers, malicious viruses, cyber-attackers and network disrupters. The dangers are ever looming.

Some armies tended to substitute manpower by using seemingly new technology in war only to find that it yields marginal returns, eg. in the Vietnam War, the US Army was way ahead of its adversary in every area of the technological divide. Yet it was not the technology employed by the Americans that determined the outcome of the war. Non-technological factors like climate, terrain and resilience offset force multipliers in the form of technology. Such factors can force a superpower to fight on the simplest terms.

The fallacy of this whole discussion can be summarised as follows:

Empirically, technological advancement has been accompanied by the growth of the "tail" at the expense of the "teeth". With computerisation, networking and "internetted command" armies become increasingly reliant on civilian engineers, scientists, programmers and network administrators to manage their systems in war. These "back-end warriors" must surely become the growing "tail". Where military warriors do not have an answer to systems problems "back-end warriors" will be called upon to make technical decisions affecting operational systems for the commanders. They will become indispensable in times of war. This trend will force armies to weigh the limited manpower resource carefully to meet the increasing demand for "front-end warriors" versus "back-end warriors" or the "teeth" versus the "tail".

Any military would want to maintain a lead over its potential adversary in terms of technological edge. There is no guarantee that it will be very productive; on the contrary, it may prove to be counter-productive as nations heavily invest money, time and resources to put their command and control systems into operations and diverting much needed resources to training and the overall proficiency and competence of soldiers in a peacetime environment.

One should always be mindful that state-of-the-art technology comes with a heavy cost, shrinking numbers and rapid obsolescence. If the predicted 18-month cycle for technological change is correct, then this increases the time needed to field new systems rapidly into the battlefield. Armies that learn to crawl, walk and then run will find it very difficult to cope with the technological stride. Now, armies must start with running to catch up with the "technological train" and all this at the expense of training, learning and re-learning new technological skills to ensure currency. The man-to-machine interface or MMI is becoming an ever-increasing factor for operational consideration. To make the typical trooper a "cyber-warrior" overnight is only a dream. Imagine the typical rifleman, sailor or aircrew being a "cyber-warrior".

If armies relying heavily on technology are not getting any results from their efforts, it is because they are used primarily to improve 7 existing, old practices and familiar doctrines on the margin. This fallacy of using technology will cause armies to invest more for less in returns. This technological trap must be avoided.

New technology should be put to good use in re-engineering work processes, operational doctrines, training, logistics and organisation. Numerically inferior combat forces cannot be substituted with superior technology. Trying to offset quantitative force inferiority by exploiting new technology is a policy marked by the law of diminishing returns. Commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) technologies, internet technology and even emerging technology does not guarantee a viable solution to rectify force structure imbalances.

While being technology-savvy can boost the Army's image, it can result in an addiction to technological solutions whenever a problem crops up in the battlefield. This is an unhealthy trend. Technology should not be allowed to dictate the mission, organisation and the way the Army fights its wars. Instead, it should be made to serve the Army's aim. It is an "enabler" and it should be one that serves the operational needs.

The bottom-line for using technology to suit the today's Army and that of the future is the durability, manoeuvrability, sustainability and survivability of matching technology. These are critical factors in an age of increasing uncertainties in the battlefield.

The creative application of technology in war will eventually decide the outcome of a war. It is the ability to apply technology creatively to our operational doctrine that contributes to battlefield success. What counts is the ability to combine and synchronise hardware, quality training, sound operational doctrine and organisation into a single whole to deliver the "single decisive force" in the land battlefield. The way ahead for the army of the future is to exploit technology gainfully.

***LTC Tan Kim Seng***

*Branch Head, G3-Army*

## **2000 CDF Essay Competition**

**POINTER is pleased to announce the 14th Annual Chief of Defence Force Essay Competition. The competition aims to encourage SAF officers to conduct research on professional and military-related issues relevant to the SAF to enable our Officer Corps to move towards excellence.**

### **Rules**

1. The Competition is open to all SAF officers and Warrant Officers (Regulars, NUSAF, NSF, NSmen and Officer Cadets).
2. Entries may be submitted as an individual or group effort, however the entries must be unpublished work.
3. The essays should be between 2,000 to 4,000 words, typewritten, double-spaced on A4-size paper with all pages numbered.
4. A separate cover sheet with the following details should be included: essay title, writer's/writers' name(s), rank, Service status, unit, home address, contact number and word count. The writer's/writers' name(s) should not appear in the main essay. The essay title should be repeated on the first page of the essay.
5. All entries should include detailed footnotes/endnotes and a bibliography.
6. The closing date of the competition is **31 Dec 2000**. Entries which do not comply with any of the competition rules will be disqualified.
7. The essays will be assessed in confidence by an independent panel of judges. No appeals will be entertained. Results of the competition will be announced in May 2001.
8. The editorial board reserves the right to edit essays selected for publication.
9. For further information, please call the Editor at 799-7410 or Assistant Editor at 799-7409

### **Topics**

10. Entries may be submitted on any of the following subjects:
  - Military strategy and tactics
  - Doctrinal development and concepts in the SAF context
  - Professionalism and leadership in the military
  - Military ethics, values and esprit de corps
  - Military campaigns or history and their relevance to the SAF
  - Personal experiences in combat operations, overseas training
  - Administration, rescue operations and decision-making during a crisis
  - Regional geopolitics and strategic issues
  - Military and defence technology

### **Prizes**

- 11 Prizes will be awarded as follows:
  - First prize - \$1,500 and a plaque
  - Second prize - \$1,000 and a plaque

- Third prize - \$500 and a plaque
- 7 Merit Awards - \$300 each and a plaque
- 10 Commendation Awards - \$300 each

# **The Role of Defence/ Military in Regional Security Cooperation: An Interpretation of the ASEAN Practice**

*by DR Khoo How San*

At first glance, the heading, "The Role of Defence/ Military in Regional Security Cooperation" may seem puzzling. After all, what is security cooperation without the involvement of the military? But in the context of the ASEAN region, at least, the term "security cooperation" can be rather elusive. It is therefore useful to examine some aspects of security cooperation involving the ASEAN countries since 1967. At the outset, it could be said that ASEAN members have had to cope with two primary security concerns: intra-mural political and security issues; and managing their external environment including the regional balance of power. The occasional rhetoric about Southeast Asian states managing their own regional order notwithstanding, the interests of the external powers in the region are always palpable in the regional leaders' minds.

## **Regional Security Cooperation: The Threat Approach**

Leaving aside definitions, what are the concerns of ASEAN leaders that merit security cooperation? One can approach this from a conceptual basis and think of traditional military security issues at one end of a continuum merging into non-military security issues at the other end. Even this idea of "non-military security issues" may be problematic. But, to follow the logic of this continuum, one can imagine external military threat situations - or conventional security threats - on one hand, and non-military threat situations - or unconventional security threats - on the other hand.

A military attack or even the threat to launch such an attack is treated unambiguously as a conventional security threat. Under this circumstance, the notion of "security against" is applied, and security cooperation typically involves formal or informal military cooperation. To give meaning to such cooperation, a high degree of military joint planning, exchange of intelligence, training and exercising, etc, is expected during peacetime. Within this context, security cooperation may be bilateral or multilateral, but always involving military assets.

As one moves towards the other extreme, the notion of "security with" may begin to be applied. But this is not precise. To the extent that the military element is involved, the existence of military threats and the need for military preparedness and deterrence is acknowledged. But whereas the mindset of those involved in alliances is "exclusiveness" (that is, excluding the source of the potential threat), the mindset of those involved in "security with" is "inclusiveness", which seeks to overcome mutual security concerns through confidence-and trust-building measures, notification of military exercises, security dialogues, preventive diplomacy, defence diplomacy, etc. The ASEAN Regional Forum is premised on such an assumption. So are the extensive networks and activities of military-to-military defence diplomacy that have developed in the region.

To the extent that the military element is not involved, at least not for the purpose of defence or offence, "security with" addresses a wide array of unconventional threats. These may range from piracy, narcotics and terrorist threats to ecological and environmental threats. There is a role for military assets to be deployed cooperatively in anti-piracy, anti-narcotics and anti-terrorist operations. However, if military assets are deployed in fighting, say, the regional haze phenomenon, or in evacuating people from a natural disaster, such use is a civil resource deployment.

## Regional Security Cooperation: The Neighbourhood Watch Approach

There is another way of examining the security outlook of ASEAN leaders which helps to highlight their thinking on regional security cooperation. It accommodates elements of the "security against" mindset into its essentially "security with" mindset. In this formulation, the grouping's founding leaders wisely chose not to formally endorse military security cooperation on an ASEAN basis. They also wisely adopted the norm that only bilateral military cooperation was acceptable among ASEAN members while imposing no restriction on such cooperation with friendly external powers. On the other hand, political cooperation was widely interpreted, was not limited to bilateral activities, and was actively pursued on an ASEAN-wide basis. Such cooperation found expression mostly in diplomatic initiatives, which gave the most prominent role to the ASEAN foreign ministers. The rules of the 'ASEAN way' of cooperation were therefore set by the foreign ministers, who decided, for example, that foreign military bases in some ASEAN countries were "temporary". It was they who decided in 1992 that "security issues" could now be put on the agenda at their annual ministerial meetings and during the follow-on dialogues involving external powers. Their purview was thus wide-ranging. In fact, their common purpose was regional political stabilisation, a broad idea that served as the link in the management of political, security, and economic cooperation within ASEAN.

If political stability, both domestic and regional, was the overriding concern, then ASEAN could be suitably depicted as a "neighbourhood watch group".<sup>1</sup> The neighbourhood watch group (NWG) idea borrows from the municipal crime prevention concept in which the residents of a locality claim an active role in assisting the police to eliminate crime in their neighbourhood, by looking out for each other, and improving the quality of life in their neighbourhood. The appeal of an NWG derives from the assumption that residents of a neighbourhood "know best their own specific problems, strengths, resources and needs. They know best the people that live in the neighbourhood. Neighbourhoods are made up of people who have the power to protect each other's safety".<sup>2</sup> Of course, as applied to ASEAN in the inter-governmental sense, the residents and police are the same state actors. Also, as already emphasised, both residents and police are ever aware that foreigners (the external powers) are either always in the neighbourhood or follow its developments very closely.

Embedded in the NWG idea is self-interest reinforcing a mutual stake in regional stability. It embodies several ideas associated with the grouping's emphasis on regional political stabilisation, that is, the mutually agreed premium placed on political stability embodied in central power and regardless of each state's political processes. These ideas include: good neighbourliness, a hallmark which is the pre-requisite of "getting to know each other", non-interference and respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, national and regional resilience, and consensus and consultation. Strongly suggestive of these ideas are the notions that trouble-makers could come from within the neighbourhood or elsewhere, and that member households would cultivate goodwill towards each other.

Given each member country's domestic concerns with religious, ethnic and other sectarian fault lines, none is expected to be his "brother's keeper". In the event that quarrels break out between affected households, these are no business of other households, although discreet mediation is not excluded. On the other hand, members face the dilemma that they cannot always look the other way since these social cleavages of ethnicity, race and religion, etc., in a region of porous and contested borders, carry the danger of inter-state "spillovers" when domestic tensions arise. Members are also acutely aware that their regional order has always been influenced by the international politics of external powers. In short, the idea of ASEAN as a neighbourhood watch group highlights its members' sensitivity to mutual vulnerabilities and changes in the external environment.

### ASEAN's Security Practice

The description above of ASEAN as a neighbourhood watch group should not convey the impression that security cooperation (in ensuring the safety of the neighbourhood) is uniformly and comfortably practiced throughout the grouping. Clearly, there are NWGs which are effective, perhaps because these are small neighbourhoods and everyone has come to know each other very well. Other NWGs may be less effective, again for various possible reasons including changes in the *status quo*.

Applying this framework, one can identify an inner core within ASEAN of at least three countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore (the maritime trio). Before the onset of the 1997 Asian crisis, bilateral security cooperation has been most advanced and regularised among them. The quality of networking and activities among defence ministry officials and senior officers from these three countries has also been very high. Thailand may be said to be also a close security partner of the maritime trio. In addition, all four countries are engaged in security cooperation with external powers, albeit in varying degrees. Finally, Brunei and the Philippines have, since the end of the Cold War, become more involved in this web of security cooperation.

This pattern among the original ASEAN-6 (the founding five and Brunei) reflects the ASEAN dynamics. The legacy of Indonesia's disruptive Confrontation on the sub-regional order created the climate for the maritime trio to explore a "do-able" bilateral security cooperation. As already noted, the pre-eminent role of the foreign ministers and their common concern with political stabilisation encouraged political cooperation and networking among foreign ministry officials. This in turn paved the way for the defence ministries to implement security cooperation. Exchange of intelligence, for example, between Indonesia and Malaysia on communist remnants along the Kalimantan-Sarawak border has been both a substantive measure as well as a confidence-building measure.

Malaysia and Indonesia began this process of confidence-building, border security cooperation and joint exercises soon after ASEAN was established. Their series of joint exercises now comprise *Ex Kekar Malindo* (army), *Ex Malindo Jaya* (navy), *Ex Elang Malindo* (air force), and *Ex Malindo Darsasa* (armed forces). Singapore-Malaysia defence cooperation outside the Five-Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) rubric took some time to gather momentum but has also advanced. For example, the Singapore-Malaysia Defence Cooperation Forum, jointly chaired by the two defence ministers, has been set up to focus on joint training and defence industry projects.<sup>3</sup>

Joint naval exercises between Singapore and Indonesia were initiated in 1974, air force exercises in 1980 and land forces in 1989. In the past decade, more tangible cooperation has occurred. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in March 1989 made provision for Singapore troops to train in Indonesia. Following their successful joint development of the Siabu Air Weapons Range (in eastern Sumatra), Singapore and Indonesia proceeded, in 1991, to develop an electronic Air Combat Manoeuvring Range (ACMR) at Pekan Baru, near Siabu. The ACMR was completed in 1995. Since 1992, Singapore and Indonesia have also begun coordinating anti-piracy operations in their littoral waters.

Thailand has had long-established border security cooperation with Malaysia, and also conducts bilateral military exercises with Malaysia and Singapore. In recent years, the Singapore air force has joined the Thai and United States air forces in their major annual *Cope Tiger* air exercise, and the Singapore army will join the large-scale US-Thai *Cobra Gold* exercise this year.<sup>4</sup>

Brunei was not actively engaged in ASEAN security cooperation until the early 1990s largely because of its close defence ties with Britain. However, it established defence cooperation with Singapore after it joined ASEAN in 1984. Following the signing of an MoU in 1992, Brunei and Malaysia have since initiated a series of naval and land exercises. Since the last decade, Brunei has also expanded its security links to include the US and Australia. In the case of the Philippines, its bilateral defence treaty with the US and geographical distance provided little incentive to look to other ASEAN members for security cooperation. Moreover, the existence of the now dormant Philippine claim to Sabah acted as a damper on security links between the armed forces of the Philippines and Malaysia. Nevertheless, since the mid-1990s, the two countries have begun to revive their defence cooperation. The Philippines, meanwhile, resumed large-scale joint exercises with the US this year.

None of the newer ASEAN members - Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, and Cambodia, have yet to meaningfully work themselves into the ASEAN web of security cooperation. Political caution, lack of funds, and incompatible training doctrines and weapon systems would be among the likely reasons. However, in a tentative confidence-building move, the navies of Vietnam and Thailand have agreed to conduct joint patrols in the Gulf of Thailand where both countries have overlapping claims.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, in the spirit of inclusive confidence-building and security dialogue participation in the Asia-Pacific, these countries are increasingly represented in a slew of activities organised, for example, by the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the Council

for Security and Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP), Pacific Area Special Operations Conference (PASOC), and the Pacific Armies Chiefs Conference (inaugurated in Singapore in September 1999). They have also begun to participate in ASEAN activities like the ASEAN Rifle Meet.

Finally, the US and Australia have, since the last decade, stepped up bilateral and multi-lateral military exercises with the ASEAN-6. For example, the US conducts a series of bilateral naval training exercises titled, CARAT (Cooperation Afloat, Readiness and Training) with ASEAN countries. In CARAT '99, the ASEAN countries involved were Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. The US also conducts the annual Western Pacific Naval Symposium.

## **Conclusion**

During the Cold War, ASEAN wisely chose not to be a military alliance. As noted in the introduction above, two primary security concerns of the founding members were: intra-mural political and security issues; and managing their external environment including the regional balance of power. ASEAN may in fact be depicted as a neighbourhood watch group whose primary purpose is political stabilisation of the region. Among the ASEAN-6, security cooperation was preceded by political cooperation. The pace was set by diplomacy, and security cooperation and defence diplomacy followed. Similarly, security cooperation with external powers evolved incrementally. Today, a dense set of bilateral and multilateral defence and security activities exist, and the newer ASEAN members have begun to take the first steps to join this web of activities. The role of the military in security cooperation in the ASEAN region has, as a result, been greatly enhanced.

## **Endnotes**

**1. See my article, "ASEAN as a 'Neighbourhood Watch Group'," published in the August 2000 issue of *Contemporary Southeast Asia*.**

**2. Extracted from the mission statement Welcome to Syracuse Neighbourhood Watch issued by the City of Syracuse (New York) Police Department on behalf of the Neighbourhood Watch Groups of Syracuse. <http://www.syracuse.ny.us/syrmayor/Services/Police/neigwatch.html>. [accessed on 3 Feb 2000]**

**3. *Reuter News Service*, 25 October 1994.**

**4. *Straits Times*, 14 January 2000.**

**5. Brook, Micool, "Do Joint Military Exercises Enhance Security in ASEAN?", *Asian Defence Journal*, 9/99.**

***This paper was presented as part of the ASEAN Regional Forum's professional development programme for foreign affairs and defence officials held from 23 to 28 April 2000 in Brunei Darussalam.***

# Globalisation and Its Impact on Security in Southeast Asia

by MAJ Ronnie Lim Gek Seng

ASEAN has faced diverse challenges since its establishment in 1967. From the time of its inception to the end of the Cold War, ASEAN's main preoccupation has been with challenges to its security in terms of military threats. With the end of the Cold War, as the military confrontation subsided, the challenges appear to come from other fronts, notably in the aspects of economic growth and cooperation.<sup>1</sup> The recent economic crisis is probably one of the greatest challenges faced by ASEAN.

With the financial crisis, confidence in the Asian economic miracle has been severely shaken. Serious doubts have been raised in the region about the 'benefits' of rapid globalisation and economic interdependence. Globalisation, which had been a significant phenomenon in this region, has been blamed for exacerbating the contagious spread of the financial crisis from one country to the entire region.<sup>2</sup>

The effect of globalisation is wide-ranging. The economic, political and security environment today is rapidly shaped by globalisation that it has become the framework on which businesses, the economy and government relations operate. The positive effects of globalisation are evident - rapidly rising standards of living and the emergence of a vibrant middle class. However, globalisation has also exhibited negative effects, as seen in the contagion effect of the financial crisis.

Globalisation has had a profound impact on security and the economy, however it does not infer that globalisation, on its own, can create such a substantial change in the security situation in ASEAN as to cause the region to escalate into a war footing. In fact, it is perceived that the negative effects of globalisation are unlikely to cause a decisive move towards animosity in the ASEAN context, as the effects are negated by a host of conflict-avoiding measures that are existent in ASEAN today eg, the provisions under ARF/APEC, preventive diplomacy, confidence-building measures, interdependent economies etc. Conversely, the positive effects of globalisation has facilitated the implementation of these conflict-avoidance measures and helped bring a peaceful settlement of issues in many instances. Moreover, for countries in the region to be inclined towards war, a number of factors would have to be present, eg. deterioration of inter-state relations, instability of government, imbalance of power, and the presence of ill-perceived threats, to name a few.

It is thus felt that the state of the security environment in ASEAN is not directly driven by globalisation, but by the interplay of numerous factors, some of which may be facilitated by globalisation. Though the financial crisis, symptomatic of the ill effects of globalisation, has resulted in a number of minor conflicts between some ASEAN states, the positive effects of globalisation has enabled those same issues to be managed amicably, thus reducing the risk of further hostility.

## Effects of Globalisation

Globalisation in its widest context, refers to the process where "social relations acquire relatively distanceless and borderless qualities, so that human lives are increasingly played out in the world as a single place."<sup>3</sup> Country locations, and in particular the boundaries between territorial states are in some important aspects, becoming less central to our lives, although they do remain significant. Globalisation is thus a continual trend whereby the world has, in many respects and at a generally accelerating rate, become one relatively borderless social environment. Globalisation may be featured in the following dimensions :

- Communication technology eg. computer networks, telephony, electronic mass media, allowing immediate contact, irrespective of the location and state borders that might lie between them.
- The expansion of 'global factories' in sectors like motor cars and micro-electronics, where various stages of production are not confined within a national boundary, but linked across several countries.

- The emergence of round-the-clock, round-the-world stock markets, commodities markets and the massive use of 'international' currencies eg. US dollars and German mark, as a trading currency throughout the world.

## **Impact of Globalisation on Economy and Trade**

The development of global markets has been facilitated by the spread of global monies. Foreign exchange dealings have become a thoroughly trans-border business. This round-the-clock, round-the-world market is not limited by time and space. Trading is transpired without limitations of distance and transactions are concluded over the telephone and confirmed by e-mail between buyers or sellers across great distances. Trans-border money also assumes other forms, such as the *Visa* and *Mastercard*, and are readily accepted world-wide for purchases, whatever the local denomination.<sup>4</sup>

For developed countries and the Southeast Asian countries, globalisation implies the breakdown of boundaries as barriers to economic exploitation. Each country, rich or poor, developed or otherwise, would have access to every other country. With the recent economic crisis, a notable feature of the effects of globalisation was the speed at which the crisis spread across Southeast Asia. The pace at which the crisis had picked up is a direct consequence of economic interdependence and globalisation.

On the other hand, the earlier-than-expected recovery of the financial crisis has been attributed to the renewed growth of the electronics industry in the West, the strengthening of the Yen, and also the gradual return of foreign direct investments to this region in view of the increased stability in some of the ASEAN countries. This gradual return to economic normalcy was to a large extent, facilitated by favourable market sentiments and renewed demand which stimulated domestic output. As these markets operate within a global context: an increase in demand in turn increases trans-border production outputs. A significant offshoot from globalisation is the consistent growth in economic interdependence over the last few years.

## **Regional Conflict Or War?**

With globalisation, given the circumstances of the financial crisis and its recovery, there are no substantive reasons to believe that the region and its ASEAN members will escalate into a war footing. The following reasons outline the various rationale why war is unlikely to occur as a direct consequence of globalisation:

### **• Model for Conflict Management**

The creation of ASEAN is the result of collaborative efforts by some Southeast Asian states to create an association to provide a platform for successful management of disputes among them. The creation was the desire of its original member states, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, to manage existing and potential inter-state disputes through peaceful means and minimise the risk of militarised conflicts. There was, therefore, a desire to secure a peaceful and cooperative environment in Southeast Asia, this being the significant contributing factor to the creation of ASEAN. ASEAN was from the outset created for conflict management.

The approach to dispute/conflict management<sup>5</sup> within ASEAN involves two aspects:

- Mechanisms are formulated in different ASEAN declarations and treaties;
- ASEAN members negotiate and reach a common understanding on various issues, within the framework of consultation, consensus, and non-interference in the internal affairs of another country.

The ASEAN states have managed to build confidence, familiarity and an understanding of each other's positions on different issues through a system of informal and formal meetings between the leaders, ministers and senior officials of the members states. The economic crisis that gripped the region is unlikely

to significantly undermine this confidence, familiarity and understanding. Although severe financial and political turmoil in some countries had triggered a series of 'squabbles' on the type and magnitude of financial aid expected and could be given, as in the case of Singapore's aid to Indonesia, this has not totally displaced the long-term relationship. Ultimately, diplomacy prevailed in averting a potentially hostile situation between the two countries. The diplomatic gestures included humanitarian aid to Indonesia, and a call on then President Habibie by Singapore's Second Defence Minister, RADM (NS) Teo Chee Hean. To a large extent, globalisation has facilitated the extension of financial aid, bank guarantees (Letters of Credit), and humanitarian aid to be made easily accessible to Indonesia through the processes of inter-bank and inter-organisation linkages between the two countries.

ASEAN countries understand that mutual support in the long-term is still needed to maintain a strong and economically vibrant region. Thus, ASEAN's approach to conflict management has primarily been geared towards preventing new conflicts from emerging and preventing existing conflicts from disrupting inter-state relations. As one long-time observer of ASEAN put it, "ASEAN is not directly about problem-solving, but about creating the milieu in which they either do not arise or can be readily managed". Historical records support that judgement. ASEAN's forte in conflict avoidance has meant that in its nearly 30 years of co-existence, there has not been a shot fired in anger among the ASEAN governments. Pioneer.

## • **Economics and Security**

The relationship between economics and security is a complex one, depending on which factor features more powerfully in the minds of the decision-makers at a particular juncture. Sometimes, concerns of nationalism or sovereignty may be so strong that a country may be prepared to enter into inter-state conflicts despite economic interdependence, and the resulting economic losses. The Taiwan Straits crisis of March 1996 showed that such a danger cannot be discounted, given the problems of divided countries (Korea & Taiwan) and the various territorial disputes in the region.

However, the relationship between economics and security has been positive in ASEAN so far. This is because the leaders of almost all the countries, and their likely successors have been committed to economic growth and development. They have vivid memories of insurgencies, war revolutions and political instability and how economies were consequently set back. Economic growth in ASEAN is underpinned by regional security, which is fuelled by the process of globalisation. Through globalisation, the ASEAN states experienced phenomenal growth, which in turn has generated wealth, prosperity and internal security within the region.

Even with the onslaught of the financial crisis, the importance of economics and security was not under-emphasised, when Singapore and Malaysia offered financial aid to Indonesia, in the form of credit facilities. Both countries and others in ASEAN recognised the imperative that helping Indonesia recover from the crisis implied not only political stability within the country, but also regional security and stability as a whole. Furthermore, as the region braced itself for a sooner-than-expected recovery from the crisis, the ASEAN leaders were even more prudent in maintaining an amicable economic relationship among themselves.

## • **Improbability of Resource Wars**

Countries go to war for a variety of reasons. In the past, wars were often resource wars (wars to gain resources) - for land, to expand human settlement, or for food or other resources. Sovereignty issues also cause armed conflicts - perhaps as important previously, although perhaps less now for outright war. Motives for such conflicts in the regions do not for the most part concern economic issues, other than the resources i.e. oil, gas, fish that island territorial disputes involve, as in the example of the Spratlys where the main contention is the oil-rich resources that the atolls could provide.

Nevertheless, the resource motivations for conquest in the past are less significant now that education, technology and the national manpower resource skills are more substantial sources of

wealth. Although natural resources in some countries have contributed to immense wealth, the highly industrialised world today thrives on economies with a leading advantage in technological skills, financial stability, and good governance to bring in foreign investments. Globalisation has enabled the opportunity for an economy to be 'networked' with the external world where technological and economic activities abound. It is precisely the dependence on these very factors that Singapore, devoid of natural resources, has remained relatively unscathed during the financial crisis.

Going to war for the purpose of gaining resources is highly improbable, as governments contemplating to do so, would weigh the costs against the benefits to be reaped from an outright war. For example, Vietnam had been secure with oil freely available on the open markets and it is less costly and more efficient to gain resources through the market than through the conquest of another country. Consequently, as the country's 'wealth' is increasingly enshrined in the quality of its technology-based economy and stable governance, an inclination to declare war to gain resource becomes even more remote.

- **Constructive Engagement With APEC and AFR**

The post-Cold War period saw the building of much needed institutions for dialogue and cooperation. The two most important Asia-Pacific-wide official institutions to emerge in recent years have been the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum.<sup>7</sup>

APEC is not a security organisation. But it is important to security indirectly. Rapid economic growth and interdependence underpin security in Southeast Asia. Conflicts within and between states can arise if economics go wrong. It is in everyone's interest, and the ASEAN members have been quick to affirm that to continue the present circle of prosperity will lead to more security, which in turn will contribute to more continued prosperity. APEC, by facilitating trade and investments and by dealing with economic disputes, had contributed to economic security, and ultimately to security. Secondly, APEC is an Asia-Pacific-wide institution. It annually brings together 18 countries, including the three most important major powers of the region - the US, China and Japan, at the heads of government-level. Keeping the major powers engaged in the region has contributed also to economic growth and balance of power security. A balance of power in the Asia Pacific, particularly Southeast Asia, with a strong American military presence had been regarded as essential. Interstate conflicts will be 'kept in check' by US presence, which is committed to ensuring peace and economic growth of the region for the benefit of the rest of the world order. Since the end of the Cold War, the US has 'globalised' the major parts of the world in its bid to maintain global peace and order. Thus, an armed conflict is not probable amongst ASEAN, given the reprisals of having to contend with this major military power.

The purpose of the ARF is to promote confidence by encouraging frank discussions on security issues and build an understanding of the different points of view and concerns. The ARF is a cooperative security arrangement, not a collective security or defence arrangement. The idea of a cooperative framework, has over time, evolved certain principles and codes of conduct, established international rules and norms (especially the non-use of force to settle disputes) to be adhered by all. The restraints against errant behaviour - peer pressure and political price, and not punitive measures. The most recent ARF held in Singapore, amongst other issues, laid the framework for preventive diplomacy to be defined and also the scope for a Regional Conduct Code for claimants to the disputed Spratlys (claimed in part by four ASEAN countries -Malaysia, Brunei, Vietnam and the Philippines). A clear sign of the usefulness of this forum has been the acquiescence of the major powers, US and China, one of the claimants, in the drafting of the Conduct Code. Further diplomatic efforts were boosted with the agreement to define and implement subsequently, the scope of preventive diplomacy - which is likely to herald a new dimension in bilateral and multi-lateral relations amongst the ARF member countries. The ARF will continue to play a useful role as long as it remains in the interest of all members to be engaged in cooperative security in this manner. In such a context, ASEAN has the impetus to advance the cause of cooperative security.

- **Economic Interdependence**

Increased interdependence, by itself, will not prevent conflict. Sovereignty claims, as over Taiwan (or the Falklands), illustrate that cost is, at times, irrelevant. Nevertheless, while perceived threats can lead to conflicts with an increase in arms expenditure, the greater a country's dependence on another, the greater the cost of conflict. Other things being equal, the likelihood of conflict would be small. Other things are not equal of course, but if two countries are significantly interdependent, then it is less likely that there would be conflict.<sup>8</sup>

The ASEAN region has offered fertile ground for the development of a close economic co-operative community. A significant offshoot of such a closely-knit economic interdependence is the convergence of interest which in turn produces shared values that can help reduce differences and facilitate peaceful settlement of disputes. The belief in the positive contribution of economic interdependence to regional peace and stability provides the rationale for ASEAN countries to 'engage' each other in the regional economy. Over the years, globalisation has allowed ASEAN countries to develop a measure of economic interdependence through multi-lateral trade arrangements and cooperation eg. the Johor-Riau- Singapore Growth Triangle. The economies of most of the ASEAN nations today are so closely intertwined that a crisis in one economy or country affects the well-being of the other. For two ASEAN countries to enter into a conflict would result in 'economic suicide' as both the economies would invariably suffer from such action. For example, Myanmar, which exports close to 37 percent of its products to ASEAN and imports 67 percent of its total imports from ASEAN countries alone, would not find it economically viable to enter into a conflict with ASEAN countries and jeopardise its growing economy.

Thus far, economic interdependence in the ASEAN region appears to have enhanced regional security. Notwithstanding the financial crisis, it can be argued that economic interdependence and globalisation in the region have contributed to economic growth and development of regional countries and to the economic dynamism of the region as a whole. As the well-being of the people in the region increases, the region becomes more stable; this in turn improves the region's security.

- **Treaty of Amity and Co-operation**

The regional association continues to manifest a strong adherence to the international norms of behaviour that it has 'ASEANised' in its own Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC). These norms, which include mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity and national identity of all nations, the right to freedom from external interference in one's internal affairs, settlement of disputes, and renunciation of the threat or use of force, constitute the basis of the group's unity that ASEAN represents.<sup>9</sup>

Over the years, ASEAN has seen a gradual change in the behaviour of most ASEAN leaders in their adherence to the norms as enshrined in the TAC. In a true sense, the TAC mechanisms have never been invoked, but what has evolved from the years of familiarity and understanding is the 'intangible but real spirit of ASEAN' as the basis for accommodation over contentious issues. ASEAN leaders have elected to depend on bi-lateral dialogue or rational measures to right prejudices or disagreements arising between two countries. For example, Malaysia and Singapore have lately manifested a more pragmatic disposition by agreeing to submit their long-standing claims over Pedra Branca for adjudication by the International Court of Justice (ICJ). And in a similar departure from previous inflexibility, Indonesia has agreed with Malaysia to submit their territorial claim over Ligitan and Sipadan to the ICJ following a summit meeting between the President Suharto and Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad in Kuala Lumpur in October 1996. Both are examples in ASEAN where other territorial disputes over islands (for example, the Sengakku/Daioyu islands and the Takashima/ Tokdo islands) have inflamed passions and led to greater volatility in the relations between states.

## • **Diplomacy**

ASEAN diplomacy is grounded in the pragmatism of its political elites. It can be observed that the ASEAN approach towards 'personalised' conflict management is far more important than a formal mechanism. Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong observed in September 1995 that "ASEAN has emphasised principles, concepts and processes rather than structures and institutional frameworks". ASEAN states have, by and large employed careful diplomacy to bring about mutually beneficial solutions, or if total solutions cannot be sought, to at least ensure that both countries are not unduly disadvantaged by the resulting arrangements. As ASEAN countries have also gradually socialised into a 'society' where consensus counts more than open confrontation, contentious issues will continue to be given priority within diplomacy channels for settlement. The recent case of the conflicts over the CIQ and water issues between Malaysia and Singapore saw a number of high level dialogues between the two countries, including talks between the two Prime Ministers.

## **Conclusion**

Southeast Asia has been, in economic terms, the most dynamic region in the world. There has been a vast improvement in the economic and social indicators, especially of the ASEAN-Six. Over the past 30 years, there have been various bilateral disputes between ASEAN countries, including territorial ones, but none have led to military conflict. Today, it is difficult to think of military conflicts between ASEAN states. The "ASEAN spirit" has emerged from the numerous meetings between political leaders and officials over the years. Its main elements emphasises personal relationships rather than formal legalistic structures; an informal rather than formal approach to problem-solving; and consensus-building. These principles have served ASEAN well, during the initial tumultuous period. It is therefore not difficult to envisage ASEAN holding on to the same principles of consensus that has held the association together since its inception.

As ASEAN progresses with phenomenal economical growth and in the technology age, it has ostensibly embraced globalisation as a means of conducting its political and economic activities. Although globalisation has been touted as a cause of the spread of the financial crisis, it has enabled regional governments to manage and resolve contentious issues with a far greater measure of influence and flexibility.

Globalisation has fuelled the phenomenal economic miracle in Southeast Asia. But the linkage between globalisation and economic security is evident which Robert Scalapino 11 notes will result in the less likely use of force in ASEAN :

*"The intricately interwoven economic ties binding states together will reduce incentives to resort to violence in resolving inter-state disputes. Given the disruptions that would occur to each state's economy, the costs of regional conflict are growing rapidly. Today and in the future, any war conducted with one's neighbours will penetrate deeply into the very marrow of one's own economic system."*

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# The Application of the Just War Tradition in Contemporary Wars Between States

by COL Noel Cheah

*The Great War to end all wars at the beginning of the last century never did. Ironically, it heralded an unprecedented trend of destructiveness that would characterise subsequent wars in the century. Man's record of peace has been less than encouraging. Just when we thought the Cold War was over, the world was soon caught up in a major fight against Iraqi aggression in the Gulf. Even as this is being written, there are wars of different magnitudes ongoing. There are also many hot-spots where potential wars could start. In spite of attempts by states and global bodies like the United Nations to prevent war, the apparent inevitability of its occurrence indicates that there is a practical and realistic need to manage wars within the bounds of humanity. This essay proposes that the just war tradition could offer a model to facilitate this. This does not imply that states should not continue to strive for the ideal situation of peaceful coexistence where conflict is resolved through non-violent means. Indeed, this essay argues that given man's propensity for war, the just war tradition offers a prescriptive model to serve as a working guide for statesmen, military commanders and ordinary citizens in the decision-making and the conduct of war.*

*This essay will provide a brief background on the historical origins and development of the just war tradition. It will provide the criteria and framework for the analysis and critique of the just war model, with the emphasis specifically on the application of this criteria. The essay aims to provide an understanding of how the just war tradition works and of its relevance to contemporary wars. The essay will be confined to dealing with conventional wars between states.*

The origins of modern day thinking on just war can be traced to the writings of St. Augustine, during a time when Christianity had become the official state religion of the Roman Empire. His concept of just war was an effort to reconcile the contradiction between killing in war and the Christian tenet against taking human lives.<sup>1</sup> He wrote that just wars had to be waged by a duly constituted authority or sovereign and for a just or worthy cause. A just cause comprised the preservation of the state, punishing a neighbouring state for the transgressions of its citizens, restoring wrongly appropriated lands or removing land from a tyrannical ruler. However, Augustine's emphasis was on *jus ad bellum* or the reasons justifying war. This is regarded as the classical just war tradition. Later, St. Aquinas added on the criterion of right intention to Augustine's list.<sup>2</sup>

In the 16th century, the element of *jus in bello* or the conduct of war, added a new dimension to the just war theory. It was introduced by scholars such as Francisco Vitoria and Francisco Suarez. However, it was Grotius who played a more significant role in emphasising the importance of *jus in bello* in his works on the laws of war. He went further than Vitoria and Suarez to advocate that the conduct of war should be limited by law. He also broke away from the traditional Christian mould of just war by adopting a secular approach. His most noted work, *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*, written in 1625, was in essence, a mix of secular natural law and customs though it was influenced by the classical Christian just war tradition.<sup>3</sup> While Grotius acknowledged and accepted the classical tradition of *jus ad bellum* he believed that *jus in bello* was just as important. He also added to the list of conditions for *jus ad bellum* the criteria that the just war had to be waged by a lawful sovereign authority<sup>4</sup> and advocated the need for war declarations and the use of just means.

From the 17th century onwards *jus ad bellum* lost its significance in the Westphalian "international[sic]" system in Europe, as monarchs went to war with each other as they chose.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, *jus in bello* became the priority. This was due largely to the influence of chivalric codes of the "knightly class" which served as a restraint in the conduct of war.<sup>6</sup> Apart from the chivalric code, the high cost of maintaining mercenary armies was probably a practical consideration that dictated the moderation of violence and bloodshed in military encounters. It finally took two highly destructive World Wars in the 20th century to rekindle interest

in the *jus ad bellum* component. This leads to the crux of this essay, that the contemporary just war model must entail both components of *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* in its criteria.

## Contemporary Just War Model

The contemporary just war model comprises:

- Just cause
- Lawful or competent authority
- Last resort (and declaration of war)
- Right intention · Proportionality
- Reasonable chance of success
- Observance of rules in the conduct of war i.e. *jus in bello* 7.

The above criteria are not listed in order of importance or priority, though just cause and *jus in bello* tend to receive more attention in the works of just war scholars since they are the more significant of the criteria. It is essential to highlight that *jus in bello* plays a distinct and unique role vis-à-vis the other criteria which generally serve the *jus ad bellum* function (with the exception of proportionality which is also one of the principles that influence the conduct of war). The main distinction of *jus in bello* is that it can only be measured with an ongoing war.

## Just Cause

The contemporary just war model adopts the Grotius' conditions for just cause: self-defence, recovery of property and punitive action against an aggressor.<sup>8</sup> This is cognisant of the fact that going to war implies the act of killing which contradicts both the religious as well as non-religious ethical beliefs which hold lives as sacred and inviolable. The basis for just war lies in the principle of preserving and defending human lives, property and the state against an aggressor.<sup>9</sup> This applies to aggression directed against oneself as well as against a third party. Punishing the aggressor is intended to serve as a deterrence. These considerations have accorded a legal basis in international law, as embodied in Articles 2 and 51 of the *UN Charter*. These Articles outlaw the use of force, including the threat of its use against the territorial integrity or political sovereignty of a member state.<sup>10</sup> It also legalises the use of force either unilaterally or collectively against acts of aggression. A recent example of its application was the UN-sanctioned military response to Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait in 1991. <sup>11</sup>

The application and determination of just cause is a complex process. Much of the difficulty lies in defining aggression. The UN itself took from 1923 to 1974 to produce an official definition of aggression.<sup>12</sup> Even with this official definition, there are still controversies over the issues of aggression, threat and correspondingly, just cause itself. This is compounded by the unavoidable element of subjectivity and the influence of other factors like national interests, balance of power and ideology. For example, during the Cold War era, aggression was often perceived and defined in ideological terms. Had the Cold War continued, the UN and the international community would probably not have reached a quick consensus on Iraq's aggression in the Gulf War.

It may appear easy and logical to accuse the one who fires the first shot as the aggressor. However, this is to over-simplify war and conflict in the international arena. Given the usual military posturing prior to any shooting, war has never been clear-cut. This is particularly in the case of pre-emptive offensive wars which have been used as a form self-defence. The 1967 Arab-Israeli 'Six Day War' is a good illustration. Israel initiated the hostilities by attacking Egypt across its borders, predicated on the threat of an imminent attack <sup>13</sup> after Egyptian forces had been mobilised and deployed along the Sinai border. Earlier, the UN Emergency Force had been expelled by the Egyptian government. Syria, Jordan and Iraq had also expressed support for an Egyptian military option while President Nasser had publicly announced that if Egypt went to war, its aim would be to destroy Israel. Israel justified its action on the grounds of strategic military necessity. It was not prepared to accept a period of protracted tension which threatened its security and economic survival.

Moreover, Israel lacked the strategic depth to fight a defensive war. Although it was a controversial case, it has been recognised by some scholars as a *bona fide* case of just cause.<sup>14</sup>

The Falklands War was a case where both belligerents claimed just cause based on their conflicting perceptions and interpretations of ownership. Both Great Britain and Argentina referred to historical, cultural and legal justifications to support their claims. After years of fruitless negotiations, Argentina resorted to settling the issue militarily by occupying the islands. The British government responded by resorting to military action to retake the islands. If territory was the issue in question, then the right of ownership would determine the aggressor. However, the ownership issue was a problem then and has still not been resolved conclusively. Thus, while this war meets many of the other just war criteria, there is still the element of doubt on whose just war it was - Britain's or Argentina's ?

Could it be that both sides had adequate basis of just cause, contrary to Vitoria's assertion that only one side can be objectively just in its cause ? <sup>15</sup> What happens when it is not possible to achieve true objectivity in this situation? (Some would argue that true objectivity does not exist. Some may acknowledge that at least some degree of objectivity is found in the view of the UN on this conflict). Yet, we simply cannot ignore the element of subjectivity in the perceptions of the government and the population of both belligerents. This would invariably be internalised in the attempt by both sides to approach the situation objectively. Argentina has been regarded as the aggressor since it made the first move to resort to violence and Britain's just cause has been exonerated. Yet, does it make Argentina's cause less just, given the controversy over ownership ? If there is indeed basis for its claims, then logically Britain's occupation could also be interpreted as aggression. This is a contentious hypothesis and probably an unpopular one, that goes against the general consensus on this conflict. The aggressor-victim dichotomy may not always be clearly distinguished.

## Lawful or Competent Authority

This was used in the Middle Ages to restrict war as the exclusive preserve of legitimate kings and princes. While it was a means of monopolising the use of force to preserve the political power of the kings and princes, it also established some form of order at a time when feudal society was decentralised and disorganised.<sup>16</sup> In fact, Grotius went as far as to advocate that the position of the sovereign was sacred and no revolution or rebellion by private citizens was justified, unless the incumbent had usurped power unlawfully in the first place.<sup>17</sup> In the modern context, authority is based on the constitutional laws of states. This follows the premise of national sovereignty advocated by the UN. This applies regardless of the states' political or ideological system. The war powers of different states take their own unique forms. These essentially empower the government of the day to decide on a policy of war. This prerogative of the sovereign state <sup>18</sup> comes with the obligation to adhere to international laws and conventions and behave responsibly as members of the international system.

Internal conflicts or civil wars do not fit readily into the just war model because of the difficulty of determining who exactly qualifies as a lawful authority. This is particularly so in situations where formal institutions of government have broken down and the state is in virtual anarchy. Here, it would be difficult to determine which party has lawful authority. Even in cases where there is no breakdown and the lawful government is still holding office, the situation is not as clear-cut. Some examples of these are the armed secessionist movements in Sri Lanka, the Bougainville secession in Papua New Guinea. Some would argue that these movements could have *de facto* sovereign rights based purely on moral grounds, if they represented the wishes of the people they are fighting for. This argument draws on the precedence of nationalist anti-colonial wars of independence, where indigenous nationalist movements fight for independence and self-determination against foreign dominance and exploitation. Therefore, the proposed just war model excludes this category of wars due to the implications of what constitutes legal or moral authority in such situations. This model is designed for wars between sovereign states.

## Last Resort

Just war is not a valid justification even if there is a just cause when alternative non-violent means for conflict resolution have not been attempted. The decision to go to war must be the last resort. In the Falklands War, there was a progressive British military escalation working in tandem with the diplomatic initiatives before the outbreak of hostilities. There was a positive semblance and indication of last resort on the part of the British government (despite critics' assertions that Margaret Thatcher was simply raring for a fight).

This criterion also allows for some degree of flexibility for practical reasons. There is a general agreement that it may not always be possible or even realistic for all alternative means to be applied. In fact in a dynamic situation involving inter-state conflict, it would be difficult to conclusively determine the alternatives. Even if this were possible, it may not be realistic nor practical to attempt all of them. Time and expedience are also limiting factors. Therefore, it is accepted that this criterion cannot be followed in the strictest sense. Sometimes even though alternatives exist, reasonable expectation that they will not succeed will suffice as a justification for not attempting them.<sup>19</sup> In the 'Six Day War', Israel's diplomatic efforts failed to bear fruit and the Western powers did not attempt to intervene. The situation deteriorated rapidly and Israel was beginning to feel the threat of the growing Arab encirclement. Israel was convinced that there was no reasonable hope of a diplomatic breakthrough. Therefore, its pre-emptive strike constituted a last resort.

Related to the last resort criterion is the need to declare war.<sup>20</sup> This reinforces the assumption of last resort. In the Gulf War, the ultimatum to Saddam Hussein by the coalition forces to withdraw his military forces from Kuwait served this purpose. In some cases, a formal declaration of war can be implied through manifestations of intent. The act of declaration may also be precluded due to reasons of military expediency. This was the situation in Israel's undeclared pre-emptive offensive against Egypt in the 1967 war. Israel's need for strategic surprise was justified in terms of military necessity. A formal war declaration at that stage of the conflict was regarded as impractical and superfluous, given Egypt's troop deployments and her state of war readiness.

## Right Intention

In the just war model, the resort to war must not be motivated by any intentions other than that of achieving peace in the end. Augustine defines wrong intentions as "the love for violence, revengeful cruelty, fierce and implacable enmity...".<sup>21</sup> This criterion precludes an open-ended belligerent course. Belligerents have to recognise the humanity of the enemy and should repress emotive feelings of antagonism and hatred. This is to ensure that the war does not result in long-term enmity.<sup>22</sup> The vanquished aggressor must be treated fairly; his territory must be respected and not appropriated. The vanquished nation must be given a chance of returning to a state of peace.<sup>23</sup>

There have been accusations that the US involvement in the war against Iraq was driven by its political and economic interests. This still does not alter the fact of Iraq's aggression in the first place. The subsequent political gains by the US does not make the collective action by the coalition forces any less just. One cannot deny that all the states in the military coalition, had their own unique and individual agendas driven by national interests. Nevertheless, this does not diminish the primary intention of the coalition forces to serve justice by dealing with Iraqi's aggression and restoring Kuwait's independence and sovereignty.

Right intentions can be difficult to maintain in political conflicts involving emotive issues like ethnicity, ideology and religion. In the Arab-Israeli conflict, one of the professed aims of the Arabs at one time was the destruction of Israel as a state. The religious divisions in the on-going conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina also reinforce this point. These examples show the difficulty in keeping emotions in abeyance. There is therefore even greater impetus to apply this criteria judiciously in the just war model as a prescriptive guide. This is in the hope of highlighting the importance of rationality to limit the extent of violence in war. This criterion overlaps and mutually reinforces the other criteria like proportionality and *jus in bello*.

## Proportionality and Reasonable Chance of Success

Proportionality implies that military and political objectives must be mutually reinforcing and proportional. At the end, there must be more good achieved than evil caused (in the form of human suffering and destruction). Another perspective is that any good undone must not be exceeded by the evil caused.<sup>24</sup> Proportionality is also closely inter-linked with and works in unison with the assessment of chances of success. When the proportionality of an action is considered, the good to be achieved depends on, and is a function of the success of such an action. Therefore, both these criteria will be examined in unison.

Proportionality serves as a constraint against embarking on a war that will cost more than what it is meant to achieve. In the Gulf War, evil had already been done in the form of the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait and there was a possibility of the costs to Kuwait increasing, if there was no intervention. Another intangible cost was that, if Iraq's aggression was condoned, it would have set an undesirable precedent to encourage the proliferation of similar acts. Thus, the nature and extent of the coalition's military intervention in dealing with Iraq was a proportionate one.<sup>25</sup>

Proportionality is more easily applied to offensive wars than defensive ones. The cost and implication of not fighting are far greater in the latter. Logically, if the cost of resistance is disproportionate, then such a course would be unjustified. Here, proportionality and the of chance of success are mutually reinforcing. If there is no reasonable chance of winning the war, it would then also not be proportionate to do so. The policy of appeasement serves as an apt illustration of this point. The utilitarian argument for appeasement is that it guarantees avoiding a war and the attendant costs.<sup>26</sup> The case of Czechoslovakia's submission to Nazi Germany's occupation in WW II appears to support this argument. Given the circumstances Czechoslovakia really had no other choice. Armed resistance would only have resulted in a disproportionate and unnecessary loss of lives, with little prospect of success anyway.

In contrast to the Czechoslovakian example, Finland's resistance to the Soviet Union's territorial expansion in 1939 defied the rule of proportionality. At the onset, armed resistance did not appear to have a reasonable chance of success and the logical proportionate option would have been to capitulate. However, Finland chose to fight and what had began as an apparently futile response proved to be successful. Of course, the subsequent prospect of France and Britain coming to Finland's aid contributed to the Soviet Union's decision for a negotiated settlement. Ironically, Finland had to yield more territory than what the Soviet Union had originally wanted. Nevertheless, Finland carried out an ostensibly disproportionate action that turned out to be justified and proportionate after all. She had preserved her fundamental values of political freedom and sovereignty.<sup>27</sup>

Proportionality must also be applied throughout the entire duration of a just war. It is possible that a war that is initially proportionate in military and political terms, could take a different course once it starts.<sup>28</sup> The danger of escalation can lead to an irrational and disastrous war of attrition with both sides losing their sense of proportionality. Therefore, the belligerents must constantly ensure that their military initiatives are proportionate to the political objectives of the war. However, the real difficulty is in determining what is really sufficient or proportionate, especially once hostilities have commenced. There is also no universal means of quantifying military violence accurately. While military strategists and planners may use scenario planning to assess options and predict outcomes, they are at best theoretical predictions and not definitive. This tool is probably more effective at the decision-making stage prior to the outbreak of war. Once the belligerents get embroiled in the war, the stakes become higher. No one wants to lose a war and there is the danger that the belligerent will want to achieve victory at all costs. The just war model serves to remind states of this danger with the aim of preventing the disproportionate escalation of violence.

## Rules in the Conduct of War

There have been varying schools of thought on the relationship between *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*. At one extreme the contention is that with *jus ad bellum*, the ends justify the means. This implies that the "righteous side" is exonerated from having to observe *jus in bello*. This means that all the actions in the conduct of a *jus ad bellum* war are legitimised by the good rendered to international society. In this case,

war is either the infringement of international law by a wrong-doer or its enforcement by a righteous vigilante.<sup>29</sup> This view converges with that of the consequentialists' which considers that moral restrictions in war are impractical because they can be over-ridden.<sup>30</sup> An opposing contention is that since war is the prerogative of sovereign states, the role of law is to regulate the way it is fought and not to determine whether it should be conducted or not.<sup>31</sup> This legalist approach accepts *jus ad bellum* as a given and attempts to measure the justness of a war more in terms of its just conduct.

In essence, the contemporary just war model reconciles and incorporates both these concepts. Paul Ramsey has reconciled them by citing the Christian value of "love thy neighbour" as the basis for assisting a neighbour being attacked. He adds that it is also the element of "love" that serves to limit the excessive use of force on the enemy. Thus, he stresses that *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* were "twin-born" concepts and were therefore, inseparable.<sup>32</sup>

A significant feature of *jus in bello* is that it does not play a determining role in the decision to go to war. This feature makes it a prescriptive tool in defining how a war could justly or unjustly be fought. It has a subsequent function as a means for assessing the just and legal conduct of a war during its course. The international laws on war provide the legal framework for this. A state confronted with the decision to go to war may be justified to embark on it, if all the other criteria in the just war model are met. However, it will not be fighting a just war unless it observes *jus in bello* while conducting it.<sup>33</sup> A belligerent usually never goes to war with the professed intention of violating the rules and conventions that govern its conduct. However, in the beginning, it is usually difficult to predict with certainty the course of the war, and to anticipate the extent that the violence would escalate. The friction of war can cause honourable men to conduct dishonourable acts in violation of *jus in bello*. It is then up to the states that apply the just war model to ensure that such acts are prevented.

*Jus in bello* is manifested in the form of contemporary international laws embodied in the Hague and Geneva laws and conventions. Laws on the conduct of war are based largely on the principles of proportionality, discrimination and military necessity. The principle of proportionality is applied at the level of state decision-making. Within *jus in bello*, proportionality works the same way but is applicable at the lowest level of the individual soldier. The same practical problems and difficulties in determining proportionality at state-level also affect the other levels.

The principle of discrimination attempts to distinguish between legitimate and non-legitimate targets. Distinctions are also made, between military and non-military targets, as well as between combatants and non-combatants. These distinctions serve to categorise what constitutes legitimate targets for attack. This principle also acknowledges the legality of secondary harm caused to non-legitimate targets as a result of engaging a legitimate one. This is the doctrine of "double effect" and is valid as long as there is no other alternative. The extent of force used would also have to be proportionate. Some have even stretched the argument of the discrimination principle to justify the deliberate targeting of non-legitimate targets like civilian-populated areas in cases of "supreme emergency". This controversial view has been used to justify the decision to use atomic bombs in Japan in WW II. Those who subscribe to this view contend that this action was to expedite the Japanese surrender in order to end the war quickly to avert further loss of lives.<sup>34</sup> This decision actually involved the integrated application of both the principles of discrimination and military necessity.

Military necessity permits the violation of the laws of war if these violations necessarily and specifically facilitate military objectives. Military necessity was also invoked as justification for the use of the atomic bombs in Japan in WW II.<sup>35</sup> Notably, the validity of this justification for ending the war per se is still disputed today. The validity of using the bombs is perhaps better justified in terms of the proportionality principle: it was a less "bad" alternative than pursuing conventional means to end the war. Nevertheless, military necessity can and should serve more of a limiting function than a permissive one. Together with the principle of proportionality, it serves as a guide for belligerents to rationalise and limit the extent of violence applied throughout the various levels, from the general to the private soldier. However, the application of military necessity is also fraught with practical difficulties. Military necessity can be abused, if misunderstood and wrongly applied.

Jus in bello cannot work on its own and has inherent limitations. Enforcement, detection and verification of breaches are hampered by practical difficulties. Even when these are reported and verified, it is not always easy to prosecute and punish the offenders in the same fashion as the war crimes tribunals after WW II. In the absence of an effective international enforcement agency, the onus of compliance is on the belligerents. This basically depends on the effectiveness of the respective national legal codes in enforcing the just and fair conduct of war on their combatants. States have the responsibility to deal judiciously with any violations of jus in bello by their own combatants. Thus, a belligerent committed to a just war or unjust war is obliged to adhere closely to jus in bello to reinforce jus ad bellum and vice versa.

Having analysed the application of each of the above criteria individually, the issue remains how they can or should be applied collectively, or whether it is practical to do so. There are various propositions for doing this. A rigid approach would require that every single criterion be applied and met. Another option suggests that the criteria should also be weighted, ordered sequentially and then applied based on their priority. A more liberal approach proposes the identification of either some or even all of the criteria as prima facie and applied flexibly depending on the situation. There is also the possible version of applying these criteria as "rules of thumb" in an even more flexible approach.<sup>36</sup> As pointed out by James Childress, the existence of these and other possible variations illustrate that the just war model is still fraught with ambiguities.

There has been an attempt to solve the above problem by breaking down the just war model into two separate components, namely "justice or justness" and "justification". "Justice or the justness" of a war refers to the existence of a just cause. The other criterion, like last resort, proportionality, reasonable chance of success, and right intention provide the justification for proceeding with the war. Therefore, a state that has a just cause may not be justified in going to war if the "justification" criterion is not met. Subsequently, the belligerent is obliged to observe jus in bello to keep the war within the bounds of the just war model.<sup>37</sup>

Nevertheless, this option is not perfect and still does not effectively resolve the issues of order, importance and weight for applying the just war criteria.

Furthermore, the above option tends to favour the strong. For instance, a militarily weaker state that has just cause may not be justified in fighting a stronger adversary, when it is apparent that it has little or no chance of success. As argued earlier, this is easier to apply when it involves an offensive war rather than a defensive one. The question here is whether the right to fight also connotes a sense of duty to fight. Finland's case of resisting the Soviet Union in WW II is probably a fortuitous exception. This question can only be answered by a state's political leaders when faced with such a situation. They are ultimately responsible for both the lives and well-being of their people as well as safe-guarding the values of political freedom and sovereignty.

## Conclusion

In the final analysis, this writer argues that in spite of the difficulties in applying the just war model, it is still very relevant to contemporary warfare. This is based on the belief that war is a social institution that serves as an instrument for conflict resolution, albeit an extreme one. History has shown that states have at some time or other resorted to war to resolve conflicts. It would appear that society is still far from totally eliminating armed confrontations between states. A world free from war is still a utopian ideal. Therefore, if we accept the notion that we are still a long way off from this ideal world, it would be better to seek ways to reduce the incidence of wars. Furthermore, if and when wars have to be fought, their conduct should limit the extent of destruction and human suffering. The just war model serves this purpose by providing a legal and moral framework to guide and constrain statesmen making decisions on war. And when *jus ad bellum* vindicates a decision for war, this model also encourages states to observe the rules of war, in keeping with the spirit and tradition of just war.

## Endnotes

**1 Donald A. Wells, *An Encyclopedia of War and Ethics*, pp. 30-1.**

2 *Ibid.*, p.149.

3 William V. O'Brien, *Law and Morality in Israel's War with the PLO*, p.275.

4 Sidney D. Bailey, *Prohibitions and Restraints in War*, p. 28.

5 *Ibid.*, p.275.

6 O'Brien, *op. cit.*, p.276.

7 Robert L. Holmes, *On War and Morality*, p.164. These criteria from Holmes were taken from the Pastoral Letter of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response*, pp. 28-34.

8 Bull, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-6.

9 O'Brien, *op. cit.*, p.277.

10 Bailey, *op. cit.*, p.40.

11 James T. Johnson and George Weigel, *Just War and the Gulf War*, p. 22-23.

12 See Yoram Dinstein, *War, Aggression and Self-defence*, for a detailed study on aggression and the interpretation of its application in the UN Charters.

13 Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, pp. 82-4.

14 Holmes, *op. cit.*, p.161.

15 *Ibid.*, p.150.

16 O'Brien, *op. cit.*, p.278.

17 Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

18 Holmes, *op. cit.*, p.164.

19 James F. Childress, "Just-War Theories: The Bases, Interrelations, Priorities, and Functions of Their Criteria" in M.M. Wakin(ed.), *War, Morality and the Military Profession*, p. 264.

20 *Ibid.*

21 Johnson and Weigel, *op. cit.*, p. 24, citing from James Brown Scott's, *The Spanish Origin of International Law*, 1934.

22 O'Brien, *op. cit.*, p.280.

23 Johnson and Weigel, *op. cit.*, p.25.

24 Paul Ramsey, *The Just War: Force and Political Responsibility*, p. 195.

25 Johnson and Weigel, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

26 Walzer, *op. cit.*, p. 67..58

27 *Ibid.*, pp. 70-1.

28 O'Brien, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

29 Bull, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-7.

30 J.E. Hare and Carey B. Joynt, *Ethics and International Affairs*, p. 50.

31 Bull, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

32 Ramsey, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

33 Holmes, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

34 Walzer, *op. cit.*, pp. 251-55 for an elaboration on "supreme emergency" and see also pp. 263-8 for more details on its application in the decision to use of first atomic bomb on Hiroshima.

35 Barton Bernstein, "Understanding the Atomic Bomb and the Japanese Surrender: Missed Opportunities, Little Known Disasters, and Modern Memory" in Michael Hogan(ed.), *Hiroshima: In History and Memory*, p.40.

36 Childress, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

37 *Ibid.*, p. 271.

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# Media Barrage! Fighting amidst the sights and sounds of fury, the smoke and mirrors of reality

by MAJ Irvin Lim Fang Jau

*"Four hostile newspapers are more feared than a thousand bayonets."*

Napoleon Bonaparte

*"The people thinking hardest about warfare in the future know that some of the most important combat of tomorrow will take place in the media battlefield."*

Alvin & Heidi Toffler<sup>1</sup>

*Much of the popular discourse and public imagination about the incipient Age of Information Warfare has focused on expounding exciting novel technologies which can virtually enable the cut and thrust of future battles to take place in cyberspace just as devastatingly as in physical space. While such potential no longer verge on the futuristic and fantastic today, much remains to be said about the other more familiar and conventional news media broadcasting aspect of Information Warfare that is being waged daily in the wider Global Information Environment (GIE). This paper will refocus attention on the ubiquitous mass media, highlighting its prominence at the vanguard of information warfare or what some have called, 'Soft War'.<sup>2</sup> We now live in an age in which global communications media corporations - also known as the international media-industrial complex <sup>3</sup> - constantly broadcast the sights and sounds of fury, and the smoke and mirrors of reality in conflict. In many ways, conflict reporting through mass media, like the printed press, radio, TV and the internet, is a powerful and irrepressible force which shapes public opinion. This can, in turn, consolidate or corrode political support for the war effort of the contesting parties concerned. To be sure, the political impact of the media's omnipresence on the battlefield is not lost on the military and it increasingly poses pressing challenges for the latter in wrestling rhetorical control over the narrative plot of conflict.<sup>4</sup> War fought under such circumstances is anything but soft.*

Late 20th century conflicts, starting from the Vietnam War through to the Falklands War, Gulf War and Kosovo conflict, saw the emergence of global media broadcast power and reach. Rapid breakthroughs in communication technologies enhanced the mass media's seemingly omniscient ability to transmit distant images of the bloody war - sometimes heavily-sanitised - right into the cosy living rooms of international audiences. Almost overnight for an entire new generation, TV News network war-reporting has become infotainment or pseudo-'spectator sports'. Communication theorist, Marshall McLuhan, coined the famous dictum, *'the media is the message'*.<sup>5</sup> By this, he meant that increasingly, the style of media presentation (form) has become an integral part of media content - form can have a more significant effect on the target audience than the actual contents being conveyed. In a sense, TV news as a pervasive media form can now claim to be an undisputed key economic resource in our New World Informational Order. News value is manufactured and reality is packaged for public consumption. Termed by some as the 'CNN effect' <sup>6</sup> of war, media networks internationalise and "jazz up the experience of watching news with live pictures of war and disasters, international phone-ins and Larry King" turning "news into showbiz"<sup>7</sup> . Of course, the observation that the news media often simplifies and sensationalises complex issues, even to the extent of shaping the outcomes of public policy debate - for example, by polarising or galvanising public opinion on grave societal issues such as armed conflict - is well-acknowledged and unremarkable. After all, news media *modus operandi* is, for all purposes and intents, driven by a highly selective *fractionalisation* of real-world events. This somewhat explains the familiar criticism <sup>8</sup> of the news media for trivialisation, over-reporting and sensationalism. What is more significant, however, is that the media's unprecedented and ever-deepening influence on far-flung global battlefields has become especially acute and resonant, given the present milieu of hyper-mass media capitalisation extending the global reach of media giants and technological developments enabling the instantaneous convergence of trans-national information flows. In many ways,

the media is no longer a supporting cast but it has become an influential trans-national actor on the world stage of international politics and conflict.

## Of Scribes and Soldiers

In the context of the late 20th century warfare as experienced by mostly western liberal countries like the US and Europe, media-military relations had been somewhat antagonistic. At the heart of the antagonism is the natural divergence in the avowed missions of the two professions. On the one hand, much of professional western journalism, in defending 'the public right to know', extols its *Fourth Estate* role of adversarial news reporting, whilst keeping an eye on the profit-making dollar in the constant face of high-rating pressure. On the other hand, the military is single-minded in its commitment to mission attainment which often hinges on concealing, or even distorting information in order to prevent the enemy from pre-empting its true intentions to gain the upper-hand and protect their own lives. Not surprisingly, the cavalier truth-ferreting ethics of media journalism is often at odds with the surreptitious operational security concerns of the military. The former revels in the bright glow of expose, while the latter prefers to plan and execute its missions under the dim light of secrecy. This explains somewhat, the uneasy state of military-media relations today which is predominantly characterised by ambivalence, if not mistrust and outright hostility in some cases.

However, if one were to go back even further to modern 20th century history, the relationship was, by most accounts, more amiable and amenable. In the case of US military-media relations which existed as far back as the American Civil War, right through the two World Wars up to the initial stages of the Korean War, the relations had largely been friendly with a fair amount of mutual professional trust and compromise. The domestic media played a largely supporting role to military operations by practicing voluntary censorship of its publications rather than submitting to compulsory government censorship<sup>9</sup>. A favorable climate of media cooperation and self-restraint on divulging sensitive military information helped to galvanise public support for the war effort and helped the military to preserve vital secrets like D-Day, the atomic bomb and the breaking of Japanese communication codes.

The Vietnam War was a watershed in more ways than one, for it saw the freezing of US military-media relations. Often described as the first 'TV war', a new breed of younger reporters with their personal beliefs and opposition to the war effort broke ranks from the traditional mould of military-media co-operation and painted a cynical and disturbing picture of the war which increased domestic pressure to end the war. The fact that officialdom painted a rosy picture of the war did not help matters, and the distrust between the US government/military and media widened.<sup>10</sup> Perhaps ironically, the war also saw the greatest liberalisation of media restrictions by the US military with unencumbered battlefield access, no domestic censorship, voluntary censorship and looser accreditation standards. The negative impact it had on military operations led the military to rethink its erstwhile liberal management of the media in subsequent conflicts. Attempts by the US military and media to work out a partnership ebbed and flowed according to the prevailing antagonism or underlying mistrust. For example, the US military kept the invasion of Grenada in 1983 under strict wraps. The media only learnt about it when the operation was completed two days later. Media protest at the restrictive media policy led to the now famous Sidle Commission<sup>11</sup> which recommended greater military-media cooperation through the establishment of accredited press pools to witness military operations and to promote an environment which encouraged voluntary media compliance with military press regulations. Subsequent conflicts in Panama and the Gulf War saw the relation develop in ways which favoured the US military in carrying out its operations. During the Gulf War, for example, the US commanders were able to use the media to spread disinformation to its strategic advantage. However, the US military did not always have things their way. During the 1992-93 Somalia (Operation Restore Hope) debacle, unfettered international media access on the ground facilitated the telecast of stark pictures of Somali militiamen dragging a dead US Ranger through the streets of Mogadishu. The footage sparked off a firestorm of adverse domestic public opinion which resulted in the pre-mature pull-out of US forces and the subsequent failure of the Somalia mission.

While what has been cited above has largely been a snap-shot attempt at historicising the American military-media experience, there are nevertheless common strands in them, useful for better grasping the often divergent institutional interests and ambivalent professional relationship between scribes and soldiers.

## Sights and Sounds of Fury

Recent diplomatic rows like the Taiwan-China cross-strait dispute, and armed conflicts in Kargil, Chechnya and East Timor all provide glaring examples in which contemporary images and the rhetoric of war have become profoundly etched in the collective subconscious of the international audience. The international media's intense spotlight is especially intrusive and pervasive in contemporary disputes and warfare.

Broad media coverage of the short-lived but intense Kargil War between India and Pakistan in 1999, brought the sights and sounds of fury, and the often tragic-heroic lives of soldiers, into the ordinary homes of Indians, throughout the rural heartlands for the very first time:

*"Indians have watched and seen on television and in newspapers, for instance, an officer talking to reporters - and tuned in or read papers a week later to find out that he had been killed. This has sent tremors through the nation."*<sup>12</sup>

Such 'up-close-and-personal' intimacy, immediacy and impact was non-existent during an earlier confrontation in 1971 between the two countries. But, with cable television networks and a better equipped local print media, extensive blow-for-blow reporting from the frontline, full-page spreads of human interest stories, of blood, guts and heroism, interlaced with 'public service advertisements' extolling the armed forces' sacrifices, helped to fan the flames of national outrage and forge domestic unity. The Indian military also drummed up support for the campaign by conducting daily briefs, complete with airforce videotapes and maps, *ala* the Gulf War and Kosovo conflicts. The subsequent outpouring of nationalist fervour led to an increase in volunteer recruits and contributions to the national defence fund.

Soon after India's unprecedented military action, the Pakistani media tried to draw a parallel between Kosovo and Kashmir and demanded international intervention. In its own propaganda war, Pakistan tried to apply terminology used in the Kosovo crisis. For example, Pakistan's information minister alleged that Indian troops were using 'nerve gas-like' material against the Mujahideen (Islamic militants) and were targeting civilians, including children. This supplemented the usual Pakistani charges of atrocities by Indian troops in Kashmir which were purportedly equivalent to the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo.<sup>13</sup> It was clear from this latest internecine episode that winning the public relations battle was a moral imperative as both sides had to fight hard to win over the Western press and media to ensure the reporting was more 'fair' and 'balanced' in their favour. In the interminable struggle to shape global media perception, stereo-typing, smearing<sup>14</sup>,scapegoating,demonising,and manufacturing allegations of atrocities<sup>15</sup> *et al* are strewn around like ammunition shells expended in the smoky terrain of conflict.

As a prelude to, or in lieu of, actual military operations, the media can also set the stage for sabre-rattling and shadow-boxing. During the China-Taiwan cross-strait tension in July-August 1999, Taiwan had alleged that media reports emanating from Hong Kong of preparations by the Chinese military for an assault on the island, were part and parcel of Beijing's psychological warfare scare tactics.<sup>16</sup> It appeared that media reports had released alarmist information from unidentified sources about offensive PRC military activities. The rumours had a detrimental effect on Taiwan's stock market. Some analysts believe that by conveying such messages through the Hong Kong media, China could vicariously target foreign readers without over-inciting its domestic readers.<sup>17</sup> Such Machiavellian media tactics continued to plague the Taiwanese presidential elections in February-March 2000. Applied in *extremis*, they blur the distinction between probability and certainty, and accords the protagonist the strategic flexibility of exerting foreign policy pressure at will, without necessarily having to resort to the actual use of military force. As a Chinese PLA official candidly put it: "Warfare is full of tricks. What you say and what you do are not necessarily the same".<sup>18</sup> The China-Taiwan dispute is indeed a contemporary hallmark on the use of disinformation and ambiguity as munitions of the mind for strategic deception.

## Smoke and Mirrors of Reality

In covering conflicts, journalists often have to expose themselves to numerous risks, such as confronting gunfire without the benefit of armoured vehicles or flak vests, or finding soldiers' fists in their faces for

toting cameras to document the news. But during the Kosovo conflict, many correspondents discovered they could cover at least the verbal volleys from a distance. With the warring factions posting official statements on their World Wide Web sites, Kosovo has been described as the first 'Web War' 19 . It was the first major conflict to be fought, in part, on the Internet. The Internet enables information to be disseminated openly from a country which has imposed media black-out of the battlefield 20 , providing valuable intelligence despite official censorship. Latest developments in the broadcast delivery of Internet content over the airwaves 21 , without the use of cables or phone lines, will make information barriers even more porous. Of course, the flip side of the impact of such new technology is that disinformation is also more easily spread to the public by policymakers, with the deft use of properly substantiated information from reliable third party sources. The clash over Kosovo engendered massive spin from NATO as well as selective news reporting from the Serbs, with few details on the real effects of the bombing campaign.22 As TV cameras focus on the use of military force in a distant land, the international media is increasingly hard pressed to sort out a few kernels of facts from the barrage of distortions and half-truths from government information manipulators. As more information is received through the Internet, the filter of the experienced journalist can be easily bypassed. Truth, as they say, is often the first casualty of war. It is often also the last casualty of war, long after the angry guns have fallen silent.23

The propaganda media war to win over the hearts and minds of the population and international opinion to take sides in contending truths is invariably waged alongside military action. To the extent that military strategy today is as much concerned with capturing territory as it is with headlines. The mass media today is an indivisible and indispensable player in any modern war system or conflict situation. Time and again, the hot embers of exclusive nationalism and extremist ethno-centrism, mixed with a volatile cocktail of propaganda, masquerading as journalism are exploited with explosive consequences. During the 1994 Rwandan conflict, 'Hate Radio' 24 was used with devastating effect to sow mistrust, confusion and chaos, preying on historical insecurities to incite internecine inter-tribal conflict. It resulted in the genocidal massacre and dislocation of thousands of Tutsis by the Hutus. As with many notorious instances in history, the method in the madness lies in the control and manipulation of the state-controlled media, by stoking the flames of fear through hate propaganda. A similar preparatory phase of virulent 'enemy-imaging' 25 by the Serbian state media occurred prior to the onset of organised violence in Kosovo. Highly selective and jaundiced accounts of revisionist history in the state media tapped on latent ethnic prejudices and insecurities by resurrecting the bogeymen of ancient civilisational conflicts, historical injustices and religious persecution. Such bald media propaganda when coupled with prolonged exposure of the targeted popular consciousness to seemingly innocuous but wholly insidious daily news media reportage, focused on disseminating negative news to demonise the adversary, can quickly poison erstwhile healthy inter-communal or inter-state relations overnight. All too soon, fact and fiction conflate, perspectives colour, and good sense no longer prevails. The unthinkable becomes thinkable. It then becomes difficult for those subsequently caught up in the heated rhetoric and images of conflict to step outside the smoke and mirrors of mediated-reality to see beyond the tunnel vision of self-interest and preservation; albeit without succumbing to the deep-seated impulses of ethno-religio-centric loyalties and nationalist realpolitik.

Given that the media can play powerful preparatory and legitimacy roles prior to direct violent confrontation, domestic media - complicit or coerced - invariably act as mouthpieces or megaphones in mobilising support for state policies and action.26 As has been eloquently put by Robert Stevenson: "Media in all countries see the world through a narrow lens of geography and national interest."27 This observation is especially vivid in times of national crisis and conflict.

## **Perceptions Matter**

A soldier trudging into the battlefield of today and tomorrow faces the 'mind'-field of disinformation and deception laid by the adversary's psy-ops and propaganda campaigns. Coupled with the intense heat of international media spotlight, insistent on saturation coverage of conflict for maximum news mileage, the soldier's actions, inaction or mistakes on the ground, in the air or at sea, will no doubt come under critical scrutiny and severe stress.28 For example, during the recent Chechnya conflict, the British Broadcasting Corporation's (BBC) broadcast of brutal images in February 2000, formed part of the evidence supporting allegations of atrocities by Russian soldiers on the rebel republic.29 Increasingly, war reporting subjects the conduct of war to public scrutiny and international accountability. Not surprisingly, it has been said: "when

commanders fail to respond to the media, the field is left open to critics of the armed forces. Then, speculation and misleading stories abound."<sup>30</sup> This can have a negative impact on the morale of soldiers, public support and political will. As the Falklands War, Gulf War and Kosovo conflict have shown, the onus now lies on commanders to carefully stage-manage briefings in order to 'show and tell' the military's side of the story to the insatiable international media. In a media race where first impressions are usually lasting impressions, the first side to successfully spin the story by beating the competition to the press, has become a priority military objective.

Perception Management (PM) has entered the military lexicon and is now serious doctrine .<sup>31</sup> Understanding at the very onset that 'perception matters', is essential for any military trying to manage the media spin. Though not entirely new to the military, PM has lately become a legitimate area of Information Operation expertise in which the world's military establishments are investing considerable effort to develop. Whether in peace or at war, the military through its public affairs and media relations machinery has a major role in perception management under the wider ambit of psychological warfare operations vis-à-vis political propaganda. The key idea is to manage the media spin, and not to suppress the flow of information; to do the latter would be futile and foolhardy in many cases.

Even closely cloistered organisations, like the Israeli foreign-intelligence service, Mossad, have come out from the shadows in tacit acknowledgement of the importance of PM. It recently appointed a press relations official for the first time to improve its somewhat murky image. The new policy which ends the organisation's long tradition of total secrecy, is aimed at improving its image and provide journalists with information to enable them to present the Mossad "in a more objective manner".<sup>32</sup>

In the same way, it is prudent, if not imperative, for military organisations to ensure that strong institutional links are in place to establish a favourable working rapport with accredited journalists from both the domestic and international media on a routine basis. The latter relationship is particularly important because, in contrast to the domestic media which often dances to a patriotic tune in times of a national crisis, the international media cannot be relied to be as neutered, pliant or sycophantic in their news reporting broadcasts. Like diplomacy, media-military ties need to be carefully cultivated during peacetime for ready access, alignment of interests and even mutually-reinforcing interpretation of events during conflict; without unduly calling into question the military's credibility for excessive 'spinning' or eroding the media's 'objectivity' for partisan-reporting.<sup>33</sup> This may yet prove to be a daunting but worthwhile challenge for both the military and media to work on. But first, military mindsets will have to change. As Gordon Bennett observed more than 50 years ago - an observation which continues to have relevance today:

*"The conservative soldiers and sailors of the old school would prefer to tell the public nothing. They resent the inquisitiveness of war correspondents and the public about naval or military affairs, which they look on as their close preserves. They seem to think that this is their war and that all journalists are insolent 'nosey parkers'."*<sup>34</sup>

The importance of instituting 'good perception management and cultivating good media relations go hand in glove. As the recent Australian-led INTERFET mission to East Timor attest, the military and the media can benefit from developing a mutually cooperative and cordial relationship to ride over any natural friction that may arise on the ground. Notwithstanding the brief criticism from some political quarters when the international media broadcast footages showed Australian soldiers firmly disarming militiamen by pointing rifles at their heads, the Australian INTERFET forces' generally adroit handling of the international media and civil agencies in an unpredictable low-intensity conflict environment was particularly instructive. It underscored the value of good perception management and media relations in averting costly public relations disasters. Some countries have even taken on a more pro-active approach towards building good media-military relations. For example, the German Armed Forces recently inaugurated special training sessions for war journalists to expose them and the soldiers to simulated battlefield conditions. The US armed forces also fully appreciate the importance of the media's role in complementing military operations, and have created Mobile Public Affairs Detachments (MPAD) to carry out press pools, media escorts, press conferences out in the field of action. Recognising the Public Affairs Officer's (PAO) seminal role in enhancing media-military relations is vital as successful and synergistic media coordination on the ground is often a highly structured process that should never be conducted haphazardly. In a world where the military is

increasingly called to answer non-traditional calls to duty, a good military Public Affairs (PA) outfit should be operationally ready for integration with task forces deployed for Operations Other Than War (OOTW)<sup>35</sup>, such as peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions. Towards that end, the military will need to work closely with the media - both local and international - in reaching a consensus on the written ground rules<sup>36</sup> for media coverage of troops and military operations in the field. Besides handling the media, the military force deployed for OOTW must have competent PA machinery with the right expertise in place to mediate effectively with inter-governmental<sup>73</sup> agencies, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and disparate civilian groups in sometimes non-permissive environments. The challenges would be multi-party and multi-faceted. Combat media coverage will pose one of the biggest challenges. It has become both a strategic and tactical concern that must prefigure constantly as a cardinal planning factor for commanders. The military will need to learn to view combat media presence not as a hindrance to effective military operations. Rather, the media should be viewed as a positive tool, part and parcel of contemporary military conflicts, to be managed with great care and sophistication. In practice, the concept of press pools, media escorts and field censorship will need to be applied responsively on the ground. All parties concerned should endeavour to promote greater transparency and restraint where necessary, on areas of common interest without contravening the military's need for operational secrecy, or the media's concern with personnel safety<sup>37</sup> and preserving professional independence. Sincerity, effort and success in enhancing mutual trust, credibility<sup>38</sup>, and accommodation will go a long way in determining the character of the relationship; if not partnership.

We need media-savvy commanders and soldiers across rank and file who understand the importance of perception management and the deep impact it has on their morale and missions. Any disconnect can have adverse repercussions beyond mere poor public relations. A timely warning about the new Pandora-box of perception management thrown up by the 'CNN-isation' of warfighting:

*"The leaders of tomorrow will have little room for mistakes as the media will capture it. The approach and process of solving the problems (as portrayed by the media) becomes just as important as solving the problem. Therefore, today's military leaders just cannot ignore the media as it can create an effect on the people. Leaders, therefore must learn to manage the media...The leader also needs to understand the impact of the mass media on soldiers and the home-front, and use effective communication skills to win them over".<sup>39</sup>*

In the SAF, the various integrated armed services coordinate and execute media policy and information plans through MINDEF Public Affairs Department (PAFF). In peacetime, good perception management and media relations spearheaded by PAFF is essential to reinforce the reality of a strong and committed SAF standing ever-vigilant at the sharp end of the nation's defence. Through its regular broadcast<sup>40</sup> of defence messages, PAFF enhances defence diplomacy, deterrence and plays a powerful public education role. In times of war, good perception management and media relations can further operationalise the aims of Singapore's 'Total Defence Concept'<sup>41</sup>, by imbuing confidence and psychological resilience in the local population. Good perception management and media relations can also help to counter the negative rumours and nefarious disinformation of hostile psychological warfare, by unmasking the media propaganda of the adversary while fortifying the credibility of one's own claims to the truth. Politico-military media propaganda today is a critical action of first and wide resort on the info-war frontline. In which case, there is a need to look seriously at the growing military impact of emergent commercial communications technologies<sup>42</sup> and how Information Operation doctrines can be formulated to deal with such challenges. A deep understanding of the significance of good perception management and good media relations during military operations will be a crucial first step.

## **Conclusion**

Achilles heel or centre of gravity, there is no doubting the pervasive power of the media in a conflict. Such power is accentuated in an era of inexorable global information flows, where ideas and opinions transgress national boundaries, and traverse the virtual ether of the Global Information Environment. What is apparent is that both the domestic and international media can have an instrumental and profound impact on structuring the public agenda of the social polity<sup>43</sup>; especially one posturing for war or caught in the thick of conflict. As an institution and tool of communication, the media *willy nilly* shapes the way perceptions,

myths and ideologies are disseminated, imbibed and contested. Political philosopher Louis Althusser once said that the media is a classic example of an "Ideological State Apparatus"<sup>44</sup> - a pervasive and potent institutional tool for shaping ideas and perceptions. Given such power, many media scholars have tried to address the polemic of whether media drives policy or vice versa .<sup>45</sup> While the power of the media allows it to play an important role in shaping the perception of international conflict, it does not hold that it would necessarily define the terms or dictate its outcomes. Generalising about the effects of the media is easy enough. But there is little doubt that media communication is a complex process. Its effects are often indeterminate and defy prediction. Its specific influence and real-effects in conflict will require more detailed elaboration; contingent on how the actual dynamics of military combat and media contact are managed by the opponents themselves in conflict.

Having grown from strength to strength over the course of the 20th century, the international media industrial complex will continue to be a socially-defining technology of power in the 21st century, with far-reaching influence beyond the battlefield. It will continue to play a key role, if not in the box, then at the ring of conflict, either by flaring the flames of animosity or calming the nerves of anxiety in times of tension and war. Whatever the case, the military professional or political strategist serious about winning over hearts and minds as well as territory cannot afford to ignore the media's impact on the success of the mission plans of today and tomorrow. He and she must be well-trained in the relevant news media management and public communication skills to better appreciate the nuances, rules, target audiences, technology and even 'sleight of hand' necessary for staying on top of the high-stakes media game. This is vital if they are to prevail and avoid becoming mute handmaidens in the often unforgiving 'war of words and images' fought vicariously, but no less viscerally, under the intense media barrage of the over-exposed information battlefield.

## Endnotes

**1** Tofflers, Alvin & Heidi (1993) *War and AntiWar: Survival at the Dawn of the 21st Century*, Boston: Little, Brown & Company, pp. 165. See also Goebel, Douglas, J. (1995) *Military-Media Relations: The Future Media Environment and Its Influence on Military Operations*, Alabama: Air War College.

**2** 'Soft War' is de Caro's doctrine of information warfare which basically posits that television has become a formidable weapon of choice in contemporary warfare that can achieve political aims without the use of military force. Cited in Adams, James (1998) 'Every Picture Tells A Story' in *The Next World War: The Warriors and Weapons of the New Battlefields in Cyberspace*, London: Random House, pp. 272- 290.

**3** The Media-Industrial Complex has risen today as the core sector of the global information economy. This complex includes not only Hollywood but also the burgeoning cable and software companies (Time Warner & AOL) as well as the traditional TV media (Cables News Network, BBC World, SkyNews, Disney/ABC) and print press (Reuters, Associated Press, United Press International, TASS AFP). Collectively, they have become genuine centres of power and influence in the late 20th century well into the 21st century. See Gardel, Nathan (1998) 'From Containment To Entertainment: The Rise of the Media-Industrial Complex' in *New Perspectives Quarterly*, Vol 15 No. 5, pp. 2-3.

**4** The recent Chechen conflict in which the Russian military imposed tight media restrictions and banned journalists from covering the war at the frontline is a classic example of the tussle.

**5** McLuhan, Marshall (1964) *Understanding Media*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

**6** The 'CNN effect' concerns the media's power to set the political agenda by pressuring leaders to make important policy shifts when responding instantly to fast-breaking foreign news. See Livingston, S. (1997) *Clarifying the CNN Effect: An Examination of Media Effects According to the Type of Military Intervention*, Research paper R-18, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

**7** See journalist Cherian George's article 'Information King: CNN - News Time is Show Time' in *The Straits Times*, Life section, 22 December, (1999), pp. 11.

**8** See *The Straits Times*, [2 June, (2000), pp. 21] report on criticism of US TV networks as CNN celebrates its 20th anniversary.

9 Neff, Steven (1999) 'The United States Military vs. the Media: Constitutional Friction' <http://review.law.mercer.edu/46215.htm>

10 *ibid*: 5.

11 After Grenada, the Pentagon appointed retired General Winant K. Sidle, who had served as head of the military information office in Saigon during the Vietnam War, to lead a commission to study journalist access to military operations. *ibid*: 6.

12 Ghosh, Nirmal (1999) 'Broad Media Coverage Brings Kargil War Home to Indians' in *The Straits Times*, 13 Jul, pp. 31.

13 See *Intelligence Digest*, 11 Jun 99 and *Indian Defence Review*, Jul-Sep 99, Vol. 14(3) pp. 126-128.

14 During East Timor episode, the Australians accused the Indonesian media of waging a disinformation campaign to discredit Australia and its role as the leader of the multi-national force in East Timor. The Indonesian media had reported alleged atrocities by Australian troops in East Timor and television reports portrayed Australian soldiers as bullies, searching militia suspects at gunpoint. See *The Straits Times*, 29 Sep 99, pp. 20.

15 During the Kosovo conflict, the question of truth or falsehood in the claims of mass murder/genocide cut to the very heart of NATO's justification for initiating the air-bombing campaign against the Serbs.

16 See *The Straits Times*, 6 Aug 99, pp. 20.

17 See *The Straits Times*, 22 Jul 99, pp. 20. Sustained psychological warfare tactics continued unabated on a prolonged and broad media-front. HongKong's independent Chinese language daily, *Ming Pao*, quoting 'unidentified' sources claimed that China had put half an estimated 100 decommissioned submarines back into service with the East Sea Fleet. This caused Taiwan's stockmarket to plunge on 26 Nov 99. See *The Straits Times*, 27 Nov 99.

18 See Liu, Melinda, (2000) 'Cyber-Rattling' in *NewsWeek*, 20 Mar, pp. 17-19.

19 See 'War on the Web' in *The Economist Review*, 15 May 99. pp. 8. See also North, Don's article in *AJR*, January/February 1999 & Beiber, Florian 'Cyberwar or Side-show? The Internet and the Balkan Wars' in *Current History: A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs*, Vol. 99, No. 635, Mar 2000, pp. 124-8.

20 The desperate attempts by the Russian authorities to ban the international media from the frontline in Chechnya is a vivid example. In an ironic twist, Chechen rebels and Russian troops reportedly extorted cash from journalists in return for interviews and safe passage into forbidden war zones in the South Russian Republic. See *The Sunday Times*, 13 Feb 00, pp. 12. In another example, the Indonesian government attempted to isolate the population of Maluku from the media to prevent news reports from fanning emotions in the riot-torn province in Dec 1999. Similarly, the Sri Lankan government also imposed censorship restrictions on the BBC News and other foreign media in May 2000 as part of emergency regulations when Tamil Tiger guerillas stepped up attacks in Jaffna. It might not be long before advanced military technologies such as unmanned Micro-Air Vehicles (MAVs) will even be used by the indefatigable media to intrude into the very thick of battlefield action and allow international audiences to see through the fog of war despite official censorship and media black-outs. Already, current miniaturisation of electronic devices such as light-weight TV cameras, portable satellite-based cellular phone and video systems now allow a journalist to send stories and pictures back to their network stations from anywhere on the battlefield.

21 12 major US broadcasters are creating a national network that offers immediate Internet access to people who could not afford more than one dial-up service and or those who live in areas where cable systems and telephone networks have not been upgraded yet for digital communications. The new iBlast network will ride on the existing digital spectrum allocated for high-definition TV to deliver Internet content. See *The Straits Times*, 9 Mar 2000, pp. 14.

22 See Sloyan, Patrick J.'s article in *AJR*, June 1999.

23 The recent attempts by ultra right-wing Japanese groups to deny that the 1937 Nanking massacre took place caused much outrage and protest in China. It was a classic whitewash attempt at revisionist history through selective amnesia. See *The Straits Times*, 26 Jan 00, pp. 20.

24 Hutu extremists used mobile radio broadcasting from the back of a Toyota pick-up to urge their people and militia on to a mass killing spree. See Adams, James (1998), pp: 272.

25 See Carruthers, Susan, L. (2000) *The Media at War: Communication and Conflict in the Twentieth Century*, London: Macmillan Press.

26 During the Kosovo conflict, the Serbs enforced total control of their domestic media. They launched a barrage of hate mail - by post and Internet - against soldiers and their families once NATO soldiers were identified. The Serb media also aired disturbing footage of dead civilians and flaming buildings in Belgrade that had allegedly been destroyed by NATO planes and cruise missiles. Taking a leaf of the Iraqi practice during the Gulf War, the Serbs even bus-ed Western journalists and cameramen to such locations. Private and state-owned Serb networks refused to broadcast Western news and filled the airwaves with hate messages and patriotic military montages. NATO warplanes then began embarked on a controversial mission to destroy Serb media facilities which enraged much international public outcry. From NATO's perspective, the attacks were an attempt to halt the diet of disinformation fed Serb viewers while curbing Serb transmission to the West of disturbing "collateral damage" pictures that could erode public support for NATO's escalating air-strikes in the Balkans. To be sure, the deliberate targeting of media broadcasting stations by the military raises polemical questions of professional ethics and moral legitimacy.

27 See Stevenson, Robert (1998) 'Remapping the World of News' in Immerfall, S. (ed.) *Territoriality in the Globalizing Society*, Berlin: Springer Verlag, pp: 115.

28 As can be seen from the criticism of 'collateral damage' on civilian targets; such as when the US pilots were accused of mistakenly bombing Kosovo Albanian refugees during the Kosovo conflict.

29 One image showed a Chechen prisoner tied to the back of a truck, and with his skin exposed, being dragged across rocky ground. Another image showed bodies of Chechens, allegedly tortured by Russian troops, dumped in a mass grave. Russian authorities have refuted the allegations by compiling a gruesome video of alleged Chechen rebel war crimes which it sent to the Council of Europe for debate on Russian's human rights record in the break-away republic. *The Straits Times*, 5 Apr 2000, pp. 23, 5 Jun 2000, pp.6 & 6 Jun 2000, pp. 10.

30 Col William Mulvey (1991) 'Observations From Desert Storm' in *Public Affairs Monthly Update*, August, pp.1; cited in LT Col Machamer (1993) 'Avoiding Military-Media War in the Next Armed Conflict' in *Military Review*, April, pp. 46-47. See also Maj-Gen Sidle (1991) 'A Battle Behind the Scenes: The Gulf War Reheats Military-Media Controversy' in *Military Review*, Sep, pp. 52-63.

31 See Lt Col Jones (1999) 'The Perception Management Process' in *Military Review*, Feb, pp. 38-43; Special 'Information Management' edition of *Military Review*, Dec 98-Feb 99.

32 See *The Straits Times*, 27 Aug 99, pp. 13.

33 Professional credibility and institutional integrity is important here as the media are oftentimes watchdogs - if not, attack dogs - and cannot be taken for granted as Pavlovian lap-dogs at the beck and call of military power. Even though they often have little choice but to depend on official elite/military censored sources for their breaking-news during conflict, TV media networks are not naive but are keenly aware of the fact that they are being used as players in achieving political agendas. Nevertheless, they often tolerate the risk of manipulation rather than miss out on a lucrative news scoop.

34 Bennett, Gordon (1944) *Why Singapore Fell*, London: Angus & Robertson, pp. 30.

35 The US Armed Forces have also termed OOTW as Stability and Sustainment Operations.

36 O.B. markers could for example, exclude spontaneous or off-the-record interviews with personnel in the field, the filming or photography of soldiers in agony or severe shock and the transmission of patients suffering from severe disfigurements. Carruthers, Susan (2000) *op cit*.

37 During the Gulf War, journalists were routinely harassed and kidnapped. Some were even killed. The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) had reported that a record 66 journalists were killed in 17 countries in 1991 alone. Recent events in the East Timor and Sierra Leone conflicts show that journalists continue to be convenient targets in the mayhem of conflict. See 'Sander Thoenes: A Scribe Lost in a Dirty War' in *The Straits Times*, 3 Oct 99, pp. 40, & 'Two Journalists dies, two hurt in ambush in Sierra Leone' in *The Straits Times*, 26 May 2000, pp. 20.

38 Prof. Joseph Nye, Harvard dean, policy-player and influential thinker on trends in strategic issues has argued that governments and organisations find that they will increasingly have to establish a reputation for credibility in the world of white noise that constitutes the Information Revolution. As he puts it, soft power is the pursuit of influence - out of proportion to size - through the power of attraction - "It is the ability to achieve desired outcomes through attraction rather than coercion." Credibility in the Information Age is a crucial source of soft power. "Power does not necessarily flow to those who can produce or withhold information, but to those who can certify it. Credibility is an important source of power. Reputation becomes even more important than in the past, and political struggles occur over the creation and destruction of credibility." Indeed, politics then becomes what he calls the politics of "competitive credibility". "Governments compete with each other and with other organisations to enhance their own credibility and weaken that of their opponents. Reputation has always mattered in world politics". See 'Soft and Hard power in the Info Age' in *Business Times*, 9 Jan 1999, pp. 7

39 Cited in SAF publication - *The Instructor Dec 1998*, pp. 3-4; Extracted from material presented at the 22nd *Pacific Armies Management Seminar* in Manila, Mar 98 by COL Goh Chee Kong, LTC Rupert Gwee, LTC David Koh and LTC Bernard Lim.

40 Through media such as SAF's *Pioneer magazine*, press coverage of significant events and policy statements, recruitment advertisements, MINDEF websites, Defence Information TV (DiTV) in-house production and SAFRA Radio broadcast programmes etc.

41 Singapore's 'Total Defence' concept rests on the five pillars of Economic Defence, Psychological Defence, Social Defence, Civil Defence and Military Defence. It is managed by MINDEF's Central National Education Office.

42 The advent of virtual *advertising technology*, allowing for the widespread morphing of images, manipulation of messages and doctoring of reality on TV screens, presents a new ethical dilemma to be grappled with. See *The Straits Times*, 28 April, pp.10- 11.

43 In Japan, for example, there is increasing concern that the media is now the 4th power wielder. It is reported to have an increasingly powerful influence on youths, after politicians, the big corporations and the government. The general conservatism dominating Japan's political landscape is turning apolitical and fun-loving youths to be right wing as well. See *The Straits Times* 25 Aug 99, pp. 19. With the US in the midst of the Year 2000 elections, there are great expectations that the internet is a new wave in politics, set to make a difference in the presidential campaign. The new medium for campaigning is instantaneous, cheaper than TV and allows for two-way communication. It could surpass the impact of television. Already, the new medium has been demonstrated to be able to identify, inform and mobilise large numbers of people, and also has enormous fund-raising potential. See *The Straits Times*, 4 Sep 99, pp. 12.

44 See Althusser, Louis (1971) *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

45 See Strobel, Warren, P. (1997) *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy: The News Media's Influence on Peace Operations*, Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace Press; Minear, Larry, Scott, Colin & Weiss, Thomas, (1996) *The News Media, Civil War, Humanitarian Action*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner; and Carruthers, Susan (2000) *op cit*, pp. 208.

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# Hitler's Strategic Follies: Operation Barbarossa

by Mr Elvis Chung Chee Wei

*Operation Barbarossa changed the strategic landscape of WW II and eventually led to the downfall of the Third Reich in 1945. Strategically, it meant that Germany had to fight on several fronts (Russia, Western Europe and the Mediterranean). Strategically, the sheer geographical extent and logistical demands of campaigning hundreds of miles into Russia undermined the Wehrmacht's greatest advantage: Blitzkrieg, via Russia's ability to trade space for time. Economically, the invasion deprived Germany of crucial Soviet raw material and lined up a coalition (Britain, Russia and ultimately USA) whose resources were much greater than Germany's. In sum, this was a limitless war for practical purposes and the Third Reich, for all its imposing successes and operational brilliance, was not properly equipped to fight it.<sup>1</sup>*

*This paper aims to evaluate the strategic failures of Operation Barbarossa at the grand strategic and strategic levels and proposes an alternative plan, emphasising the elimination of Great Britain before invading Russia.*

*At the grand strategic level, this paper evaluates three alternatives which were available to Hitler besides Operation Barbarossa during the crucial phases between June 1940 and June 1941: the invasion of Britain (autumn 1940), the operations in the Mediterranean (autumn 1940) and the operations in the Balkans (spring 1941). These represent the "lost opportunities" as a result of the invasion. Their strengths, weaknesses and impact will be evaluated.*

*At the strategic level, the paper focuses on the means employed (strategies) to achieve the objective of Operation Barbarossa, namely the domination of Europe. The weaknesses of the following strategies are discussed and finally, a grand strategy advocating the postponement of the invasion to 1942/43 is advanced.*

*This paper will not discuss the logistical, operational and tactical aspects of the invasion. Logistical problems include muddy road conditions, inadequacies of transport systems and the differences in the gauge of German and Russian railway tracks. Operational failures include the lack of a detailed timetable, the under-estimation of the Red Army's strength, the lack of quality and mobilisation speed, the under-estimation of Germany's force requirements, unrealistic supply requirements and inadequate winter clothing and munitions. An example of tactical failure is Hitler's meddling in the operational/ tactical planning of the German generals. Cooper, Barry and Robert have explored these in details in their books. <sup>2</sup>*

## Political Objective and Assumption

According to Clausewitz, "War is the continuation of politics by other means". What was the political objective of Hitler? For the purpose of this paper, Taylor's definition of the objective of Hitler, "German domination of Europe"<sup>3</sup>, is used.

It is assumed that the accomplishment of the above objective necessitates the destruction of both the British Empire and Russia. Therefore the question is not whether Operation *Barbarossa* should have taken place but the timing of the invasion. All strategies are evaluated with respect to this objective.

## Grand Strategic Decisions

This section evaluates the various grand strategies, besides Operation *Barbarossa*, available to Hitler during the crucial phases between June 1940 (fall of France) and June 1941 (commencement of Operation *Barbarossa*). During this period, Hitler had to decide the next major direction of the war. Three alternatives are discussed: invasion of Britain (Operation *Sealion*), operations in the Mediterranean (Plan *Orient*), and operations in the Balkans (Operation *Marita*). These represent the "lost opportunities" as a result of Operation *Barbarossa*.

## Operation *Sea Lion*

After the Battle of Britain in summer 1940, it was clear that the *Luftwaffe* had not wrested command of the air from the Royal Airforce (RAF). The first grand strategic decision was whether to invade Britain without air superiority or leave an undefeated Britain at Germany's rear and invade Russia. Hitler opted for the latter.

The German Army leaders thought that Hitler failed to appreciate the true priority of the Reich's grand strategic objectives. In their opinion, the invasion of the Soviet Union should be contemplated only after Britain had been subdued. Instead of starting a war on two fronts, it was better for the time being to remain friendly with the Soviet Union, which showed no immediate signs of hostility, and concentrate on attacking Great Britain and its empire with all the resources at Germany's disposal.<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, Hitler recognised the risks of a cross-channel attack, especially without air superiority over the Channel. A reversal on the beaches of England's south coast, was considered to be unthinkable politically.<sup>5</sup>

Hitler's assessment of a cross-channel invasion without air and sea superiority was that it would be very risky and was not to be attempted. Although Britain was not strong enough to attempt a landing in France during 1940, it was a grave strategic mistake to have left Britain alone. Alternative operations should have been considered to "knock out" Great Britain before commencing Operation *Barbarossa*.

## Operation in the Mediterranean (*Plan Orient*)

The lifeline of the British Empire ran through the Mediterranean. The occupation of Gibraltar and Suez would have effectively sealed off the Mediterranean and enable the Reich to seize the spoils of the Middle East (especially oil).<sup>6</sup> Most importantly, the Suez Canal, an essential center for Britain's communications, would be closed to British shipping. This, together with the submarine war in the Atlantic, would inflict a serious blow to the British war effort.

The loss of the Mediterranean would have transformed the history of the war. Italy would have remained in the field, the campaign against Russia could have been supported by an Axis firmly established in the Middle East and the very outcome could have been different. On this, Churchill, Mussolini, Hitler, Raeder and Brooke were all in agreement.<sup>7</sup>

The above strategy was the basis for *Plan Orient* - which would take the *Wehrmacht* through Egypt, across the Syrian desert and into Persia, threatening the Soviet Caucasus from the south and in the process, deny Middle Eastern oil to Britain.<sup>8</sup>

However, Hitler was too obsessed with Operation *Barbarossa* to appreciate the strategic advantage of *Plan Orient*. He invaded Russia with 145 divisions and allocated Rommel's Africa Korps only ten divisions.<sup>9</sup> Yet, Rommel almost captured Alexandria in July 1942. <sup>10</sup> If Hitler had diverted a quarter of the troops, aircraft and supplies used in Operation *Barbarossa* to the Middle East, Britain's position would surely have been overrun.<sup>11</sup>

History has shown that a defiant Britain, with its fleet untouched and its empire intact, was the greatest danger to a continental power. Hence, Britain needed to be eliminated before attempting Operation *Barbarossa*. A direct invasion against the British Isles was impossible without air and sea superiority. A full-scale invasion, using the troops allocated for Operation *Barbarossa*, towards the Mediterranean and Middle East was the best way to eliminate Britain. If the aircraft allocated for Operation *Barbarossa* were used for the Mediterranean operation, air superiority could have been achieved. Without air superiority, the Royal Navy would not be able to intercept the invading forces.

There were also a few natural allies that Hitler could have made use of in the Mediterranean to create havoc behind the British line: Franco against Gibraltar, the French in Syria, Rasid Ali in Iraq and Haj Amin in Jerusalem.<sup>12</sup>

## **Balkans Operation (Operation *Marita*)**

The Balkans were very important to Germany for two reasons: economically, Germany relied heavily on the Balkans' raw resources, (e.g. bauxite, cereals, cottons, metals, etc.) especially its oil. Strategically, control of the Balkans secured its southern flank in Operation *Barbarossa* and acted as a forward base for operations in the Mediterranean.

In late 1940 and early 1941, there was increasing friction between Germany and the Soviet Union in the Balkans.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, the British had occupied Greece, the island of Crete and Lemnos in early 1941. The latter provided them with an advanced air base from which they could invade the Balkans and bomb the Romanian oil fields.

Hence Hitler ordered Operation *Marita* (codeword for the Greek and Yugoslavian invasion) on 1 April 1941.<sup>14</sup> As a result, Operation *Barbarossa* was delayed from mid-May to 22 June 1941. This delay proved to be fatal, causing the Germans to run out of time during the Russian campaign. However, the weather and ground conditions would not have been favourable earlier than the first week of June.<sup>15</sup> Therefore a postponement would have been necessary, Balkans or no Balkans.

The real disadvantages from the Balkan campaign were the wear and tear on the tanks, resulting in high rate of mechanical failure in Operation *Barbarossa*. Secondly, the Balkan campaign deprived the Army Group South of about a third of its armoured strength for its initial attack and their loss was sorely felt. Finally, the failed airborne invasion of Crete discouraged Hitler to attempt any further large airborne operations, which could have been invaluable in the Russian campaign.<sup>16</sup> These tactical/operational disadvantages soon translated into military strategic disadvantages during Operation *Barbarossa*.

Germany could not afford to lose control of its lifeline to either Russia or Britain. Therefore the operations in the Balkans were necessary to safeguard its capability to wage further wars. The tactical/operational disadvantages could have been avoided had Operation *Barbarossa* could have been postponed.

## **Ideological/Political Strategy**

Hitler's hatred for both the Slavic race and communists is well known and needs no elaboration. Because of his ideological conviction, Hitler wanted the German Army to destroy not only the Red Army in the field but also eliminate the Russian-Bolshevik menace. He wanted a war of extermination, which would have to be waged with unprecedented, unmerciful and unrelenting harshness.<sup>17</sup>

The German forces were initially welcomed as liberators as they advanced into the Ukraine in the summer of 1941. However, the harsh treatment of the peasants and prisoners-of-war soon compelled them to rally firmly behind Stalin and toughen their resistance.<sup>18</sup> There is little doubt that a skilful effort to win the population to oppose the Soviet regime could have yielded substantial and perhaps decisive results during the first critical weeks of the war.<sup>19</sup>

Therefore, the wrong ideological/political strategy was employed because of Hitler's conviction

## **Economic/Total War Strategy**

Another strategic failure was Hitler's refusal to place the German economy on a "Total War" footing until it was too late.

Although Hitler was aware of the quantitative disadvantage faced by Germany, he tried to rely on "qualitative superiority" to overcome this disadvantage. He assumed that it was possible for German technology to be ahead of the enemy, especially in armaments, i.e. "qualitative superiority". However there were certain weaknesses in this assumption. Firstly, there were significant quantitative differences in armament outputs between Germany and its opponents. Secondly, it was difficult to maintain technical superiority over an enemy who was able to reproduce armaments captured in battle. Thirdly, "qualitative superiority" was useless when confined solely to development and production. It needed to be extended to the use of the armaments produced. Technology and strategy do not necessarily always go hand in hand. Lastly, the shortage of certain raw materials e.g. tungsten carbide, prevented mass production of the superior weapons.<sup>20</sup>

Despite the economic losses with the invasion, Russia still managed to produce 4,000 aircraft more than Germany in 1941, and 10,000 more in 1942. This was for one front, as opposed to Germany's three. Given its increasingly superior men, tanks, artillery, and planes, the Red Army could actually afford to sustain higher losses and still push forward against the weakening Germans.<sup>21</sup>

Hitler rejected "Total War" initially because he regarded the maintenance of the civilian economy essential for morale.<sup>22</sup> He was only convinced of the need for "Total War" on 10 January 1942, six months after Operation *Barbarossa* commenced.<sup>23</sup> In fact, German's armaments production only peaked in July 1944. <sup>24</sup> This was nearly 28 months after the economy was placed on "Total War", which was too late to affect the ultimate outcome. Had Hitler placed the economy on a "Total War" footing earlier and delayed the invasion until the German economy was at optimum production, perhaps in 1942 or a year later, the outcome would have been different.

## Japan's Role

German diplomacy aimed to persuade the Japanese to pursue a more active role in East Asia so as to tie down British forces and focus American attention on the Pacific. The Japanese were to be given no hint of the Russian operation and no help was expected from them.<sup>25</sup>

A quick victory over Russia was necessary for the success of Hitler's plans. His refusal to inform the Japanese about the Russian campaign and failure to do anything to secure Japanese co-operation of any kind prior to the German invasion must be regarded as a major blunder. On the basis of what is now known of the Russian military situation in the autumn of 1941, it seems possible that a Japanese invasion of Russia from the east coinciding with German blows from the west might have brought about the collapse of the Soviet Union. This would have been decisive for the outcome of the entire war.<sup>26</sup>

On the other hand, the Japanese were facing a strategic dilemma: whether to strike north (towards Russia) or south (towards Southeast Asia).<sup>27</sup> Hence we can only speculate if Japan would have agreed to a joint invasion. Nevertheless, the strategic advantage gained with Japan's involvement outweighed the loss of tactical secrecy.

## Military Strategy

Hitler's military strategy for Operation *Barbarossa* was based on the concept of *Blitzkrieg*: gaining time and space with the skilful use of surprise, economy, concentration of force and mobility. This strategy served Germany well in Poland and Western Europe but was this the correct strategy for Operation *Barbarossa*?

Although total surprise was achieved in the initial stages of the campaign, the size of the Red Army, the great depth of the theatre of operations, the primitive state of its roads and Russia's strategic depth soon allowed Germany to trade space for time, thereby blunting *Blitzkrieg*'s greatest strength.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, the high rate of mechanical failure and loss of armoured strength in the initial weeks of the Balkan operation, diminished the advantages further.

The problems were compounded by the choice of the priority objective city: Moscow, Kiev or Leningrad? Hitler overruled the professional expertise of his general's plan to capture Moscow located in the centre, for psychological impact as the political, cultural and communication centre of Russia. Instead, he preferred to capture Leningrad (the cradle of Bolshevism) in the north and the Ukraine (the economic powerhouse of the Soviet Union represented by the city of Kiev) in the south. The choice of the objective city was very crucial as it affected the operational planning of the entire campaign. In the end, the generals presented a hybrid plan: a plan emphasising the strategic objective of capturing Leningrad and Kiev but with troop deployments more suited for operations towards Moscow.<sup>29</sup>

The plan caused confusion among the field commanders at the tactical level and resulted in much delay, diversion of forces for important battles and incoherent line of thrust between the different army groups.<sup>30</sup> This resulted in the loss of speed, mobility and concentration of forces, further undermining the concept of *Blitzkrieg*. Hence, the failure to define the strategic objective city resulted in failure at the tactical level, that in turn affected the strategic outcome of the invasion.

In addition, Hitler wanted a five-month campaign for the destruction of Russia. This was unrealistic given the immense size of Russia: the timeframe was too short for the German army to accomplish its target but paradoxically, the German generals did not formulate a plan consisting of two- or perhaps three-campaign seasons. This would have given the German army more time to re-group and consolidate their positions before launching another campaign.

In summary, Germany's military strategy failed because Russia's strategic depth blunted *Blitzkrieg's* cutting edge. The inconsistency between the ends (choice of objective cities) and means (military planning and actions) further undermined the concept of *Blitzkrieg*.

## Proposed Plan

The most critical error in grand strategy made by Hitler was his decision to invade Russia with an undefeated Britain at Germany's rear. This gave the Allies a powerful base, i.e. the British Isles, to stage its counterattack on the Western front. It also gave the British Empire time to recuperate and mobilise its immense resources. The grand strategic error was compounded by the means (strategies) used in Operation *Barbarossa*. This paper attempts to propose an alternative plan.

A direct invasion of the British Isle was suicidal without air and sea superiority. Germany should have used an "indirect approach" to eliminate Britain. This could have been achieved with a full-scale invasion of the Mediterranean, using the forces and aircraft allocated for Operation *Barbarossa*, in 1941. Once air superiority was achieved over the Mediterranean, the Royal Navy's sea superiority could be neutralised, an invading force could land in North Africa and *Plan Orient* could be executed. In addition, the various anti-British elements in the Mediterranean could be utilised to create havoc behind the British lines.

The capture of the Mediterranean and Middle East would have weakened the British Empire seriously with the disruption to the Empire's communication lines and the loss of oil from the Middle East. In the meantime, the submarine war in the Atlantic and the U-boat construction could have intensified. The dual impact of the submarine war and the loss of the Mediterranean/Middle East would have eliminated Britain's military capabilities and civilian morale would have collapsed with starvation. This would have forced the British to negotiate for peace or even surrendered.

The invasion of the Balkans was inevitable, given its strategic advantages and should have still been carried out in spring 1941. Finally, the German economy should have been placed on a "Total War" footing at the earliest possible period, perhaps 1940.

Operation *Barbarossa* should have been attempted only with Britain eliminated, the Balkans firmly under German control, troops and tanks refurbished and war production at its optimum. This would probably have had the invasion taking place in 1942 or a year later. During this period, the border would have been

strengthened to prevent Russia from launching a pre-emptive strike, although this was unlikely given the state of Stalin's military preparation.

The proposed strategies for Operation *Barbarossa* are as follows:

- A two- or even three-season campaign was necessary given Russia's size and its transport system.
- Despite running contrary to Hitler's ideological conviction, the Russian population and prisoners-of-war should have been treated humanely to win over their hearts and perception that Hitler was a liberator.
- The campaign's priority should have been the destruction of the Russian field army, followed by the capture of the Ukraine (to enable a prolonged war), and Moscow (for its industries, communication systems and psychological impact as the capital of Russia). Leningrad should have been captured only if it served an economic or political objective, and not an ideological objective. A modified version of *Blitzkrieg* should have been used i.e. emphasis should still have been placed on concentrating forces, surprise and mobility, with the theatre of operation reduced. Russia should have been treated like "it were a new France", necessitating a plan for a two- to three-campaign season i.e. a short blast of *Blitzkrieg* followed by consolidation and re-organisation and then *Blitzkrieg* again. Finally, Japan should have been encouraged to attack Russia's rear, although this depended on Japan's strategic plan for the 1941/42 period.

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# Low-Intensity Conflict

by MAJ Hong Kian Wah

Since the end of WW II to 1991, nearly 75 percent of the 160 armed conflicts around the world were of the "low-intensity" variety <sup>1</sup>. This trend has continued into the 1990s, according to the 1996 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's report. Of the 30 major conflicts which were raging around the world, none were conventional, state-on-state in nature. All were international low-intensity conflicts, some involving outside participation.<sup>2</sup> Nobody will disagree that the most common form of warfare today and in the foreseeable future is low-intensity in nature, a shorthand term for a diverse range of politico-military activities less violent than modern conventional warfare. Low-intensity conflict is defined by the US Joint Chiefs of Staff (as promulgated in the US Army Field Manual 100-20) as:

*"... a political-military confrontation between contending states or groups below conventional war and above the routine, peaceful competition among states. It frequently involves protracted struggles of competing principles and ideologies. Low-intensity conflict ranges from subversion to the use of the armed forces. It is waged by a combination of means, employing political, economic, informational, and military instruments. Low-intensity conflicts are often localized, generally in the Third World, but contain regional and global security implications".<sup>3</sup>*

This definition covers a wide spectrum of conflicts including combating illegal drug trafficking, terrorism and counter-terrorism, insurgency and counter-insurgency, and other special operations needed to counter activities which threaten security and requires a government response - whether revolutionary or non-revolutionary, political or non-political, open or clandestine. However, some of these low-intensity threats such as the Aum Shinrikyo cult's gas attacks in the Tokyo subway, the bombing of the Alfred P Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City and cyber terrorism do not require more than effective police operations from the government. This paper analyses the effectiveness of modern conventional forces <sup>4</sup> of democratic countries <sup>5</sup> in countering illegitimate arms-organised.<sup>99</sup> groups aimed at overthrowing the legitimate government or forcing the states they target to modify their policies and actions. The following definition of low-intensity conflict by the College of Combat, Mhow (India), is more relevant for this analysis:

*"It is a politico-military confrontation between the established authority (state) and organised group(s) of people with or without external assistance, beyond the scope of legitimate, route, peaceful contest/agitation. Being on the low end of the conflict spectrum, it imposes an undefined restraint on the execution of military operations".<sup>6</sup>*

Such forms of low-intensity conflict usually involve armed forces and have similar qualities identified by Blaufarb and Tanham in their definition of insurgency. "First, it is organized rather than spontaneous ... Second, it relies heavily on (irregular) armed forces to advance its cause ... The armed forces is usually deployed in the guerilla mode... Finally, ... is not a brief affair that flares up and burns out quickly" . <sup>7</sup> In addition to these three qualities, van Creveld has pointed out that the irregular armed forces of such groups usually comprise guerrillas, terrorists, and even civilians and they do not rely on [large quantity of] high-tech weapons and conventional armaments such as tanks, heavy artilleries and aircraft.<sup>8</sup> These irregulars are capable of operating in both the country and urban settings. Current examples would include the Kosovo Liberation Army in Yugoslavia, *Mujahideen* guerrillas in Indian Kashmir, Kurds in Iraq and Turkey, Tamil Tigers in Northern Sri Lanka and the Irish Republican Army in British Northern Ireland.

'Victory' in low-intensity conflicts can be considered achieved in situations where the threatened government is able to conquer or pacify the illegitimate arms-organised group or limit the conflict to a manageable proportion at a domestically "acceptable" cost. However, the acceptance of such a cost is often subject to debate and controversy. Wong has rightly pointed out that 'victory' in such conflicts, if defined and achieved, "will be less meaningful compared to conventional wars due to the irrelevance of the Clausewitzian war

trinity, the likelihood of war atrocities and a great need for political compromise".<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, are there countries which have succeeded in securing an ideal victory in low-intensity conflicts in the modern era?

Britain lost most of its crown colonies - India, Palestine, Kenya, Cyprus, and Aden - to name a few, largely due to their failure to overcome the upsurge in insurgencies witnessed in these countries after WW II. The Dutch attempted to hold on to resource-rich Indonesia by military means but ended up withdrawing. Both the rich and powerful France and US suffered humiliating defeat in Vietnam after fighting hopelessly for six and nine years respectively. The Russians failed to secure victory in Chechnya despite their overwhelming combat power and years of counter-insurgency experience gained while fighting *Mujahideen* guerrillas in Afghanistan. The intervention of the Indian armed forces in the Sri Lanka's civil war proved disastrous too. Even the once 'never-give-up' Israel is tired of continuing the 'never-ending' low-intensity conflicts with its neighboring Arab states: it is trading in its hard-earned land for peace.

The only and often-quoted success story is the British counterinsurgency operations in Malaya. However, as van Creveld points out, the communist insurgency "was largely confined to the Chinese minority and unsupported by most of the population ... struggle was conducted in vacuum".<sup>10</sup> Lately, the Indian government announced "victory" in Kashmir as the Indian armed forces had successfully forced the Pakistan-backed *Mujahideen* guerrillas out of Indian Kashmir. However, it is not clear how lasting the victory would be since the *Mujahideen* guerrillas are still very much alive and capable of making more such advances anytime.

Against these statistics, are modern conventional forces of democratic countries capable of achieving victory in low-intensity conflicts? The ineffectiveness of these modern conventional forces in low-intensity conflicts could be due to three reasons:

- Inability of many democratic countries, especially the Western states, to apply the perceived desired amount of military resources needed to counter low-intensity threats.
- Modern conventional forces are not configured primarily to deal with such threats. They are thus, incapable of "defeating" the opposing irregular armed forces.
- The sole use of modern conventional forces may be inadequate to achieve victory in low-intensity conflicts.

There are differences between a democracy, such as the US, and a dictatorial system, such as the former Soviet Union, when confronting low-intensity threats. The domestic factors have more influence over the outcomes of protracted conflicts for democratic countries as the strategic and tactical adaptation to warfare of these countries are more affected by their domestic structure. In democratic countries, the liberal values often spill over from the society to the military and civil authority, and thus their ability to win low-intensity conflicts is further reduced.<sup>11</sup> The Soviet treatment of Afghanistan and America's approach to Vietnam well-illustrate the differences. An experienced French observer who was in Afghanistan during part of the Soviet invasion highlighted two aspects of the Soviet strategy which he thought differentiated the outcome in Afghanistan from the Western experience. One was the use of mass terror, completely unlike any of the more moderate types of intervention. The second was the fact that the Soviets could afford a protracted war, as the Soviet public opinion did not influence Soviet policy. Unlike their American counterpart, the Soviet government had absolute control over the media and the nature of their "closed" society allowed them to manipulate the war information intended for the public.<sup>12</sup>

Today, many democratic countries cannot effectively commit their conventional forces to fight insurgents, guerrillas, terrorists or whatever they may be called, due to the moral and political difficulties in waging small wars. These irregulars, to use Mao's famous words, are like fishes in the sea.<sup>13</sup> In situations where the 'fishes' cannot be singled out, one may have no choice but to withdraw the water - to attack the civilian population and sometimes, other sovereign states, supporting the insurgents and terrorists. However, the deliberate targeting of the civilian population and counter-operations that intentionally violate another state's sovereignty, are not morally acceptable to the general public nor the international community. The high doses of brutality inflicted by some US Marines on Vietnamese villagers (to deter the opposing Vietcong) seemed immoral and provoked many anti-war demonstrations. Similarly, the US 'military intervention' in

Grenada has been seen as an invasion and received world-wide condemnation. Today, no democratic country can apply crude power to dominate weaker states without facing internal social backlash, political trouble or risk international outrage and condemnation. The modern day use of conventional forces by democratic countries in low-intensity conflicts is certainly not equal to those of Nazi Germany.

The protracted nature of low-intensity conflicts is never attractive to the general public, bureaucrats or the military commanders. Both the victorious British counter-insurgency operation in Malaya and the disastrous American Vietnam War lasted for more than 10 years. Many more similar low-intensity conflicts such the Tamil insurgency in Sri Lanka and the Kurds' independence movements in Iraq and Turkey are on-going despite years of fruitless fighting with no apparent clear-cut victories or defeats in the foreseeable future. In the democratic countries, the short time-span given to the politicians to govern usually does not allow the government to hold such issues as priority in the agenda for very long, making it impossible to deal effectively with low-intensity conflicts. Likewise, military commanders find it hard to fight "protracted small wars" where the political objective and priority change frequently over the years.

Many operations needed to successfully counter low-intensity threats demand secrecy and sometimes, deception to mask politically sensitive training and deployment. For example, the measure to isolate civilian population from insurgents has proven to be effective, efficient and essential in many counter-insurgency operations but often invites criticism. It is therefore, tempting for government counter-insurgency agencies to engage in such effective but morally and politically ambiguous operations or 'dirty tricks' hidden from the public. These 'government secrets', if exposed, will certainly prove costly to the politicians governing the democratic country. Nevertheless, today's democratic governments are finding themselves increasingly unable to monopolise the supply of information to the public and isolate the 'battlefields' for long periods of time. As seen in the Vietnam War, the North Vietnamese successfully exploited the American media to expose the "distasteful" operations carried out by the US military and turn the American public against the war.

Grant highlights: "low-intensity conflict is even more politically distasteful because the US government rarely gives it high priority... the (military) services have traditionally given few rewards for work in low-intensity conflict, and the situation with civilian agencies is not much better... Low-intensity conflicts are low priority and are likely to stay that way".<sup>14</sup> The design and implementation of more effective strategy and tactics for low-intensity conflicts are difficult under such unfavourable conditions. In many democratic countries, the perception and policy gap between support for major wars and lack of support for low-intensity conflicts is wide. It is such a short-sighted view that is further weakening the ability of the agency-in-charge of countering low-intensity conflicts to rally support from both bureaucrats and military commanders.

Besides the inability of today's democratic countries in committing their military forces to low-intensity conflicts, there are numerous solid military reasons why conventional forces are largely ineffective in fighting such conflicts. Conventional forces are unlike their irregular counterparts: they are fashioned by the Clausewitzian notion of war, focusing on decisive battles to defeat the enemy forces. Table 1 highlights the major asymmetries between modern conventional war and irregular warfare:

<b>Modern</b>	<b>Irregular</b>
Organised	Informal
Advanced technology	At-hand technology
Logistics-dependent	Logistics-independent
National direction	Local direction
Coherent doctrine	Ad-hoc doctrine
Decisive battle	Raids and skirmishes
Soldier	Warrior
Allies	Accomplices
Segregation	Integration

Table 1 : Contrasting Dimensions of War 15

Modern conventional forces often prefer to deal with military opponents rather than irregular armed forces comprising civilians who are inseparable from society. As mentioned earlier, low-intensity conflict is not a brief affair that flares up and burns out quickly - it can continue for generations and become a routine part of a society. White notes that this has clear implications for external forces entering a conflict to settle it, and in a protracted conflict, time will generally be on the side of the local forces.<sup>16</sup> Operations in Lebanon and Somalia have demonstrated the difficulty for a technologically more superior external force to have more than just a passing effect on a conflict that is deeply embedded in the society. Internal legitimate conventional forces have not done better in such a setting. The Sri Lankan armed forces are still trying hard to pacify the Tamil Tigers after years of fighting. Battle-tested British forces have also not made much headway against the Irish Republican Army in Northern Ireland.

It is rarely possible to force the irregulars to a military showdown and fight a decisive battle as in a conventional war. The irregulars usually 'own the ground,' and they are unconcerned with time. They do not seek a decisive battle, preferring to engage in raids, skirmishes, and ambushes. In many cases, the conventional forces switch their prime targets for eradication to insurgency-warriors and leaders, as was seen in the controversial *Phoenix Program* of the US during the Vietnam War, where assassinations were carried out without any consideration for laws. Most military commanders of civilised forces would find the approach distasteful and difficult to formalise as a conventional military doctrine. There is also not much preparation in terms of training or planning for the modern conventional force in such operations.

Van Creveld suggests that the conventional war-oriented command-structures of modern armed forces are too tall and battle procedures too cumbersome. According to a source, the US Air Force required 24 hours advance warning to tailor-plan missions during the Vietnam War.<sup>17</sup> Such tall command-structures offer little help in neutralising the irregulars' monopoly of the offensive. They have the element of surprise and determine who or what is to be attacked, when, where and how and "customarily", strike quickly and depart before the clumsy regular force can respond - thereby effectively extending their life expectancy and prolonging the conflict.

Heavily mechanised "high-tech" modern conventional forces use enormous amounts of fuel, ammunition and spare parts and require huge numbers of non-combat supporting staff. They carry with them the 'ball-and-chain' of their logistics system which is often a constraint to mobility and operational flexibility, creating exploitable vulnerabilities. To use van Creveld's words: their 'tail' is far too long and the number of fighting 'teeth' is far too small <sup>18</sup> . Irregular forces, on the contrary, are substantially less limited by logistical factors as they usually draw support from the local population. They usually have a much higher 'tooth-to-tail' ratio due to their simple logistical requirements. These logistical factors reduce the vulnerability of irregulars to counter-logistic strategies. There are no rail or road networks to attack, no ammunition dumps to bomb, no bridges to knock out, no clear logistic centers of gravity to strike - a scenario where many modern conventional forces face difficulties in applying their military might.

The military intelligence collection system has been optimised to obtain information on modern military forces, not for those involved in irregular conflicts. The traditional focus at the corps, division and brigade levels is on military capabilities through analysis of order of battle, force deployment, relative combat powers, doctrine and tactics, sensors and weapons capabilities, and battle damage assessment. However, as highlighted by White, the order of battle of irregular forces does not approach the rigidity of modern forces and units differ in size and structure from tribe to tribe, and from time to time, if accountable. This makes it difficult to display confidently what the enemy's forces look like or how they are deployed. Even the concept of deployment loses some of its meaning when the forces are closely integrated with their society.<sup>19</sup>

A strong military force by itself does not deter insurgents and terrorists. In fact, guerilla warfare and terrorism developed in response to strong government powers. The US demonstrated its military might with the 1986 retaliation air strike against Libya.<sup>20</sup> In all, 100 military aircraft took part in the punishing operation, code-named, *El Dorado Canyon*, to demonstrate to all states sponsoring terrorists, the high costs of terrorism and that the US did not need an aircraft carrier nearby for them to fear retaliation. Unfortunately, the "military threat" failed to deter further terrorist acts by Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi

or other terrorist groups. It prompted the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie in 1988, where the lives of 270 passengers, including 189 Americans, were cut short. The military could not have done anything to prevent or deter the attack.

Countries cannot rely solely on the use of their modern conventional forces to achieve victory in low-intensity conflicts. One must understand the politico-military nature of low-intensity conflicts. To counter such threats involves much more than military enterprise. Equal importance must be given to a broad range of non-military actions. As Sir Robert Thompson puts it unmistakably: "The first lesson to be learnt in this type of war (an insurgency or whatever it may be called) is [it is] all embracing and cannot be won by military means alone. If Vietnam did not prove that, Afghanistan certainly did. The military has only one function - to support the civil government."<sup>21</sup> Such thinking is well indoctrinated in the US Army training and which reinforces that "in low-intensity conflicts, political objectives drive military decisions at every level from the strategic to the tactical. All commanders and staff officers must understand these political objectives and the impact of military operations on them."<sup>22</sup>

The French experience in Indochina has taught them that counter-insurgency must mirror the Maoist 'people's war'. It thus requires a careful blend of military, political, and psychological efforts including pro-government propaganda, mobilisation of the state's political resources, attacks on the subversive infrastructure, re-conquest of liberated zones, isolation and destruction of insurgent military forces, and diplomatic efforts.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, the only country that has succeeded in 'winning' a low-intensity conflict, Britain, stresses strict unity of effort between the military, economic, political, and police forces during counter-insurgency, effective political and psychological operations, and the limited use of firepower in military operations.<sup>24</sup> Giving an Asian perspective of the issue, BG Chauhan of the Indian Army highlights in his essay, *Low Intensity Conflict In India: Organisation and Resources Required To Meet This Threat*, "... need to create a Bureau of Internal Security (BIS). The BIS would be directly responsible to the Prime Minister via the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs ... liaise with every ministry ... to formulate a national strategy to counter low-intensity conflict".<sup>25</sup>

Sun Tzu argues that it is far more effective to attack an opponent's strategy than his army.<sup>26</sup> This suggests that the threatened government should examine why the insurgents and terrorists could be promoted and sustained in the first place and apply the most effective action, not necessarily the use of military force, to remove the support base of the threat. As Mao put it: "Without a political goal, guerilla warfare must fail, as it must if its political objectives does not coincide with the aspirations of the people, and their sympathy, cooperation, and assistance cannot be gained."<sup>27</sup> One must note that it was not the application of more conventional air power that forced Libya to hand over the bombing suspects for trial in Netherlands but the tough sanctions imposed by the US and the UN against Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi's regime for over 10 years.

Unlike the colonial powers in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the ability of today's democratic countries in waging small wars (or low-intensity conflicts) are influenced more by domestic and international factors. Even in situations where modern conventional forces can be effectively mobilised and their "incompatibilities" in dealing with irregular armed forces are overcome, there is no guarantee that victory can be achieved in low-intensity conflicts. In an exchange between two colonels in Hanoi in April 1975, one an American and the other a North Vietnamese, the following was recorded:

*"You know you never defeated us on the battlefield," said the American colonel.*

The North Vietnamese colonel pondered this remark a moment before replying,

*"That may be so, but it is also irrelevant."<sup>28</sup>*

The salient point highlighted by the North Vietnamese colonel is that the tactical responses provided by modern conventional forces can "win battles" (as evidenced by the US experience in Vietnam) but they cannot "win wars". The Indian armed forces have won just 'battles' in Kashmir today: the 'lower intensity' fight is far from over and the conflict could well escalate again. One must understand that the center of

gravity of low-intensity conflicts is not on the battlefield per se, but in the complex political-social system. Thus, the main battle lines are political and psychological rather than between regular and irregular forces. No modern conventional forces, not even the multi-purpose 'forces of the future' projected by Irwin 29, are sufficient in such conflicts. Only strategic responses that incorporate both military and non-military actions can achieve victory in low-intensity conflicts.

## Endnotes

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3 *US Army Field Manual 100-20* Chapter 1: 'Fundamentals of Low Intensity Conflict' at [http://earthops.org/sovereign/low\\_intensity/100-20.1.html](http://earthops.org/sovereign/low_intensity/100-20.1.html).

4 These are armed forces built primarily for warfighting, to fight against other armed forces. They do not cover the police force and other internal security forces.

5 Countries that have a government where the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation, usually involving periodically held free elections (based on Merriam-Webster's Collegiate(R) Dictionary, Tenth Edition).

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20 Former US President Reagan ordered the 1996 attack in retaliation to the Libyan bombing of a Berlin disco where two US servicemen were killed.

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# Conditions for Peace and Stability in the Middle East

by MAJ Lawrence Ng

*The Middle East countries seem plagued with long-standing disputes and conflicts<sup>1</sup> which has frequently led to inter-state wars and border conflicts. The realist flavour of balance of power has been strong in the Middle East since the Cold War. In fact, the recent acquisition of German Dolphin-class submarines by Israel<sup>2</sup> with an assessed second nuclear strike capability<sup>3</sup> is evidence of the continuous desire to safeguard sovereignty using military power. Despite the hostile environment, there are still cases of peace and stability between states in the Middle East, some with very different ideologies with peace and stability achieved under tremendous pressure. Take the case of Egypt and Israel. Both countries have fought numerous wars between 1948 and 1973 and were the most unlikely candidates for a peace treaty because of the vast differences in ideology. Furthermore, dealings with Israel were then considered unacceptable in the Arab world. Against all odds, both countries have managed to sign a peace treaty, resulting in peace and stability between them for the last 20 years. Under what conditions have peace and stability been achieved between Egypt and Israel?*

*Similarly, in the pursuit of peace and stability through cooperation, six Gulf states - Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman, formed the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). The GCC was formed both in response to the perceived threat from revolutionary Iran and an interest to further cooperation in economic and cultural activities.<sup>4</sup> However, "after a decade of rather surprising successful experimentation in security cooperation and a successful collective response to the challenge of the Gulf War, the Gulf states seemingly abandoned any sense of regionalism in favour of statism and particularism."<sup>5</sup> Why have peace and stability endured between Egypt and Israel but declined for the GCC?*

*This essay will show that constructivism can explain the conditions for peace and stability in the Middle East an issue other theories cannot quite satisfactorily explain. The essay will show the limitations of realism and balance of power and highlight how constructivism can overcome these limitations. Two case studies will be presented and the conditions for enduring peace and stability between Egypt and Israel will be examined using the constructivist approach. This will be contrasted against the declining peace and stability in the GCC.*

## Realism and Its Limitations

Realism "depicts international affairs as a struggle for power among self-interested states and is generally pessimistic about the prospects for eliminating conflict and war".<sup>6</sup> The primary pursuit of self-interest among the states makes cooperation difficult because of insecurity that arises out of the concern over relative gains (instead of absolute gain).<sup>7</sup> As a result, states believe in self-help as a necessary principle in an anarchic order.<sup>8</sup> In order to pursue self-interest in an anarchic world, the states need to accumulate material power which realists define as military and economic power. Therefore, the self-help system in anarchy sets the condition for balance of power<sup>9</sup> in *realpolitik* and states view balance of power as the key to stability (through deterrence).

The realist paradigm of balance of power or threat demonstrates the limitations of realism that traps states in a perpetual state of war. The limitations are imposed by the realist assumptions that interest and anarchy are given, cannot be changed and power is solely material. There are several disadvantages. Firstly, this will rule out cooperation, forcing states to be inefficient as they will prefer to operate alone, instead of reaping benefits from lower transaction costs from cooperation. This is because states are unlikely to cooperate unless they think they can gain more than their partners as opposed to everyone gaining something. Hence, states have only one meaningful identity of a self-interested state. Secondly, states will be confronted by anarchy. This is created from the insecurity caused by concerns over relative gain and will trap states forever in a self-help world, as Waltz states, "the creators become the creatures of the market [that is, the system] that their activity give rise to".<sup>10</sup> The implication is that states are willing to accept a situation of overall inefficiency and lack of progress in exchange for perceived greater security in an anarchic world. Lastly, realism ignores intangibles like ideals, norms and rules. Military power is mainly associated (more than economic power) with influence and the ability of a state to survive. "In international affairs, force

remains the final arbiter."<sup>11</sup> This will increase the likelihood for states to settle disputes through armed confrontations if states are limited to military power as the dominant arbitrator instead of ideals, norms and rules.

## Constructivism and Its "Break Out"

Constructivism views international relations as a social process where the central theme is the impact of human capacity for reflection and learning on the meaning attached to materials and perception of the world.<sup>12</sup> It stresses the importance of "culture, norms, institutions, procedures, rules and social practises that constitute the actors (states) and the structure alike".<sup>13</sup>

The break out offered by constructivism lies in its two central beliefs:

- Identity and interest of states are not fixed and can be changed.
- Power is not solely material.

Firstly, states assume identities are socially constructed. This means that states attach certain characteristics to themselves vis-à-vis other states. States can also have multiple identities, depending on whether it is assumed from relations to domestic society ("liberal," "democratic") or from international society ("hegemon," "balancer").<sup>14</sup> Based on the assumed identity, states will have prescribed interests and actions. Identities can also be changed through social processes. Hence, interests can also be reshaped. It views the realist world of anarchy as an institution created by the states themselves.<sup>15</sup> In other words, states can escape anarchy by changing their identity and interests through positive social interactions.

Opponents like Jonathan Mercer use the social identity theory (SIT) to provide the theoretical and empirical support for Waltz's arguments that "states are *a priori* self-regarding." <sup>16</sup> Based on SIT, he argues that "the more we identify with our group, the more likely we are to discriminate against out-groups." Egoism within a group can be avoided by forging a strong group identity, but this requires differentiation from other groups and group comparisons cannot be neutral. Therefore, "group egoism, self-help and relative gains are ever present in international politics".<sup>17</sup> Wendt likens this in-group identity to corporate identity and argues that group egoism is not permanent because "the boundaries of the self are not inherently limited to corporate identity".<sup>18</sup> It is possible for groups to develop collective identities.<sup>19</sup>

Secondly, according to Alder, power does not solely consist of resources to impose one's will on others, but also "the authority to determine the shared meanings that constitute the identities, interests, and practices of states, as well as the conditions that confer, defer or deny access to 'goods' and benefits".<sup>20</sup> Physical objects have no real meanings. Hence the ability to create ideals and define rules and norms, and get actors to internalise and abide by those rules and norms is the most subtle and effective form of power.<sup>21</sup> Power will mainly be institutional power held by international organisations, which are sites for identity and formation. Constructivists "do not view institutions as necessarily a product of conscious choice and design but rather as a consequence of patterned interactions and allows for the possibility that institutions, as a potential source of state interests and identities, can generate order among actors".<sup>22</sup>

In contrast, neo-realists argue that institutions are created by great powers to serve their needs and rules are changed according to the changing power hierarchy.<sup>23</sup> In the neo-liberalists view, institutions are created by self-interested states to further cooperation and stability.<sup>24</sup> Wendt views both as rationalist approaches, which is limited by assuming that interests and identities are constant and exogenous to interaction. Hence, it misses out most of the action at systemic level because it "is not designed to explain identities and interests, the reproduction and transformation of which is a key determinant of structural change". <sup>25</sup>

## Conditions for Peace and Stability Between Egypt and Israel

Ironically, the most enduring example of peace and stability in the Middle East exists between an Arabic and non-Arabic state which has the most significant differences in race, religion and ideology. Egypt and Israel have fought numerous wars during the Cold War. Since the signing of the unprecedented peace treaty at the Camp David in March 1979, both countries have enjoyed peace and stability in their relations. For Israel, its southern border has been secured and the most powerful Arab state has apparently been eliminated from the coalition of forces against Israel.<sup>26</sup> Egypt has secured more through peace settlements than through war.<sup>27</sup> Although disagreements are inevitable in what some observers term the "cold peace" between Egypt and Israel <sup>28</sup> , both countries have not allowed the treaty to break down completely.

Why did Egypt sue for peace with Israel in the first place? It is reasonable to accept the realists' explanation that Egypt could not hope to defeat Israel militarily and the liberalists' explanation that Egypt was trying to revive its economy which had been severely drained during its wars with Israel. But these reasons provide only the impetus for the peace process and do not explain why peace and stability have endured for the last 20 years. After the Camp David Accords, Egypt's access to American military grants has been second only to Israel. In fact, Egypt managed to re-arm itself with American military aid. If Egypt retained its identity as the aspiring "military hegemon", it would be orchestrated another Arab coalition against Israel after rearming. Economically, Egypt was unsuccessful in reviving its economy - its GNP per capital was one of the lowest in the Middle East.<sup>29</sup> Hence, there was little incentive to keep the peace if the benefits were not forthcoming economically. The Egyptian government could easily distract its people from their economic woes by drumming up the Arab-Israeli conflict. The most compelling observation was that the peace treaty did not break down after the assassination of the man who started the peace process - President Sadat. Egypt also managed to stand firm in the face of rejection from the other Arab states. In fact, Egypt was branded a traitor and expelled from the Arab League after it signed the Camp David Accords in 1979. Egypt did not cringe, showing that Egypt's identity transformation had been deeply internalised.

Israel, on the other hand, is a small country with little strategic depth. In the June 1967 war, it captured the Golan Heights, West Bank, Gaza Strip and the Sinai peninsula for the purpose of creating buffer zones between the hostile Arab states and its population. Israel needed these buffer zones as the Arab world did not recognise Israel's right to exist as an independent state.<sup>30</sup> In trading land for peace with Egypt, the risk was high because if war had broken out after the land had been returned, Israel would be very vulnerable. Therefore, Israel had to be very sure of Egypt's intentions. How sure was Israel, especially since Egypt's promises were intangible and revocable? How did Egypt manage to win Israel's trust?

The transformation of Egypt and Israel from enemies to friends <sup>31</sup> was based on a gradual build-up of trust and confidence between the two countries. The transformation of identity took place during the socialisation processes between Egypt and Israel. The Yom Kippur War in October 1973 led to a series of US-initiated diplomatic exchanges, known as Sinai I and Sinai II, between Egypt and Israel. Israel kept to the agreement and withdrew to Mitla and Gidi Passes. Egypt managed to recover its oil fields in western Sinai and re-opened the Suez Canal. This socialisation process increased the confidence of both Egypt and Israel as the agreements were honoured. As the interaction progressed, both states saw each other less as enemies and more as friends. Eventually, this led to a visit by President Sadat to Israel which was a great symbolic and substantive act for an Arab head of state to do. In his dramatic address to the Israeli Knesset in November 1977, Sadat proclaimed Egypt's intention to live in peace with Israel. This was in fact recognition of Israel as an independent state. This paved the way for Camp David Accords, which led to the resumption of full diplomatic relations between the two countries and Egypt's recovery of Sinai.<sup>32</sup> Egypt and Israel effectively created the norm for "land for peace". Since the signing, the peace treaty has been put to the test several times. Egypt has demonstrated its commitment to peace, despite pressure from the other Arab states during Israel's incursion into Lebanon in 1982. This has increased Egypt's credibility in Israel's eyes.

In addition, Egypt learnt two things. Firstly, it was more effective to engage Israel through diplomatic negotiations than military confrontation. Secondly, with the experience gained and diplomatic channels established from its dealings with Israel, Egypt found a new role as the powerbroker for future dealings between Israel and the rest of the Arab world. With this transformed identity as a powerbroker for peace, Egypt has emerged with enhanced prestige. Egypt is now the major player in convening the Arab-Israeli

peace conference, "particularly in reassuring (and pressuring) Syria and Israel"<sup>33</sup> and playing a key role in keeping both Israel and the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation) engaged in the peace process. In fact, Egypt probably commands more respect currently as a peacebroker than a military hegemon. For example, Egypt successfully mediated a border dispute between Saudi Arabia and Qatar in which two Qatari and one Saudi tribal shaykh were killed.<sup>34</sup> The return of Egypt to the Arab mainstream after rejoining the Arab League suggest that "some of the traditional stigma associated with those who deal with Israel may be wearing off".<sup>35</sup> Another interpretation can also be the norm that the Arab world is endorsing - an Arab state can be at peace with both Israel and the Arab world at the same time.

This case study clearly demonstrates the constructivists' argument that state identity and interest are not given and can be transformed after interaction at the systemic level. In the case of Egypt, it has learnt and reinvented the role of powerbroker in the peace negotiations between the Arab world and Israel. For Israel, it has learnt that Egypt can be trusted to honour the peace treaty since Israel would never have returned the Sinai peninsula to Egypt otherwise. Ideas, norms and rules are more effective forms of power than military might. These norms have been accepted in the Middle East and some actors such as the PLO, Jordan (which signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1994) and Syria <sup>36</sup> are negotiating with Israel based on these norms.

## **GCC - Case of Declining Peace and Stability?**

The creation and membership of GCC was based on a (constructivist) shared identity and sentiment of common destiny, shared interests and values.<sup>37</sup> The common economic and political systems (all are ruled by a monarchy) also produced a natural solidarity. The Gulf states also attempted to produce security through symbolic means, most notably through a "Gulf identity". Although the Gulf states downplayed the security role of the GCC and stressed on economic and cultural cooperation, security issues soon dominated GCC summits mainly due to common 'imported' internal security threats from Iran.<sup>38</sup>

The GCC enjoyed early success, particularly in "dealing with threats of internal subversion backed by Iran".<sup>39</sup> This was because the conditions were favourable for co-operation and security. Therefore, the GCC states enjoyed a jump-start in the pursuit of peace and stability unlike Egypt and Israel. As interaction and socialisation progressed, the GCC became a mechanism for security coordination and peaceful settlements of disputes because of the creation of effective norms and procedures, particularly "for dealing with internal disputes and coordinating policies toward external actors".<sup>40</sup> For example, the GCC peacefully settled the border disputes between Saudi Arabia and Oman in 1990 (before the Gulf War) and the Qatari-Bahraini border flare-up in 1986. Kuwait's invitation to foreign navies to protect its oil tankers in November 1986 was subsequently ratified by the GCC and all GCC states cooperated with the US while risking retaliation from Iran.<sup>41</sup> More ambitious military cooperation projects were undertaken as confidence in the GCC grew, leading to the establishment of a GCC strike force under Saudi command called the Peninsula Shield Force.

The most serious test to the GCC came during the Gulf War. The GCC collectively rose to the occasion and stood by Kuwait throughout. The wholehearted commitment by the lower Gulf countries such as Qatar, UAE and Oman which were not directly threatened by the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, strongly suggested that security interest was interdependent had been internalised as part of the GCC's identity through the years of interaction and socialisation since its formation.

However, after the Gulf War, a move towards statism rather than regionalism was detected.<sup>42</sup> The Gulf War seemed to bring out "centrifugal tendencies and unilateral scrambles for security".<sup>43</sup> It started with the *Damascus Declaration* in March 1991 which called for a permanent Egyptian and Syrian military presence. Subsequently, some GCC states followed up with unilateral security agreements with great powers, such as the Kuwaiti security arrangements with the US which "have conflicted with post-war regional security arrangements involving the GCC" as noted by Acharya.<sup>44</sup> There has also been a re-emergence of territorial disputes and rivalries among the GCC states which has led to military clashes along the borders. Why has peace and stability among the GCC states declined?

Realists will attribute the breakdown in co-operation to the states which remain fundamentally self-interested and concerned with only their survival. Liberalists will argue that the military clashes along the borders are the result of low economic interdependence and non-democratic GCC states. Hence, both will dismiss the possibility of the GCC ever achieving some semblance of co-operation, in the case of the Liberalists, like those found in a true security community. However, rationalist approaches cannot account for the early success of the GCC.

On the other hand, the Constructivists' approach highlight the greater relevance and importance of norms, rules and ideas in national security,<sup>45</sup> and its effect in shaping international relations. After the Iraqi threat had been removed, old suspicions which had not been effectively dealt with, surfaced. There is a history of "dynastic dispute in the Arab peninsular" which "left a residue of suspicion among the ruling families about their intentions towards each other."<sup>46</sup> This resulted in possessive sovereignty which caused the GCC states to be very sensitive to "possible infringements on [sic] their decision-making latitude, fearing [sic] conceding too much authority to any international body."<sup>47</sup> Hence, the GCC states have deliberately avoided discussing the ground rules on states meddling in each other's domestic political affairs, in the hope that it will discourage such meddling if it is treated as taboo. The fear of meddling from member states has not ruled out the possibility of using force against each other.<sup>48</sup> Unlike ASEAN, which has clearly spelt agreements on "non-interference in the internal affairs of one another" and the "renunciation of the threat of use of force" in the *Treaty of Amity and Cooperation*,<sup>49</sup> the absence of such norms has resulted in GCC members meddling in each other's internal affairs and border clashes. As a result, the GCC states have been unable to overcome the emotional baggage carried over from earlier dynastic disputes and continue to harbour suspicions toward each other. For example, an 1995 intra-family coup in Qatar deposed Amir, Shaykh Khalifa al Thani and brought to power his son, Shaykh Hamad.<sup>50</sup> Hamad was largely blamed for the Qatar-Saudi border clashes. After the coup, the GCC states allowed the deposed Amir to make a public tour in the other GCC capitals, claiming to be the legitimate ruler of Qatar.<sup>51</sup> The heads of states even received the deposed Amir during his tour. This was perceived by Qatar as support for the deposed Amir and an attempt to meddle in Qatar's internal affairs. In February 1996, Qatar arrested 100 people in an alleged coup by the deposed Amir. Qatar then accused the other GCC states of facilitating the coup which led to open disputes in the GCC. Qatar refused to take part in a Peninsula Shield exercise in 1996.

The case study on the GCC further demonstrates the importance of norms. The lack of norms in the GCC to provide guidance on handling domestic political affairs of other member states stalled the last stage of the transformation from suspicion to trust after the early successes of the group. This has even led to a reversal from trust to suspicion which has an overriding effect on other established norms for modest multilateralism prior to the Gulf War, thus causing the states to seek unilateral agreements with external powers for security. "Only when leaders are confident that interstate cooperation will not lead to a challenge in their domestic position, can integration move forward."<sup>52</sup> A norm to promote the understanding on handling sensitive issues on domestic politics of other states will promote greater transparency and less misunderstanding. This is a confidence-building measure which is important for a region with emotional baggage left over from historic dynastic disputes.

On the issue of the Gulf identity, Barnett and Gauss observe that two opposite paths have been taken - an official and a popular one. The creation of GCC has given both the states and their people an opportunity to think in regional terms. While the regimes have been cautious toward cooperation, various societal groups are catching-on to the idea of a Gulf identity. Hence, it is reasonable to speculate that "as the idea of 'Gulf' identity grows, the incentives for the leaders to build on the popular feelings of the community will increase."<sup>53</sup> This can lead to increased cooperation again.

## **Conclusion**

Although the balance of power scenario in the Middle East has created a hostile environment that is not conducive for peace and stability, there are examples of peace and stability between some states. Peace and stability have endured in some countries while it has declined in others.

From a theoretical perspective, realism traps states in anarchy. On the other hand, constructivism argues that states are able to transform their identities and interests through systemic-level interaction. During the course of interaction, norms, rules and ideas are created which can be an effective form of power. Through socialisation, states become fully internalised with the rules and norms which then become a part of the state's identity. This will shape their interests and offer an escape from the limitations of Realism which traps states in a perpetual state of war in an anarchic world.

The case study on Egypt and Israel demonstrates the constructivist argument that state identity and interest are not given and can be transformed after interaction at the systemic level. The transformation of Egypt and Israel from enemies to friends was due to their ability to internalise the norms and rules created during their interaction as part of their identity. This has resulted in enduring peace and stability between them. Other actors in the Arab world have also accepted these norms which has resulted in negotiations with Israel. This demonstrates the power of ideas, norms and rules over military might.

On the other hand, the case study on the GCC is significant in further demonstrating the importance of norms in transforming a state's identity. The failure to create important norms promoting trust leads to an incomplete transformation in identity and interest. As a result, cooperation among states with the most striking similarities in culture, race, society, values, common destiny, shared interests and values, economic and political systems can be compromised, leading to a decline in peace and stability. Hence, one should not overlook the effect of norms in transforming a state's identity and interest - a fundamental for creating an enduring peaceful and stable environment.

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# Logistics - A Combat Multiplier

by MAJ Ng Chan Cheok and MAJ Ng Tion Huat

*"A military maxim has it that amateurs talk about strategy while professionals talk about logistics".*

*TIME, August 20, 1990*

*The importance of logistics in any military campaign cannot be over emphasised. Success in military campaigns and victories in war cannot be achieved without providing good logistical support. From Alexander the Great at the end of Asia, to the more recent Gulf War, there are hosts of examples where logistics was the key factor in the success or failure of the plan. While heroic details of military strategies and manoeuvres have been well-documented, there are relatively fewer documents recording the contributions of logisticians in assisting the generals and troops to sustain and achieve the final victory.*

*This article reviews some of the success stories (and failures) of logistics in past military campaigns, highlighting the importance of logistics in these campaigns. Logistical developments in the SAF will also be examined to show how it can enhance its critical role in the Army as a 'combat multiplier'.*

## Korean War (1950 - 1953)

*"There is no one but yourself to keep your back door open. You can live without food, but you cannot last long without ammunition."*

*LTG Walker, Commanding 8th US Army in Korea.*

The Korean War fought between the US-led coalition against the communists offered several lessons on the importance of logistics. When the North Korean Army invaded South Korea at about 0400 hrs on 25 June 1950, South Korea, including the US were caught by surprise. Although there were signs of an impending North Korean military move, these were discounted as the prevailing belief was that North Korea would continue to employ guerrilla warfare rather than military forces.

Compared to the seven well-trained and well-equipped North Korea divisions, the Republic of Korea (ROK) armed forces were not in a good state to repel the invasion.<sup>1</sup> The US 8 th Army, stationed as occupation troops in Japan, was subsequently given permission to be deployed in South Korea together with the naval and air forces already there, covering the evacuation of Americans from Seoul and Inchon. The US troops were later joined by the UN troops and the forces put under US command.

In the initial phase of the war, the four divisions forming the US 8th Army were not in a state of full combat readiness.<sup>2</sup> Logistics was also in a bad shape: for example, out of the 226 recoilless rifles in the 8 th Army establishment, only 21 were available. Of the 18,000 jeeps and 4x4 trucks, 55 percent were unserviceable. In addition, only 32 percent of the 13,800 6x 6 trucks available, were functional. <sup>3</sup>

In the area of supplies, the stock at hand was only sufficient to sustain troops in peacetime activities for about 60 days. Although material support from de-activated units was available, they were mostly unserviceable. The unpreparedness of the American troops was due to the assumptions made by the military planners that after 1945, the next war would be a repeat of WW II. However, thanks to the availability of immense air and sea transport resources to move large quantities of supplies, they recovered quickly.

As the war stretched on and the lines of communication extended, the ability to supply the frontline troops became more crucial. By 4 August 1950, the US 8 th Army and the ROK Army were behind the Nakton River,

having established the Pusan perimeter. While there were several attempts by the North Koreans to break through the defence line, the line held. Stopping the North Koreans was a major milestone in the war. By holding on to the Pusan perimeter, the US Army was able to recuperate, con-solidate and grow stronger.

This was achieved with ample logistics supplies received by the US Army through the port at Pusan. The successful logistics operation played a key role in allowing the US Army to consolidate, grow and carry on with the subsequent counter offensive. Between 2 to 13 July, a daily average of 10,666 tons of supplies and equipment were shipped and unloaded at Pusan.<sup>3</sup>

In the Korean War, logistics was a key consideration in operations planning. Sustaining the forces' lines of communication or the disrupting the enemy's logistics supplies was a key feature throughout the war. Operation Strangle, for example, was launched as part of the coalition's efforts to disrupt the communists' supply system. However, the resourceful communists cleverly countered these efforts by literally using the huge pool of manpower resources available to them. One such example was the use of a rail bridge north-east of Pyongyang. Pilots kept reporting that the bridge could not be used for lack of two spans. It was later discovered that the communists fitted removable spans each night, allowing the bridge to be used throughout the hours of darkness.<sup>4</sup> Throughout the war, the North Koreans had also placed great emphasis in ensuring that their lines of communication were open at all times. Some three brigades of 7,700 men each were engaged exclusively on railway repair, indicating the importance and emphasis accorded to logistics during the war.

The Korean War highlights the need to maintain a high level of logistics readiness at all times. Although the 8<sup>th</sup> Army was able to recover swiftly thanks to the availability of vast US resources, the same cannot be said for other smaller armies. On hindsight, if the 8<sup>th</sup> Army had been properly trained and logistically supported, they would have been able to hold and even defeat the invading North Koreans in the opening phase of the war. The war also indicates the power and flexibility of having good logistics support as well as the pitfalls and constraints due to their shortage.

## **Gulf War (1990 - 1992)**

The Gulf War was undoubtedly one of the largest military campaigns seen in recent years. The unprecedented scale and complexity of the war presented logisticians with a daunting logistics nightmare.

There were three phases in the Gulf War: deployment (*Operation Desert Shield*), combat (*Operation Desert Storm*) and redeployment.<sup>135</sup> (*Operation Desert Farewell*).<sup>5</sup> Logistics played a significant role throughout the campaign. Within the short duration of the war, several significant logistics operations were conducted with enviable success despite the complexity, magnitude and multi-dimensional nature of the logistical support requirements.

- ***Operation Desert Shield***

In the early build-up phase, the coalition's challenge was to quickly rush enough troops and equipment into the theatre to deter and resist the anticipated Iraqi attack against Saudi Arabia. The logistical system was straining to quickly receive and settle the forces pouring in at an hourly rate. The logisticians then had to cope with the daunting tasks of landing and processing 38,000 troops and 163, 581 tons of equipment within the first 30 days.<sup>6</sup>

Besides the massive amount of supplies and military hardware, the logistics personnel also had to deal with basic issues such as sanitation, transport and accommodation, etc. A number of these requirements were resolved by local outsourcing, eg. Bedouin tents were bought and put up by contracted locals to house the troops; and refrigerated trucks were hired to provide cold drinks to the troops.

Despite the short timeframe given for preparation, the resourceful logistics team was up to the given tasks. The effective logistics support demonstrated in Operation *Desert Shield* allowed the quick deployment of the troops in the initial phase of the operation. It also provided the troops a positive start before the commencement of the offensive operation.

- **Operation *Desert Storm***

It began at 0230 hours on Jan 17, 1991 when the US planes bombed targets in Kuwait and Iraq. A total of 2,500 tons of bombs were dropped within the first 24 hours.<sup>7</sup> The month of intensive bombing had badly crippled the Iraqi command and control systems. Coalition forces took full advantage of this and were ready to gear up for the now famous "end run" around the western flank of the Iraqi border defences.

To the logisticians, this manoeuvre posed another huge challenge. To support such a manoeuvre, two Army Corps worth of personnel and equipment had to be transported westward and northward to their respective jumping off points for the assault. Nearly 4,000 heavy vehicles were used. The amount of co-ordination, transport means and hence the movement control required within the theatre was enormous. Just before the ground assault began, peak traffic at a key checkpoint of the supply routes approached 18 vehicles per minute, seven days a week, 24 hours a day.<sup>8</sup> This volume was sustained for almost six weeks. This manoeuvre would not have been possible without the logistics capabilities of the US Army.

- **Operation *Desert Farewell***

It was recognised that the logistical requirements to support the initial build-up phase and the subsequent air and land offensive operations were difficult tasks to achieve. However, the sheer scope of overall redeployment task at the end of the war was beyond easy comprehension. To illustrate, the King Khalid Military City (KKMC) main depot was probably the largest collection of military equipment ever assembled in one place. <sup>9</sup> A *Blackhawk* helicopter flying around the perimeter of the depot would take over an hour. While the fighting troops were heading home, the logisticians, who were among the first to arrive at the start of the war, were again entrusted with a less glamorous but important "clean up job". Despite the massive amount of supplies and hardware to be shipped back, the logisticians who remained behind completed the re-deployment almost six months ahead of time.<sup>10</sup>

Throughout the war, the Commanding General, Norman Schwarzkopf, had accorded great importance to logistics. MG William G Pagonis was appointed as the Deputy Commanding General for logistics and subsequently given a promotion to a three-star general during the war. This promotion symbolised the importance of a single and authoritative logistical point of contact in the Gulf War. Under the able leadership of LG Pagonis, the efficient and effective logistical support system set up in the Gulf War, from deployment phase to the pull-out phase, enabled the US-led coalition forces to achieve a swift and decisive victory over the Iraqi. The achievement of logistics in the Gulf War in General Schwarzkopf's words, 'an absolutely gigantic accomplishment', highlights the vital role played by logistics during the Gulf War. These complex logistics operations successfully executed during the War will remind many of the mighty prowess of effective logistics as well as the penalties for the lack of it.

## **Logistics in the Future**

*" Logistics has been identified as a key element in our TOTAL approach. As logistics permeates the entire Army, its operational philosophy will undoubtedly affect the Army's operational readiness. "*

*MG Lim Chuan Poh, Chief of Defence Force*

*"There can be no revolution in military affairs without first having revolution in military logistics."*

*General Dennis J Reimer, Chief of Staff, US Army*

The impact of logistics on the outcome of past campaigns has been aptly demonstrated in past campaigns. So how does it measure in today's and tomorrow's context? "As modern warfare increases in technological sophistication, speed and complexity, there will be dramatic changes in the way we fight".<sup>10</sup> The future land theatre of operation would witness rapid projection of integrated forces into enemy's depth to dislocate their centre of gravity and hence secure a quick victory. These manoeuvres would probably mean that only strategic battles will be fought at critical objectives, implying that secured land lines of communications may not be available for Combat Service Support operations at least for the initial stages of the battle. These changes in how we fight will necessitate a change in the way we provide support. The conventional land-based re-supply system will no longer be adequate nor possess the required level of responsiveness. Logistics and acquisition organisations and systems must change to keep pace and remain a combat multiplier.

Future developments in logistics would most likely be a system that marries the power of information with modern transportation and electronic commerce systems. It will evolve into a seamless logistics system that ties all parts of the logistics community into one network of shared situational awareness and unified actions.<sup>11</sup>

- **Seamless Logistics System**

At present, the Army has already successfully implemented a series of tactical and administrative management information system *vis-a-vis* Logistics Management Information System, Integrated Manpower Information System, Finance Management Information System and Command and Control Information System etc. However, these need to be enhanced through lateral integration and also vertical integration to exploit rapid developments in the emerging global, information-based economy. A seamless logistics information system that connects and operates with this emerging global system is essential to ensure that the Army keeps pace with the demand of information age warfare. At the forefront, built-in prognostics and diagnostic system sensors are increasingly being incorporated into weapon systems to provide near real-time data on system states. This data will be received and shared by the Army's logistics and other lateral information systems with advanced decision-making tools for analysis. Finally, the rearward connection of the potent pool of resources with the global electronic commerce will ensure that the Army's requirements are met efficiently. It will enable industry partners to track and support Army forces in the field and allow Army logisticians to locate suppliers expeditiously to do business with them.<sup>12</sup>

Besides having a seamless information system, the present logistics processes can also be enhanced to take full advantage of the information system. The US Army has reviewed and identified Readiness Management, Logistics Interventions, Distribution Management and Asset Management<sup>13</sup> as their key processes. Similarly, the revolutions in these processes can be customised for the SAF. Essentially, the passive on-request nature of previous storeman practices are replaced by skilled logisticians who will monitor and fuse the plans of the combat forces and prognostic feeds from system in the field to forecast the status of units and judge whether they can support the mission. Multi-layer logistics chain will be replaced by logistics packages developed based on the operational requirement and consisting of materiel, labour, equipment and skills that are task-organised for specific improvements in readiness for each unit. Individual self-sufficient packets are bundled and linked to a specific readiness improvement goal. Such an effort would require a certain amount of agility in the structure of the supporting forces. With near real-time data being piped back, there will be complete control on the distribution management which entails the use of the seamless logistics system to task the distribution system to move assets to the point of need.<sup>14</sup>

The seamless logistics system will also match available assets with needs, identify total shortfalls of assets, and then interface with the government and industry suppliers to acquire additional assets.<sup>15</sup>

- **Materiel Storage and Distribution**

In the Seamless Logistics System, re-supplies will be determined and packaged based on the mission and not mandated by historical demand.<sup>16</sup> To date, software such as SPAR and URCM has been effectively used to model actual operations profile of combat forces and determine materiel requirements to achieve pre-determined levels of equipment availability. However, the real challenge is in the storage and packaging of this vast amount of materiel, and the timely distribution to the location of need. Modern fully automated intelligent warehouses would be required to manage such a large inventory of materiel. Transloading and packaging would be accomplished efficiently by robotic means. We should also leverage on technology in developing platforms with enhanced mobility and carrying capacity on which to transport these mission-configured loads to the user for land lines of communication. Air and sea craft with higher carriage capacity and speed can be used to exploit the air and sea dimensions. Developments in precision airdrop systems will be exploited as it offers higher stealth and reduces reliance on land lines of communication.

The US Army is developing the Smart Gliding Airdrop System <sup>17</sup> that has the ability to deliver payload accurately from high altitudes and offset distances through application of gliding decelerators. These advances in the storage and distribution systems will also provide tremendous opportunity to achieve unprecedented repair efficiencies by moving labor, skills, parts, and special equipment at the critical location and the critical time, and then moving the repaired system and major assemblies rapidly back to the fighting units.<sup>18</sup>

Besides facilities, to cope with the dynamic demand of operations, the material manager needs to be able to anticipate demand, manage the availability of assets, and direct appropriate adjustments to the supply system in real-time. To get his level of anticipation, materiel managers will rely on prognostic data from digitised weapon systems, near real-time situational awareness of current and planned operations, and close and continuous coordination with operational planners they are supporting. The end state is an integrated storage, packaging and distribution system with real-time control to deliver material of the right amount, to the right place, in the shortest possible time.

- **Agile Infrastructure**

The US Army has long realised the importance of infrastructure - structural, physical and mental - to cope with the demands and dynamic support for the mobile forces of the Army. In the SAF, the Army logistics components could leverage on IT and move towards a flat command hierarchy with modular capabilities to facilitate total integration of all the Army's components as well as incorporate support teams from other services and the Army's partners in industry for specific missions. Teaming and task organising are key skills that must be developed and applied to logistics forces. Logistics task forces need to be scaled up and down in size, as well as in technical expertise. Personnel, teams, and units from all components need to be capable of deploying and moving independently to the rendezvous location in the area of operations. They must be ready to accept and integrate with civilian augmentation, contracted personnel and equipment. Having developed the task-organised support package, this operational infrastructure must be equipped with the appropriate transportation means to deploy and manoeuvre to keep pace with the Army's fast moving forces. The logistics units and personnel operating this network must be able to manoeuvre the component distribution systems and control the distribution platforms on the move. And they must do so without degrading the throughput to sustain the fighting forces.<sup>19</sup>

Having the right logistics infrastructure is not enough. The traditional mindset of logistics commanders must be changed to one that is proactive and fast. All logistics commanders are now

faced with a multitude of data streams in which they are expected to analyse and make decisions fast. They need to constantly think several steps ahead. Organisations need to train team members to work in such a fast-paced environment. Only by having first-class logistics commanders can the advantages of the technologies in logistics be exploited.<sup>20</sup>

- **Total Asset Visibility (TAV)**

To achieve the degree of control in the storage and distribution system, total asset visibility is absolutely essential. The present Logistics Information System is a step in that direction. Enhancement would be necessary in the areas of digitising the weapons systems and distribution platforms to give real-time precision on their location and status. With TAV, all commanders will have access to near real-time data to make decisions to either re-direct re-supplies, re-distribute unclaimed assets or keep up with changing unit locations and requirements. It will be a critical link in the seamless logistics system.<sup>21</sup>

- **Optimal Logistics to Force Ratio**

"There is always be a limit to how small the logistics system can get without sacrificing support to the combat units".<sup>22</sup> The key to maintaining optimal logistics to force ratio is about balancing the size, the amount and the knowledge to do the job 10 . In today's complex world, there is a trade-off between capability and force projection. The Gulf War is an example of how armies were reluctant to expose soldiers and civilians to unnecessary danger.

When the theatre force must be limited and exposure of personnel reduced, cutting support forces is an attractive option. Unfortunately, those support forces are often the key to sustaining the dominant combat power. Besides the convenience of cutting support forces, there are however various other means to reduce the logistical footprint without sacrificing the effectiveness of support. The seamless logistical system that integrates inventory management, distribution, prognostics and control will reduce the amount in redundant supply-based footprint to one that is just adequate. The ability to predict failures before they occur will improve repair lead times and prevent failure during missions. The speed and carrying capacity of the distribution platforms mean less is required to be held as inventory. Developing weapons systems that have double the firepower or capability would imply less system is required for the same mission.

Leveraging on technology to develop systems that have fewer parts would imply less inventory and breakdowns. The incorporation of advanced materials in smart munitions and weapons systems would result in a higher kill-ratio and lighter, more reliable weapons systems.<sup>23</sup>

Operational planners need to be sensitive to both the sustainable force level and the total deployed force level. The readiness maintenance and enhancement capabilities of logistics support forces need to be considered when force packages are being designed. Typically, combat forces are empowered by logistics, not encumbered by logistics.<sup>24</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The TOTAL approach was formulated to face the challenges of the vision, *ARMY 21 - The Decisive Force*, where logistics is a key tenet. The challenge for logistics would be to be able to transit from peacetime to war smoothly and efficiently, overcoming all physical and time limitations, to provide logistics support of the highest quality to the Army. Seamless logistics systems, materiel storage and distribution, agile infrastructure, total asset visibility and optimal logistics to force ratio - are all hallmarks of logisticians of the future. They will re-shape how the Army projects and sustains, ensuring that logistics will continue to be a force multiplier of the Army of tomorrow.

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