

THE NAVY

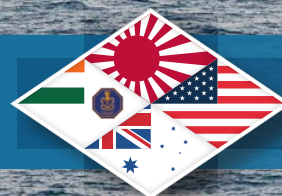
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA

**AUTONOMY IN WARFARE:
WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM
THE WAR IN UKRAINE?**

**PRICED OUT:
WHY NEW ZEALAND
WILL NOT JOIN AUKUS**

**SUBS OR NO SUBS,
AUSTRALIA CAN FIGHT
AN UNDERSEA WAR**

**POTENTIAL USE OF NEUTRINOS
FOR THE DETECTION OF
NUCLEAR SUBMARINES**



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Front cover: HMAS STALWART conducts dual RAS with HMAS BRISBANE and TOOWOOMBA plus VERTREP RDP (LSIS D Goodman).

REGULAR FEATURES

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Systemic Bias

The first issue of 2024 commences with four relevant papers, against the backdrop of systemic political / Government / public service / Defence incompetency and decline in civility and standards occurring also cross the democratic world.

The year begins with four topical papers, two of them first prizes in the essay competition (professional and non-professional). The first is a paper by Robert Sutton, entitled *Autonomy in Warfare: What we can learn from the War in Ukraine*. Favourably received at the recent (subdued – in the absence on the floor of major companies such as Raytheon) IndoPac Conference, the author concludes, *inter alia*:

Without a significant naval fleet, Ukraine has used robotics and autonomous systems technologies to help wrest sea control of the western half of the Black Sea from Russia. [Australia] needs to:

- A. learn the lessons from the use of robotics and autonomous systems in Ukraine – because we will need them for the next conflict, we are called on to fight.
- B. win the adaptation battle.
- C. use robotics and autonomous systems at scale – to generate the combat mass we need to defeat our potential adversaries.
- D. support a sovereign robotics and autonomous systems industry – to allow us to generate and re-generate combat power.
- E. adapt the way we think [about autonomous warfare] so that we can fight, and win, at sea.

It is unclear – given the devastating impact of cuts, freezes, and inflation amounting to almost a \$3B (6%) of the annual budget (including almost \$1B handed back) – if the intent, will, and competency is there to deliver on the DSR. If this rate of cuts is maintained, the GDP spend on Defence will be about 1.5% by 2028. Representing an almost 30% real cut in Defence spending, since 2022. There is no way on earth that autonomy will be delivered by this Government, or Defence – let alone the DSR and AUKUS.

Taking up this theme, the second paper *Priced out: Why New Zealand will not join AUKUS*, by new author (and 1st Prize, Professional entry) Benjamin Macintyre, posits *inter alia*:

New Zealand stands at a crossroads...as things stand, the path New Zealand will choose is clear. The sheer importance of Chinese trade to the New Zealand economy draws a line in the sand which New Zealand will not cross for fear of economic retribution. If New Zealand is to align itself with AUKUS one day, that line must be redrawn. Making the New Zealand economy less dependent on Chinese trade is the first step, and one that current AUKUS members can help with.

The third paper, by Robert McKeown (1st Prize, non-Professional entry) continues the theme developed in the first paper, by suggesting: *Subs or no Subs, Australia can fight and win an underseas war*. Robert takes a practical approach, itself underpinned by the effective delivery and funding of the DSR and AUKUS. Robert considers that:



Navy Recruits – Recruiting and Retention in the ADF is in Crisis.

Enthusiasm for creating the world's seventh nuclear-powered submarine fleet must be tempered by the realisation that many things have to go right over a long period of time before this goal can be achieved. Some of the hurdles are within Australia's ability to manage, while others are not. But there should be no obstacles to preparing the plans and infrastructure required to support an allied submarine force in a future conflict. Then Australia will again be in a position to make a significant contribution to an undersea war, even if it has only a couple of old Collins boats to send into battle.

Taking forward the practical contribution Australia can make – also tying in with the first paper – father and son team Dr Dario Delgado (returning author and prize winner) and Professor Eden Delgado, examine the *Potential use of neutrinos for the Detection of Nuclear Submarines*. They conclude, *inter alia*, that

1. The SSN-AUKUS program is at her conception now, it is expensive and engineeringly complex;
2. Smart decisions made early in the design would be highly advantageous in the future;
3. Modular design is key as new technologies could negatively affect the capability of our submarines, for instance considering hybrid/dual propulsion (like the new *Columbia-class* SSN).
4. Research in the detection of neutrinos is advancing, new experimental tests, better accuracy and neutrino databases could, in the near future, enable this technology to be implemented for military purposes.
5. It is important to develop the war capacity flawlessly as small nuclear reactors for small businesses could assist the manufacturing sector to be competitive and the people could see a return for our significant investment.

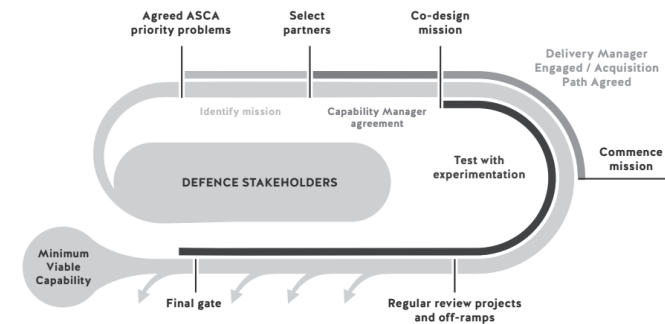
BREAKING RANKS

Although not reported in full and, it would appear deliberately shut down by the Government, Stephen Smith (High Commissioner to the UK) and one of the three main architects of the DSR, apparently spoke out against its delivery; the lack of funding for the *Hunter-class* program, and the allegedly failing DSTG *Australian Strategic Capability Accelerator* (ASCA) program, at the Australian British Chamber of Commerce Defence Catalyst event, 18 Oct 23. Quoted in Hansards: [1]

Senator BIRMINGHAM: Mr Deeble, you indicated before that you were at the *Australian British Chamber of Commerce Defence Catalyst* event. Were you there for the remarks by High Commissioner Stephen Smith? **Mr Deeble:** Yes, I was.



Then Minister for Defence Industry Christopher Pyne, BAE Systems Australia CEO Gabby Costigan, Simon Birmingham, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull.



ASCA "pick the winner" enterprise for Industry and Academe to Pay for Defence – underfunded to fail?

Excellent. What's your recollection of Mr Smith's remarks about the *Hunter-class* program? **Mr Deeble:** I can't recollect any detailed memory of any comments with respect to the Hunter specifically. **Senator BIRMINGHAM:** Were there any comments on shipbuilding generally by Mr Smith? **Mr Deeble:** My memory is that His Excellency Stephen Smith described a range of issues associated with the Defence strategic review and some observations in that regard, noting, of course, that he was one of the independent writers of the DSR. **Senator BIRMINGHAM:** It feels like you were either busy, inattentive or being very diplomatic, Mr Deeble. A few different sources seem to suggest that Mr Smith was rather forthcoming in his opinions and that they might be rather memorable. **Mr Deeble:** Not to my recollection. I'm not trying to obfuscate here, but I can't remember anything in that detail. **Senator BIRMINGHAM:** If you can't remember anything, we will have to rely on other sources, and we'll see whether DFAT has any copies of those remarks. I'm assuming Defence don't have any copies – that although the High Commissioner is wearing multiple hats at present, still advising on defence matters as well as serving as high commissioner, Defence don't have copies of remarks he may have made about shipbuilding, the *Hunter-class* or DSR generally at this defence event in London?

To date, it would appear that the hapless Mr Deeble (a former RAAF Air Vice Marshal and career and Deputy Secretary to CASG, who does not take notes?!), Defence, and DFAT, have been unable to recall and/or release what was said, at least in/to Australia. *The NAVY* has been critical of Smith, Houston, and (to an extent) Dean in failing to fight for the funding necessary to deliver the DSR. It would seem Stephen Smith, by breaking ranks, was attesting to this failure of the Government. His alleged remarks suggesting that there could be as few as four *Hunter-class* frigates, and that they would likely be built in the UK (not Adelaide). He also apparently considered that ASCA was underfunded, and poorly led – “set up for failure?” We may never know, unless Mr Deeble re-finds his memory and notes – perhaps on a change of Government?

At the IndoPac event, Professor Peter Dean spoke eloquently – appearing (within the constraints of his Government funded appointment to the *United States Study Centre*, at the University of Sydney) uncomfortable (by omission) about the delivery of the DSR and its lack of funding. On the other hand, Kim Beazley (previous patron as Governor of the NLA WA Division), the last great Minister of Defence, pioneer of Australian submarines, and fellow West Australian (with Smith and Dean) noted pointedly that “if the Government, in comparison to other budgets such as for NDIS and Health”, had left existing commitments in place – “it would have been at 2.5% GDP by 2025/6”. He also recognised that AUKUS

and the DSR will be unlikely to be delivered at the current rate of Defence expenditure – projected (by NLA Defence Analysts, see *Flash Traffic*) now to be at 1.75% GDP in 2025/26; reducing to 1.5% by 2027/8. Only Angus Houston, as perhaps might be expected, has failed to engage with the failure that, as co-author, is also his DSR.

Conscious Bias from the Top

The country as a whole voted decisively against the independent Voice to Parliament (IVP), at 60.06% to 39.94%, or three No for every two Yes votes. A similar proportion as voted No in the NT, with the highest state Yes in Victoria at 45.85%. ACT recorded the only Yes vote by a territory. In previous NLA analysis, ACT was described as the *Canberra Industrial Complex* (CIC). A better description might be the *Canberra Social Complex* (CSC)? Examination of AEC voting records, in addition to the IVP indicate in the ACT there were more than 3 Yes votes for every 2 No. In Canberra itself, it was almost 5 Yes Votes for every two No. See *Flash Traffic*.

Whereas, Australian election patterns indicate a Centre Left and Centre Right swing vote of about 54% - it also confirms that the left wing of labor, inner city greens and teals attract about 23% of the vote – and, similarly, the right of the LNP, the Nationals, One Nation another 23%. Arguably, there is a balance of sorts with the “centre” hunting between its two wings. This is totally different in the ACT, where the left-wing vote makes up 38% of the vote; the right wing only 15%. About a overall left leaning/“Labor” vote in the region of 62%. In other words, exactly as the ACT voted on the IVP.

A question emerging is “is Australia governable from the ACT?” Imagine any other electorate with such a bias – or if for every 5 right wing votes, there were two left wing? Where the Right Wing was 60% larger than the “traditional” LNP vote? The bias is worse in Canberra.

WHY JOIN?

A recent ANU study indicated that between January and April 2023, confidence in Government declined from 51.2 per cent to 48.3 per cent, and it declined again from April to August 2023 to 43.6 per cent. Our young people join to serve country and Commonwealth – under a single flag; not three. Two of which by decree, are “not theirs;” therefore, “not common”. They do not join to serve a particular political ideology – and the majority come from the 60% of the population who did not vote for the IVP; attending TAFE not inner-city universities. The unpleasant lack of responsibility from ACT, including the extension of CDF in post – suggest that bias has replaced merit. Why would any parent suggest their child join such a patently failing organisation? Where gender, ethnicity, and identity are likely to be more important than merit? ■

STATEMENT OF POLICY

For the maintenance of the Maritime wellbeing of the nation.

The Navy League is intent upon keeping before the Australian people the fact that we are a maritime nation and that a strong Navy and capable maritime industry are elements of our national wellbeing and vital to the freedom of Australia. The League seeks to promote Defence self-reliance by actively supporting defence manufacturing, research, cyberspace, shipping, transport and other relevant industries.

Through geographical necessity Australia's prosperity, strength, and safety depend to a great extent upon the security of the surrounding seas and island areas, and on unrestricted seaborne trade.

The strategic background to Australia's security is changing and in many respects has become much less certain following increasing tensions, particularly in East Asia involving major powers, and in Europe and the Middle East. The League believes that Australia should rapidly increase the capability to defend itself, paying particular attention to maritime defence.

The Navy League:

- Believes Australia can be defended against attack by other than a major maritime power and that the prime requirement of our defence is an evident ability to control the sea and air space around us and to contribute to defending essential lines of sea and air communication with our allies.
 - Supports a continuing strong alliance with the US.
 - Supports close relationships with all nations in our general area particularly New Zealand, PNG and the South Pacific island States.
 - Advocates the acquisition of the most capable modern armaments, surveillance systems and sensors to ensure technological advantage over forces in our general area.
 - Advocates a strong deterrent element in the ADF enabling powerful retaliation at significant distances from our shores.
 - Believes the ADF must be capable of protecting commercial shipping both within Australian waters and beyond, in conjunction with allies.
 - Endorses the development of the capability for the patrol and surveillance of all of Australia's ocean areas, its island territories and the Southern Ocean.
 - Advocates Government initiatives for rebuilding an Australian commercial fleet capable of supporting the ADF and the carriage of essential cargoes to and from Australia in times of conflict.
 - Notes the Government intention to increase maritime preparedness and gradually increase defence expenditure to 2% of GDP, while recommending that this target should be increased to 3%.
 - Urges the strength and capabilities of the Army (including particularly the Army Reserve) and Air Force be enhanced, and the weaponry, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, cyberspace and electronic capabilities of the ADF be increased, including an expansion in its UAV capability.
 - Considers that the level of both the offensive and defensive capabilities of the RAN should be strengthened, in particular with a further increase in the number of new proposed replacement frigates and offshore patrol vessels, noting the need to ensure essential fuel and other supplies, and the many other essential maritime tasks.
 - Recommends bringing forward the start date of the replacement frigate program to both strengthen the RAN and mitigate the local industry capability gap.
 - Recommends the timely replacement and increase in numbers of the current mine-countermeasure force.
 - Strongly supports the early acquisition of large, long range and endurance, fast submarines and notes the deterrent value, reliability and huge operational advantages of nuclear powered submarines and their value in training anti-submarine forces.
 - The League is concerned at the very long time before the projected 12 new conventional submarines can enter operational service, noting very serious tensions in the NW Pacific involving major maritime powers.
 - Recommends very early action to provide a submarine base on the Eastern seaboard.
 - Notes the potential combat effectiveness and flexibility of the STOVL version of the Joint Strike Fighter (F35 *Lightning II*) and supports further examination of its application within the ADF.
 - Supports the development of Australia's defence industry, including strong research and design organisations capable of the construction and maintenance of all warships, submarines and support vessels in the Navy's order of battle, and welcomes the Government decision to provide a stable and continuous shipbuilding program.
 - Advocates the retention in maintained reserve of operationally capable ships that are required to be paid off for resource or other economic reasons.
 - Supports a strong and identifiable Naval Reserve and Australian Navy Cadets organisation.
 - Advocates urgent Government research and action to remedy the reported serious naval recruiting and retention problem.
- As to the RAN, the League,** while noting vital national peacetime tasks conducted by Navy, including border protection, flag showing/diplomacy, disaster relief, maritime rescue, hydrography and aid to the civil power:
- Supports the maintenance of a Navy capable of effective action in hostilities and advocates a build-up of the fleet and its afloat support elements to ensure that, in conjunction with the RAAF, this can be sustained against any force which could be deployed in our area of strategic interest.
- The League:**
- Calls for a bipartisan political approach to national defence with a commitment to a steady long-term build-up in Australia's defence capability including the required industrial infrastructure.
 - Believes that, given leadership by successive governments, Australia can defend itself in the longer term, within acceptable financial, economic and manpower parameters.

NLA UPDATE

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

The President presented his annual report noting in particular the collegiality and ideas sharing. The costs of *The NAVY* were no longer able to be supported by the NSW Division and costs will need to be wound back and brought under control. The League with careful management will be able to continue its operations indefinitely into the future. The surplus may be put to good use advancing the objectives of the League through scholarships and support of the Navy. Members and office holders were thanked for their ongoing support and hard work.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The President noted that the FY 2021/22 & FY 2022/23 are being progressed by the Auditor and will be discussed and adopted in an out of session meeting.

COMMUNITY AWARD

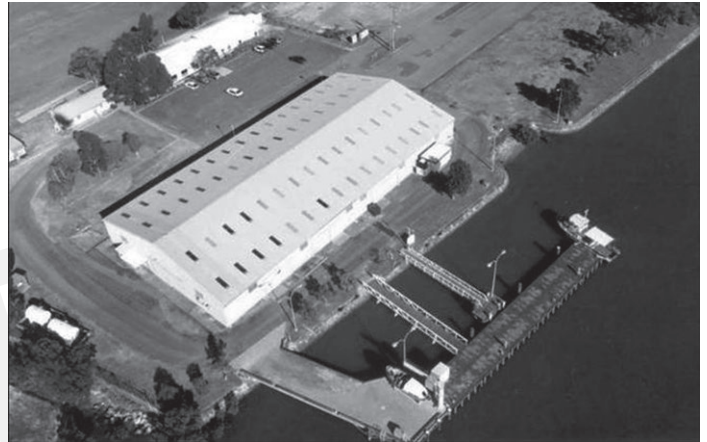
The President will write to Fleet Commander recommending HMAS MORETON for the Shield, with considerable support for HMAS CAIRNS.

DIVISIONAL REPORTS

The Divisional reports were circulated and taken as read. Each Division presented their reports in person – except for NLA-WA who were not represented again this year. Most Divisions reported declining memberships except Queensland.

THE NAVY MAGAZINE

The Navy Magazine carries an annual deficit, which is not sustainable. NSW Division to discuss further as this was a sensitive issue and come up with a plan going forward.



HMAS MORETON (3) - NLA Recommended Shield Community Award 2023.

MARITIME ESSAY AWARDS

Following stiff competition, the winners of the 2023 NLA Essay Competition were announced to be:

Professional Winners

1. Benjamin Macintyre
2. George Galdorosi
3. Kelvin Curnow

Non-Professional Winners

1. Robert McKeown
2. Murray Dear
3. Roger Jennings

The first two papers by the winners in each category, Ben Macintyre, and Robert McKeown, appear in this issue. Congratulations are offered to all our winners, and those who entered this year.

THE LEAGUE WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA

Malware and issuing of certificates for the website has been investigated. Thanks were offered to the NLA website editor for uploading samplers of *The NAVY* magazine – since 2022. It was noted that the NLA websites has 414 Twitter followers and 24 LinkedIn followers.

LEAGUE PROPERTIES

Two land titles in Tasmania are retained and owned freehold with an annual rent agreed for the next 3 years.

As price of land increases in Tasmania, it may be worth considering future investment decisions. There is one perpetual lease (day-to-day) in Western Australia.

FUTURE OF THE NAVY LEAGUE

It was agreed there were two approaches – a short or longer-term proposal, both aiming to achieve stability; while revitalising where possible.

It was agreed that the reprised Capitol (or ACT) Division be provided with core funding for PLAN JANUS, items 2, 6, 11, 12, 21, 22 and 23.



On 18 June 2022 a headstone was dedicated at Rookwood Cemetery Naval Section Catholic Cemetery for AB George Ritchie.

OTHER BUSINESS

The immediate Past President Graham Harris thanked the retiring Senior Vice President, John Jeremy for his long service to the Federal Council. He noted John's distinguished career and his enormous contribution to naval matters over half a century.

DATE & PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed to hold a meeting by video-conferencing early in the New Year to take forward Plan Janus and the plan submitted by the NSW Division regarding the future of the League and *The NAVY*.

The next annual conference is planned for 18-19 Oct 2024 in Sydney. To be coordinated by NLA NSW and Capitol Divisions. ■



John Jeremy, the last CEO of Cockatoo Island and Mary Darwell CEO the then Executive Director of the Harbour Trust, in the old powerhouse (Image Dominic Lorrimer)

LETTERS

Naval Graves Project – Speakers

I am writing to inform you about the *Naval Graves Project*.

The project is an attempt to research, record and remember our Naval history by locating the burial places of those with naval service across Australia, then looking into their naval careers, that's the Research function. All information gathered, including photographs of their resting place is then added to a database – that's the Record function. We place brief biographies of the naval service of those we find online via our Facebook page, provide speakers to groups like yourselves, lead tours of Cemeteries like Rookwood and are looking to create a website so that our work, the Navy's history, our shared history is not forgotten, that's the Remember function. I write to enquire if you might like a speaker at one of your meetings?

Despite the name of the group, it is not a morbid topic. Graves are used as the doorway to the stories of our people, we tell the stories of the lives of naval folk, celebrate the many exceptional stories and share the inspirational stories of their lives. All who served are included in our records not just those with active service. We also include other navies, Commonwealth, Allied and other, the only requirement is service in an armed navy. We are not able to research those of the Merchant Navy.

As of the date of this email our database has over 4,300 entries, covering over 437 cemeteries Australia wide. RAN personnel comprises over 3,300 of these records. We have records of RAN, RANR, RANVR, RANBT, RANHfV, RANNS, WRANS and Naval Police. We have lists within these records of Tingira Boys, Junior Recruits, Apprentices, those who joined under the Dominion Yachtsmen's Scheme and those trained on the RN Australia Squadron Ships as part of the Australian Naval Forces pre Federation, as well as the Colonial or State Naval Forces, POW's, veterans of various Battles ie Sydney/Emden and more. We are able to target those from states or towns as recorded on Service History documents to give our talks a local interest aspect as well. Of course, we can speak of those resting in local cemeteries.

The Naval Graves Project is self-funded, we are neither a charity or incorporated body and as such there is no charge for our speakers

or to lead tours, currently available for Rookwood and Camperdown Cemeteries. Tours are car based for Rookwood where there are 3 separate Naval Sections and the War Cemetery. Plus Naval burials scattered throughout the general areas of the cemetery and crematorium. There are over 1000 Naval burials and cremations within the Rookwood Cemetery and Crematoria. Given the size of the Cemetery three tours are offered, the Official Naval Sections, the Crematorium and the General Sections. Tours are designed to minimize walking and end at the Cemetery Café where refreshments are available for purchase.

Part of our work includes monitoring the condition of the last resting places of naval folk and to identify unmarked graves. The Navy for various reasons is the only service to have its own cemeteries, Rookwood, Nowra and Cerberus which are the responsibility of the Commanding Officers HMAS KUTTABUL, ALBATROSS and CERBERUS (all other military cemeteries are under the Office of Australian War Graves). A fact unknown to KUTTABUL until raised by the NGP and our Patron Chaplain Andrew Watters, the upkeep of that section is now monitored by the XO KUTTABUL.

One of the unmarked graves within the Catholic Naval Section at Rookwood belonged to ORD George Ritchie, who was murdered onboard the Brisbane I in 1924, the NGP was able to see that George Ritchie was provided with a Naval Headstone some 98 years after his death. In addition, we identified all the other unmarked graves and lobbied for recognition for all those buried there, especially the RAN sailors. The unmarked graves in the Official Naval Cemetery have also been identified.

I hope you have found this email informative and interesting and that it may lead to the NGP providing a speaker at one of your meetings.

Yours Sincerely

Mark Fleming

navalgraves@gmail.com



Mo'ave UAS Being ranged on Deck during trials off the US East Coast by HMS PRINCE OF WALES (R09).

DSR: WORSE AND WORSE

The DSR proposed identified increases in Defence spending. Instead, the unnamed international consultants advising the Government, fabricated a \$42bn 'black hole'. Before the 2010 UK *Strategic Defence and Security Review* (SDSR), there was no so-called *Black Hole*. After the SDSR, there was. The UK Armed Forces have been chasing their tails ever since – while getting progressively smaller, less capable, and adaptive.

While increases in the forward estimates over the next decade may have filled the fabricated \$42B *DSR Black Hole* by 2029, the real impact is much, much worse, and prolonged. Cuts of this nature are very hard to arrest once the reductionist mentality takes hold. Overshoots are inevitable, if not unstoppable. Recently, Defence handed back to Treasury almost \$1 Billion it was unable to spend, in year. Exactly because of the uncertainty and snowball effect created.

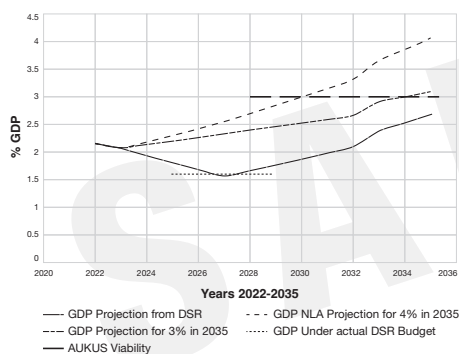


Fig 1: Real Defence Spending Reducing to 1.5% GDP by 2027

In real terms, the consultant's (Treasury / DFAT) SDR *Defence Budget* removes \$48-58B by 2035, and over \$83B by 2032 (noting growth at 5 or 6%, from 2028). In actuality, the

Defence Budget, as currently projected, will not have dug itself out of the *self-fabricating Black Hole* by 2035.

Between 2023 and 2027, the DSR *Defence Budget* reduces defence spending by almost \$11B a year; between 2028 and 2032, by \$9.25B a year. Even by 2035, reducing Defence spending by \$5B a year, over the next 12 years.

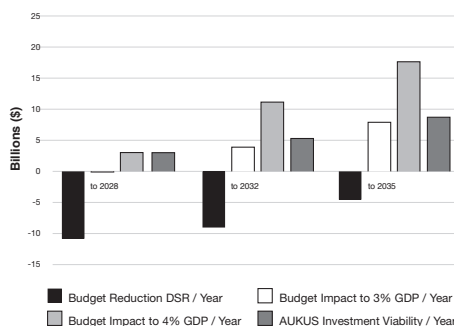


Figure 2: Treasury-DSR Budget Reductions / Increases per Year, to 2028, 2032, and 2035, necessary for AUKUS Viability.

IMPACT ON AUKUS

As is now quite apparent from backchannel briefings from the U.S. and UK, and Primes, AUKUS will not happen – possibly ever, but certainly not at the already sclerotic pace of the unfunded DSR.

The DSR international consultants applied the *von Neumann turnpike*, based on misplaced Marxist (USSR Great Leap Forward) concepts of *Schumpeterian creative destruction*. [1] It is predicated on cutting some programs (substantively hollowing out Army), to rapidly capitalise others (Submarines, Air, Space, Cyber, Guided Weapons, UA/S/U/Vs) through *predictive change*. All orchestrated by the

accountant consultancies, who run Defence Without investing in change-leadership there will be paralysis, as the shock works through the system, caused by the removal of programs and management teams. As for collectivisation (*Holodomor*) and the Great Leap Forward (both leading to famine), people will become fearful

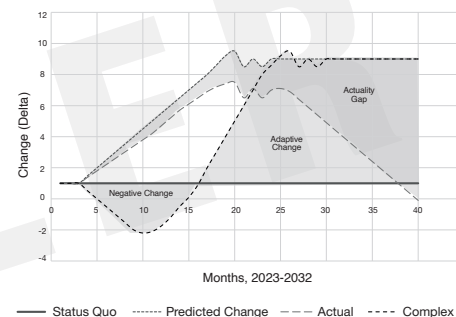


Figure 3: Predictive (never-never) versus Adaptive Change Investment

Predictive Change

The consultancy-model assumes a control system response. A stimulus is injected, Key Performance Indicators (KPI) set, and a linear, predictable, managed response, with a few perturbations, follows. In 20-months you are there. Change is led; not managed. It is costly and requires investment and trust. The actual response lags the predicted. Made worse by fixed indicators encouraging deceptions. People know the result of not reporting the "expected KPI."

Ten Year Rule

After ten years, the actuality gap is so wide, that everyone notices – but there is no one to hold accountable. So "new-same-revised" consultancy models are applied, and it starts all over again. Except worse than before.

Adaptive Change

Defence is a complex system. If it is to change, it requires investment to change (leadership, time, and dollars) – during which there will be negative change. Got right, and the system will get there, even by 2025. Got wrong and it never will.

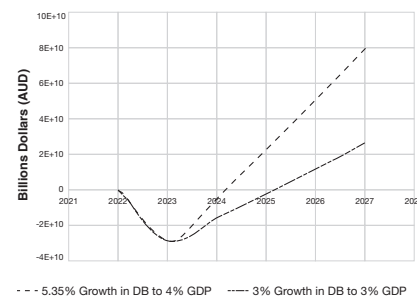


Fig 4: AUKUS DSR Adaptive Budgets envisaged by Stephen Smith (to 4% GDP) and Kim Beazley (to 3% GDP)



AUKUS – NOT HAPPENING

The budget proposed by the DSR authors (Smith, Houston, and Dean) was apparently an *adaptive budget*, see figures 3, and 4.

Stephen Smith, in speaking out against DSR delivery and the lack of funding for the *Hunter-class* (and the *Australian Strategic Capability Accelerator*) program, at the *Australian British Chamber of Commerce Defence Catalyst* event, 18 Oct 23, see Editorial – was seemingly representing the 5.35% annual increase in Defence spending (from 2023) Which would have delivered the reshaping, savings and investment to achieve 3% GDP (necessary for AUKUS) in 2030, and 4% GDP by 2035. See *Crow's Nest*.

Speaking at the 2023 IndoPac conference, Kim Beazley essentially stated that “if the Government had simply left Defence spending increases alone (at 3% per annum), then the DSR would have achieved savings, reshaping and 3% of GDP by 2033. A year later than when the now deferred (cancelled?) East Coast submarine base should have been completed. With *Virginia / Astute class* boats operating from Australian waters, from the late-2020s.

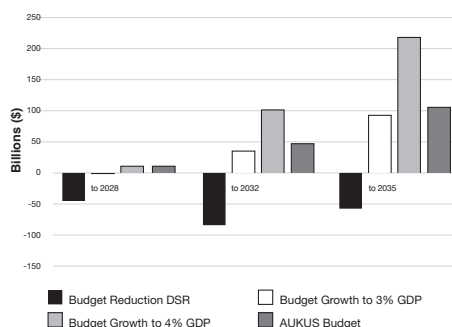


Figure 5: Budget Reductions / Increases necessary for AUKUS Viability.

Taken overall, not only will the cuts, freezing, and inflation impacting the Defence budget disable any change – as is now clear – but it will also not deliver on AUKUS, Army Littoral Manoeuvre, or the *Hunter-class*. Nor clearly on the Space, or Cyber domains. There is simply not enough funding – consequently, Defence is in meltdown and paralysis. As feared by *NLA Defence Analysts* in previous DSR reporting. But simply not covered or identified by any other Defence reporting, ASPI, *The Australian*, ABC, etc.

Even If...

If the Government were to reverse the DSR spending decisions today, and restore budget increases in 2024, the damage is already done. People (ADF/APS), systems, Primes, consultants, are all walking. It would take three years (2027) at least to recover from the damage already done – and overshoots and losses in specialist personnel may not be recoverable.

Defence will not have recovered from the

self-immolation caused by the DSR in 2023, by 2038. It will certainly not be in any shape to respond to the years of peak threat (2025-2027), that it was intended to address – and / or to deliver on AUKUS. Be it for three *Virginia-class* SSNs in the early 2030s, and 8 *AUKUS-class* submarines to be built in Australia. Or variations of that theme.

In Sum

AUKUS will not be delivered as envisaged, in full, or possibly even in part, in the next decade. Neither will the nine *Hunter-class* frigates (raised by Stephen Smith); nor Army Littoral Manoeuvre, or ASCA. On the current trajectory, the earliest AUKUS will become viable is 2038 – even then without an East Coast submarine base, deferred for selection and building to 2032. For completion in 2042.

WHY?

The question is why? In defence of Stephen Smith and to an extent Peter Dean – while being muzzled, both have apparently expressed misgivings about the funding for DSR. Sir Angus Houston has remained dumbly silent.

The disaster that is now Defence and the DSR could be laid at the door of competency. There are many reasons to believe that this may be the case – given recent failings in foreign policy, national security (boats and detention releases), costly changes to IR, the *Independent Voice to Parliament*, the failure to address inflation (due also to Government largess on non-productive NDIS and Renewables expenditure), and the concomitant impact on costs of living. In all areas – including the zealous approach to non-nuclear renewables – there is an argument for cockup and incompetency, rather than conspiracy.

Follow the money

The other side of the competency-cockup-equation, is that significant factions of the Labor Party (supported by the unions and the Greens, in the Senate) are against nuclear-energy, AUKUS, nuclear-powered submarines, the *Hunter-class*, and any substantial increases in Defence spending. The failure of AUKUS would fit neatly into the policies of the Treasurer, Jim Chalmers (seen to be cutting Defence spending – always a Treasury target); dovetail with Burke's (and the unions) Industrial Relations politics and changes; and Bowen's Green-dream.

It is unclear (and has been for some time) exactly where Richard Marles stands on Defence. Since coming into office, he notably took on the Deputy PM title – rather than Minister for Defence. He has not demonstrably spoken for Defence, or spoken for maintained/increased Defence spending. While appearing content to

exercise his preferential dislikes of senior defence leadership and leaving it to the West Australian heavyweights of Smith and Beazley to do his job for him.

That leaves the Prime Minister and Senator Penny Wong. The emphasis for Ms Wong and DFAT appears to have been to undo much of the foreign policy of the LNP. For example, an unknown APS official/consultant removed recognition of West Jerusalem from DFAT pages, before approved by Ms Wong. More recently, there have missteps on the Hamas-Gaza war – preceded by Ms Wong's emphasis on improving relations with China by “Managing Equilibrium.” Anything that would upset the equilibrium – and China – was not to be entertained, before the PMs much vaunted visit to Beijing in November.

Defence Where?

At the same time DFAT has created its own Defence directorate, to monitor and track Defence. Which means, there are now at least four Defence “departments”: Defence itself; in DFAT; in Treasury, and in Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C). It is PM&C that employs the international consultants, who work with Treasury to determine Defence spending – responsible for the DSR fabricated *Black-hole Budget*. In terms of transparency, it is about time the Government declared where it got its budget advice from. There are probably only three international consultancy groups, previously used by European and U.S. Governments, who would fit the bill:

- *McKinsey & Company* (heavily criticised during the French Presidential election);
- *Bain & Company*, and;
- *Boston Consulting Group*.

So called Sofa Government has effectively contracted out both Ministers and their Departments. PM&C is run through / by consultants – many on loan – who are not democratically accountable, and do not go (along with senior APS) on the change of Government, unlike in the U.S. PM&C has replicated all Government Departments / Ministries and effectively tells the PM and Ministers what to do.

In a recent about face, the McKinsey and Boston Consulting Group agreed to appear at the (October) Senate inquiry into consulting after earlier refusing to testify before the committee and failing to answer even most basic of questions posed by the senators about their operations.

In the *Big Con: How the Consulting Industry Weakens Our Businesses, Infantilizes Our Governments, and Warps Our Economies* (2023), see Book Review, Mariana Mazzucato and Rosie Collington outline:

how the consulting industry reached

the core of global economies and governments. The 'Big Con' is possible in today's economies because of the unique power that consultancies wield through extensive contracts and networks and the illusion that they are objective sources of expertise and capacity (Prof Jane Andrew, University of Sydney, Aug 2023)

China Pandaring?

Askance has been raised of the PM following the sonar illumination incident of divers operating from HMAS TOOWOOMBA (FFG 156) by a PLAN Destroyer in international waters, close to Japan. The PM apparently failed to raise the matter before his visit to Beijing, and has equivocated on whether he did so ever since. It is unclear if the PM understands his duty in this regard and that "the most fundamental welfare is the security of our people." What confidence can the ADF have, when the PM and Foreign Minister appear to set their political interests and even personal ambitions ahead of the welfare of our diggers, aviators, and sailors?

The recent transit of HMAS TOOWOOMBA through the Taiwan Strait, also came after the PM's Beijing visit. It is reportedly the first such transit since Labor came to power, 18 months ago. Giving an impression that, perhaps, the PM begged permission from China before engaging the transit. Notably, unlike for other partners, e.g., Canada and Japan, who traditionally join with the U.S. for such transits, TOOWOOMBA went alone. While trilateral exercises with partner QUAD and RCN vessels were apparently curtailed prior to the PM's visit.

CANBERRA SOCIAL COMPLEX?

The November 2021 AHRC (Jenkins) *Set the Standard* report, or the *Independent Review into Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces* (CPW) – following the Higgins allegations – was illuminating in many regards.

The report identified that up to 75% of all [CPW] bullying (of men and women) was likely to be undertaken by women, and women were over two-and-a-half times more likely to be bullied, than men. The report appeared to conflate several issues (bullying with harassment, and bullying/harassment with assault) – seemingly blaming men for the behaviour of women. Thereby indirectly removing agency from women themselves – by demanding more rules protecting women, from men. When the bullying problem appears, statistically, to be more women on women?

In previous analysis, *NLA DSR-FSR Review*, Flash Traffic, Vol 84, Issue 3, Jul-Oct, Canberra was described as the "Canberra Industrial Complex (CIC)."

Examination of AEC voting records over

the previous two election, the Single-sex marriage postal vote, and the recent *Independent Voice to Parliament* (IVP) reveals that about 54% of the Australian electorate vote for centre parties (the Liberal Party and the traditional blue collar, outer-city Labor party). Whereas about 23% of the population vote either for the Nationals, right, or One Nation type parties, or for left wing parties, the Greens, Teals, and inner-city Labor.

Table 1: Consolidated Australian voting patterns from previous elections (from AEC)

Left	Centre Left, Centre Right and Swing	Right
23%	54%	23%

In broad terms, it can be argued that the Australian electorate hunts between the two political wings to select its governments.

The electoral result of the IVP, based upon previous voting patterns, indicate a significant proportion of the centre swung to NO.

Table 2: Consolidated Australian voting patterns from IVP Referendum (from AEC)

Left	Swing & Centre Left	Swing & Centre Right	Right
23.37%	16.57%	37.03%	23.03%
39.94% (YES)		60.06% (NO)	

Table 3: Consolidated ACT voting patterns from previous elections (from AEC)

Left	Centre Left, Centre Right and Swing	Right
38%	47%	15%

Table 4: Consolidated ACT Australian voting patterns from IVP Referendum (from AEC)

Left	Swing & Centre Left	Swing & Centre Right	Right
37.96%	23.33%	23.44%	15.27%
61.29% (YES)		38.71% (NO)	

The results from ACT and Canberra were a complete reversal, see tables 3 and 4.

For Canberra itself, the Voting patterns were even more biased (extreme?)

Table 5: Consolidated CBR voting patterns from previous elections (from AEC)

Left	Centre Left, Centre Right and Swing	Right
44%	44%	12%

Table 6: Consolidated CBR voting patterns from IVP Referendum (from AEC)

Left	Swing & Centre Left	Swing & Centre Right	Right
43.72%	26.87%	17.81%	11.60%
70.59% (YES)		29.41% (NO)	

So What?

Canberra's electorate comprises employees of head offices, industry, Defence, lobbyists, judiciary, academe, policy makers, diplomats, the High Court, banks, public institutions (APS, ABC, RBA); utility companies; consultancies; accountancies, and; commissions.

A recorded, systemic bias in any other electorate would be of concern. The ACT appears no longer contestable as far as the LNP is concerned – either as a Territory or at Federal elections. The Liberal party last governed Canberra (and ACT) in coalition, in 2001.

The ACT electorate and parliaments appears to be anti-Government whatever its colour – even more so if it is "Blue." The recent aborted Higgins trial, the Sofronoff enquiry, and subsequent awards / litigation should all raise serious questions about the state of the Law in ACT; its judiciary (including possibly the Chief Justice?); the office of Public Prosecutions, and political bias. This extends also to the Federal Labor party and the role played by ministers in supporting the case for political gain, it would appear, before the abortive trial and subsequently arranging a \$2.44 million award to Higgins.

The recent decision by the High Court to release detainees, some with serious criminal records, onto Australian streets plays into this perception.

The High Court has been pressing for a Human Rights Act (HRA) for generations – to govern the constitution. If the IVP had succeeded, then by breaking Commonwealth and Common Law, there would have been a need for a HRA. The type of act and division of Commonwealth and Common Law, that led to Brexit. As night follows day, a referendum on the monarchy would almost certainly have followed.

Putting it all together, raises questions as to whether the Canberra Industrial Complex can be trusted to govern ACT and Australia, or whether it has become a progressive



Canberra Social (or socialist?) *Complex* (CSC) – activistly, forever seeking to rewrite the Constitution?

IS AUSTRALIA GOVERNABLE FROM THE ACT?

A question arises as to “whether, or not, Australia is governable from a Federal Capital Territory that no longer appears to be reflective by poll, deed, and action, of the rest of the country?”

Questions may also be asked as to whether the politics or the culture have created the types of behaviour being exhibited. Is it by nature or nurture? For example, “are the virtues by which Canberrans choose to live their lives imposable on the rest of the country?” Or, as importantly, vice versa. John Stuart Mill would suggest not.

Join, Retain, and Sustain?

The recent behaviour of some Canberrans may also raise questions about trust in the professional (inner city) political elites? The same inner-city elites (including in ACT and Canberra), who electorally voted 60% (or more) in favour of the Voice.

The Voice raised questions about Commonwealth and belonging – choosing as its backdrops three flags, two of which were not common to all but by identity. The revolution of the new model Army [Navy], was that soldiers fought for the regiment – the regiment became the new clan. Covenanted to look after its soldiers and families during, and post service. It was what made the Indian Army so cohesive and effective – even on partition when the same Army ended up, tragically, fighting itself.

The leadership of the ADF appears also deeply out of touch. The immoral extension of CDF (and VCDF) by this Government and CDF failure to resign on three occasions – when he had the opportunity to do so (including on erroneously offering to hand back his DSC to the PM; not the Governor General) – has had a devastating impact on Army. By staying in post, General Angus Campbell AO DSC has prevented a generation of operational war-thinking officers from leading Army. As a result, 170 officers from the rank of Colonel upwards, will no longer be advanced in time. At the same time, Army (RAAF and Navy) have promoted female officers (at an *affirmative factor* potentially between 5 and 8 times that for men) into senior flag technical / engineering (non-operational) positions. These women may have the intellect for the senior positions they are taking up – but often lack the operational experience, or deep collegiate expertise of their male colleagues. They are unlikely to be five times better than every male colleague, by intellect or experience. By being selected

early on identity, not merit – they generally lack operational experience. Moreover, when identity counts more than merit – selections end up being made more on grounds of adherence to health and safety (kept good kit) during their careers, than expertise. i.e., not those who have been in the thick of the discipline of war, learning, and adapting their art, over time. Tellingly, the 2023 Nobel for Economics winner, Professor Claudia Goldin, makes similar points in her probe into the Pay Gap.

As a direct consequence of CDF staying and being extended, Army has lost a generation of senior officers capable of fighting, thinking and winning at war – specifically in vital areas of Littoral Manoeuvre, and digger-in-the-loop, autonomous Armour.

A recent ANU study indicates a long-term (from the early 2000s) reduction of confidence (trust) in Government, from above 70% in the early 2000s, to less than 44% in August 2024.

Noting the Jenkins (2021) report that bullies in the *Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplace* may be up to 75% more likely to be women, than men – it is quite possible that the feminised technical leadership of the ADF will be more rules-focussed, less expert, collegiate, and conducive to change/adaptation.

The impact of the SDR lack of funding (training is always cut first), declining confidence in government/senior leadership, support for our sailors when illuminated (attacked) by a PLAN warship, lack of trust (e.g. the Voice referendum), the breaking of the covenant (poor pensions, support, post career, suicides, etc.), Covid, and the continuous undermining of the ADF by inner-city elites (many from Canberra) – who will never serve – combined with the failure of CDF to take responsibility (as required by International Law and the Geneva Conventions) for the failures of the SAS in Afghanistan, has all contributed to reducing recruitment and retention. With the ADF reducing in size, just at that moment when it was required to increase by 18,500 over the next decade.

Even if Navy gets all its submarines and frigates, it will not have the sailors to crew them, by the early 2030s. It cannot crew all its warships today – when recruitment is failing to keep pace with those leaving the Service.

MEAN GIRLS?

The “mean girls” apparently referred to by the late Senator Kimberley Kitchen, all now occupy senior ministerial positions, in the Labor Government.

Although there is not a direct correlation between voting and bullying, the *Jenkins* report was based upon the *Commonwealth*



PLAN FUJIAN with sheds covering the failing EM Catapult System.

Parliamentary Workplace – drawn largely from / working in the ACT. An argument could be made that, in the ACT, up to 45% of [CPW] bullies are centre / left-wing females, and over 60% of bullies may come from the left. Conversely, about 39% of all [CPW] bullies in the ACT may come from the right.

In Canberra itself, over 50% of [CPW] bullies may be centre / left-wing females, with over 70% of bullies coming from the left. Conversely, less than 30% of [CPW] bullies in Canberra may come from the right.

Would, for example, the Higgins-Lehrman trial have proceeded with the same apparent bias and political involvement, if the politics were reversed? And would Liberal MPs and Senators in opposition have treated their female Labor counterparts, the way that Liberal Senators and MPs were treated by the *Mean Girls*. Tellingly, the statistics would suggest not.

AXES WITH HUNTERS TO GRIND?

A report apparently classified “Secret – Australian Eyes Only”, released to Parliament in October – details how then-Chief of Navy Vice Admiral Tim Barrett played a key role in selecting then UK Type 26 Frigate; before later becoming a paid advisor to BAE Systems Australia. The report allegedly attests that

- the \$45 billion program did not meet Commonwealth *value-for-money* requirements; noting;
- the involvement of the then-chief of navy, who later became a paid BAE adviser

There is more than a little smell of sour grapes to the reporting, and its timing. The authors are apparently retired Commodore Craig Bourke and retired Rear Admiral Greg Sammut, who claim the department did not “fulfil the requirements of the Commonwealth Procurement Rules (CPRs) in relation to achieving *value for money*”.

Value for money is something of a catchall, used to instil compliance. The reverse, for example, implies something else entirely – *money for values*?

Bourke and Sammut were both effectively sacked on the cancelling of the *Attack-class* submarine program, where they had lead positions. To be replaced by AUKUS and an entirely different and reputedly more

competent cast. At the time of cancellation, a common theme picked up from senior officials (drawn from major Allies, U.S., UK, and France), was that they:

would not have achieved such rank in [their] respective navies. This was not considered the fault of the officers in question – they may simply not have had the maturation and experience necessary to take on these roles. What is telling, is that this was being said independently. [2]

The Strategic Partnering Agreement (SPA) was a shoddily substandard premise upon which to base any complex [submarine] build programme. Let alone one dealing with an artefact of existential strategic significance to Australia. As one senior NAVAL GROUP official commented: “vous ne pouvez pas construire un sous-marin par contrat”. Yet build a submarine within the complicated constraints of a prescriptive, fixed contract is exactly what Defence was attempting to do. [2]

The SPA might have worked if it had been based on some form of Joint Venture (JV) or Joint Partnering Agreement (JPA) between the three parties. [3] Such an agreement would, ordinarily, be based on the shared competencies of JV partners and an assured and appropriate balancing of risks. As outlined in Neil Baird's two papers on “the state of Australian Government and Defence”, this was simply never the case. [4, 5]

Whereas both Lockheed Martin Australia LMA, and NAVAL GROUP, brought highly competent leads, engineers, designers and naval architects to bear, Commonwealth relied almost exclusively on the AUSDEFCON contract suite, [5, 6] senior RAN/APS, and contractors acting as Australian Public Servants (at senior and functional levels). All leaning significantly upon the Prime Integrator, LMA. It would not have been so bad if ADF and Navy had developed a programme and deployed some of their best people to the – few-in-number – positions held by dedicated APS and ADF. [2]

Of the leadership and directors, working from both Canberra and Adelaide, apparently “1/3 were highly competent and would have won their position in the U.S. or Europe; 1/3 were average and would have had to run hard; and 1/3 were of neither standing”. [2] Since NAVAL GROUP officials rarely if ever got beyond the Cherbourg, Canberra, or Adelaide offices, they rarely met “Australia”:

“Je n'ai jamais rencontré l'Australie. Quand je l'ai fait, j'ai réalisé que la culture était unique et différente - pas américaine ou britannique!” [2]

There is a sense that the *Hunter* report authors may have a particular conscious bias – noting opposition to Tim Barrett when he was in office and seen to be a Fleet Air

Arm Admiral, “flying too high.” Since Tim Barrett's time – one of the few Admiral's to think and write [7, 8] – the Navy has generally thought to have regressed. As seen by the retrenchment of the surface and submarine warfare officer cliques – and the retirement of senior birdies.

The choice of Craig Bourke and Greg Sammut to lead the review was therefore interesting. Both retired officers are, of course, at liberty to respond – and *The NAVY* would be happy to publish their response.

TALLY HO?

On the *Hunter-class*, *The NAVY* and the NLA has long maintained that these were the best designs then available. Notwithstanding, many *The NAVY* authors have long maintained that more were needed, at a much quicker rate – and that alternative versatile modular designs should be considered. [9, 10]

Impact of DSR Budget

Irrespective of the *Surface Fleet Review* (SFR), now delayed for publishing until the New Year – and potentially compromised by the Bourke-Sammut report – the DSR budget is unlikely to deliver for the Surface Fleet. This is the point being made by Stephen Smith, when he apparently referred to their being only four *Hunter-class* ships, all probably to be built in British yards. Confirming a 60% cut in *Hunter-class* funding, exactly because of the DSR black-hole budget. Created for defence by PM&C, the unnamed international consultancy, and Treasury. Seemingly aligned with DFAT policy – supported by Labor and Union factions. For example, the MWU, see Red Duster.

NOT PLAN SAILING?

The PLAN is encountering problems of its own.

Not widely understood but there has been an entrenched opposition to Xi Jinping over many years – including two reputed assassination attempts early in his Presidency. The opposition is from those who have been disenfranchised, and also those who have been marginalised. Particularly those Princelings running the Private Armies, Militias, and Military Industrial Complexes (MIC) that make up 70% or more of China's GDP. At the same time, the economy is slowing, costs are mounting and the West is no longer prepared either to invest in China – without alternative manufacturing plants elsewhere – or to transfer IP/technology, or tolerate its wholesale criminal ripping off.

In addition to the faltering Chinese economy – much of it a grey economy – three things have combined to make Xi's position more unstable:

- His handling of the Covid crisis, in China and Internationally;
- His policy towards Taiwan (and Ukraine), which has drawn together international opposition;
- The crisis of an ageing population – leading to a more expensive workforce, less willing and available to work at rates 10 times less than for western plants.

Given the mercantile basis upon which China thrives, including in its diaspora communities, Xi is seen to be “no longer a safe pair of hands, or to be good for business.”

习近平: “不再是一双安全的手, 也不利于生意”。

This is making Xi enemies, with suggestions that his major shipbuilding programs may have been vandalised.

Lost Shang-class Type 093 Submarine

Rumours began circulating on August 21 after anti-Chinese Communist Party activist social media account “Lude Media” posted a claim that Chairman Xi Jinping had received a briefing that all officers, crew, and students undergoing training aboard a Type 093 (*Shang-class*) nuclear-powered attack submarine had died “while performing a mission in the Taiwan Strait”.

According to reports, the *Shang-Class* (Type 093) submarine was testing a secret new pump-jet propulsion system in the Taiwan Strait when it collided with a chain-and-anchor trap also laid by the PLAN.

Reports subsequently quoted a leak from a RN Intelligence source published in the *Daily Mail*:

The incident happened on 21 Aug, at 08.12 local resulting in the death of 55 crew members: 22 officers, 7 officer cadets, 9 petty officers, 17 sailors. The Dead include the Captain Colonel Xue Yong-Peng. Our understanding is death caused by hypoxia due to a system fault on the submarine. The submarine hit a chain and anchor obstacle used by the Chinese Navy to trap US and allied submarines. This resulted in systems failures that took six hours to repair and surface the vessel. The on-board oxygen system poisoned the crew after a catastrophic failure.

Rest in peace PLAN sailors – who, although not widely reported, often enjoy professional cordial relations with all regional navies. Despite the politics.



NAM Atlântico and FS JACQUES CHEVALIER undertaking RASL in the North Atlantic.

Carrier Failures

The PLAN FUJIAN (CV 18) *Type 03* class carrier was supposed to have been commissioned by President Xi Jinping, on the 12th anniversary of him coming to power. There were also rumours that he previously wished to commission the ship as PLAN JINPING. Significant delays have occurred to the *Type 03* and *Type 04*. The electromagnetic “traps and cats” arrestors are of indigenous design and apparently have not yet achieved interim operational capability. The technological innovation required is seemingly beyond the current technology and capability of the Chinese military industrial complex. To date, the Chinese have been unable to transfer (steal) this technology from the U.S. (or UK). The more so, given tightening U.S. regimes designed exactly to prevent the transfer of this type of technology to the Chinese.

Issues impacting the FUJIAN are also impacting the *Type 04* Nuclear powered aircraft carrier (CVN 20). These problems have been exacerbated by the state of the Chinese economy, the cash crisis impacting the CCP, and its potential over-extension to support the demands of other initiatives, such as the Belt and Road. The *Type 04* cats and traps also need to be integrated with a nuclear-powered propulsion plant, with different characteristics. The FUJIAN cats and traps were covered in sheds for much of this year – and remain untested, with considerable work going on. Testing may be ongoing but faults and instability appear not to have been overcome. Admiral Ma Weiming PLAN (the Chief Naval Engineer and Architect) appears to have been removed – and no longer part of the program. Potentially a result of Xi's purges. The former Deputy Minister of Navy, capability, and materiel responsible for both programs, Song Xue, was arrested in 2021.

At the same time there have been reports of “anti Xi Jinping Forces” interfering with the installation and trialling of equipment. On July 21 2023 a large truck carrying equipment for the carrier was apparently bombed. There are also rumours that the design was based on an undergraduate thesis – subsequently developed by U.S. scientists. Dynamic loading of the developmental systems, led to

catastrophic failures and fires. Ropes have also failed during launch trials – apparently leading to injuries to technicians and sailors building/testing the rig.

The Shenyang J-15 (Chinese: 歼-15), Flying Shark (equivalent to the F-35C *Joint Strike Fighter*) is also facing delays. Since the Cats and Traps necessary for its successful launch (and recovery) are not yet stable enough to allow for production of its landing gear.

The CCP is at risk of facing bankruptcy through over-extension, not dissimilar to that facing the USSR in the 1980s. Leading to its collapse in the early 1990s. Due to these factors, although on the one hand increasing its manoeuvres against Taiwan in 2023 – China has also indicated through backchannels to the U.S. that it is unlikely to seek Taiwan reunification in 2025 or 2026 – leaving 2027 as “possible.” Consequently, the drills and trials are also being delayed.

The two carriers currently in existence are unable to apply the ski ramps, with risks of arrestor wire brakeage and aircraft crashing on launch. Aircraft continue to fall off the carrier during trials – as reported to the CCP. In March the state of the carriers was leaked – describing them as “all Junk.” There are also concerns about the steel used in the development of the SHANDONG (CV 17) and FUJIAN being subpar – leading to leaks and flooding. The LIAONING (CV 16) *Type 001* class carrier, being built by Russian steel has, apparently not suffered the same problems – except where Chinese modifications have been made. The result potentially both of poor-quality steel production standards (a well-known criticism of Chinese products), but also the graft and corruption rife in the Chinese MIC. Which Xi Jinping was trying to combat – potentially leading, today, to even more opposition to him. Noting the purge of senior PLA military officers between September and November 2023.

In November the SHANDONG Carrier Strike Group made a feint along the Taiwan Strait but found itself trapped between the USS CARL VINSEN (CVN 70) and USS RONALD REAGAN (CVN 76) carrier strike groups. The PLAN had to deploy additional ships in support of the CSG.

No Smoke without Fire?

A recent fire aboard the PLAN LONGHUSAN (L980) *Type 071* class LPD appeared to show lack of firefighting capability and damage control – leading to the rapid spread of fire in four locations. The fires potentially were deliberately lit – possibly as a means of signalling Xi's weakness, while putting pressure on economic, trade, and technology sanctions many “Chinese business” leaders want lifted by the U.S.

The PLAN is potentially facing three severe, near-simultaneous crises:

1. Lack of competent influential senior leadership – given factional divisions and ongoing purges;
2. Unreliable capabilities and equipment – that is increasingly expensive to put right, and to maintain given reducing budgets;
3. An inability to recruit and train personnel in sufficient numbers to the required quality, given China's rapidly ageing population.

The signalling to the U.S. and its allies appears to suggest factional opposition to Xi Jinping by demonstrating the structural weakness of the PLAN – and potentially the PLA and PLAAF. The weakness being suggested as akin to the Chinese Beiyang Fleet, that in 1894 lost to the Imperial Japanese Navy in less than an hour.

RAN AND JMSDF EXERCISE NICHU GOU TRIDENT

RAN and RAAF recently joined forces with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) for *Exercise Nichu Gou Trident* (NGT) 23-2 during a regional presence deployment. The bilateral exercise has been held since 2009 – aiming to strengthen the military relationship between the two countries.

HMA Ships BRISBANE and STALWART and a RAAF P-8A aircraft joined JS SAZANAMI, a P-1 maritime patrol aircraft and a submarine. The focus was on Intelligence, Reconnaissance and Surveillance (ISR), and interoperability between the aircraft and warships.

HMAS TOOWOOMBA later conducted an additional bilateral exercise, NGT 23-3, testing communication and cooperation with a JMSDF P-3C aircraft.

The exercise took place following BRISBANE and STALWART's conduct of *Annualex*, which was led by the JMSDF and included other units from the US Navy, Royal Canadian Navy, RAAF Force and observers from the Philippine Navy.

PH-AUS MARITIME COOPERATIVE ACTIVITY

The Philippines Armed Forces (AFP) and the RAN and RAAF successfully completed the PH-Aus Maritime Cooperative Activity (MCA) in November.

The three-day activity, which featured exercises in the country's Exclusive Economic Zone from 25-27 November 2023, was participated by Philippine Navy vessels BRP GREGORIO DEL PILAR and BRP DAVAO DEL SUR; Royal Australian Navy frigate HMAS TOOWOOMBA; Philippine Air Force's A29B *Super Tucano* and N-22 Nomad, Philippine Navy's BNI2A aircraft;

and Royal Australian Air Force P-8A maritime surveillance aircraft.

The MCA between the Philippines and Australia demonstrated both countries' shared commitment to improve maritime interoperability, foster camaraderie among the participants and to exercise freedom of navigation and overflight in accordance with international law for a peaceful and secure Indo-Pacific.

MB ATLANTICO REPLENISHES FROM FS JACQUES CHEVALLIER

The Brazilian Multipurpose Aerodrome Ship (NAM) *Atlântico* (ex HMS OCEAN, L12) carried out, an Oil Transfer at Sea (TOM) exercise, with the participation of the Logistics Support Ship (NAPLog) JACQUES CHEVALLIER, from French Navy, near Cabo Frio (RJ).

The exercise aimed to verify the ability to refuel the ship at sea, in order to increase its permanence, for long periods, in the operating area, independently.

HMS PRINCE OF WALES TRIALS MOJAVE OFF US EAST COAST

The largest uncrewed aircraft ever launched from a Royal Navy aircraft carrier has paved the way for the next generation of UK naval air power.

Codenamed *Mojave*, the specially-modified aircraft – operated remotely by a 'pilot' at a computer terminal – has taken-off from and safely landed back on board HMS PRINCE OF WALES (R09) in a trial off the East Coast of the USA.

Mojave – a version of the MQIC *Gray Eagle* aircraft adapted for short take-off and landing from runways even shorter than the flight deck of *Queen Elizabeth-class* carriers – is a larger and more complex aircraft.

Produced by US company General Atomics, *Mojave* is capable of performing numerous long endurance missions from medium altitude.

TOMAHAWK APPROVED

The U.S. State Department approved a possible Foreign Military Sale (FMS) to Japan of Tomahawk Weapon System and related equipment for an estimated cost of \$3.5 Billion. The U.S. Defense Security Cooperation Agency delivered the required certification notifying Congress of the FMS.

The Government of Japan has requested up to two hundred (200) Tomahawk Block IV All Up Rounds (AURs) (RGM-109E); up to two hundred (200) Tomahawk Block V AURs (RGM-109E); and fourteen (14) Tactical Tomahawk Weapon Control Systems (TTWCS). Also included is support for the Tomahawk Weapon System (TWS) (the All Up Round, the Tactical Tomahawk

Weapon Control Systems (TTWCS) and the Mission Distribution Software Suite Centers (MDSSC)), as well as containers; feasibility studies; software; hardware; training; unscheduled missile maintenance; spares; in-service support; communication equipment; operational flight test; publications; engineering and technical expertise to maintain the TWS capability; non-recurring engineering; transportation; and other related elements of logistics and program support.

EXPEDITIONARY SEA BASE SHIPS

ESB ships such as the USS LEWIS B. PULLER (ESB-3), form a class of up to 7 ships designed as a mobile landing platform / afloat forward staging base for the USN. She is the lead ship of the expeditionary mobile bases and is also a sub-variant of the more sophisticated and expensive *Montford Point-class* expeditionary transfer docks.

ESB are optimised to support a variety of maritime based missions, including Special Operations Forces (SOF) and Airborne Mine Counter Measures (AMCM). The ESBs, which include a four-spot flight deck, mission deck and hangar, are designed around four core capabilities: aviation facilities, berthing, equipment staging support, and command and control assets.

Based upon versatile modular ship design principles, the ships are a less expensive littoral manoeuvre force option than LHD such as HMAS ADELAIDE and CANBERRA and ALSL such as HMAS CHOULES. As Bases, they would provide Army with a significant basing capability – able to be integrated with USMC and USN. For Navy, they would effectively replace the LHD and CHOULES – at much reduced cost. Supported by Heavy Lift ship variants, to provide off-loading docking down facilities. Based on available, low cost, commercial designs – modularised for Fleet purposes. Exactly as the ESB. CANBERRA and ADELAIDE without applying fixed wing aircraft – such as the F-35B, for which they were designed – would better be replaced by less expensive, ships such as ESB. For Army, it would provide its Littoral Manoeuvre force with an inexpensive immediate forward projection, and interoperability with the U.S., at scale and range.

GREENWICH STATION

The British Royal Navy scrambled in November to send HMS DIAMOND, one of only two available Destroyers capable of being deployed to hot operations in the Gulf. Of the remaining five ships of the *Daring-class*, two are in long term overhaul and repairs – to restore baseline capability, never provided on build – and two are in maintenance. The Type 23 Frigates are

largely obsolete and would not be suitable in this type of role – providing air and ballistic missile defence. This leaves the UK with only one DDG that it might be possible to deploy around the UK's EEZ – but is also necessary to support the UK Carrier Strike Group based on the *Queen Elizabeth class*. Inability to recruit, poor operational and engineering leadership over many years have led to the RN being described in a House of Commons report as being:

woefully inadequate...with no idea about strategy and "no vision for the future.

A position contested by the First Sea Lord..

ZZZZ

HMS DIAMOND Sea Viper missiles shot down Houthi/Iranian attack drones over the Red Sea, 16 Dec. 16 2023.

The request by the U.S. for the RAN to send a ship to support Air Defence convoy duties in the Red Sea appears a "coincident" response to Australia for not supporting the U.S. and other key allies, on the UN resolution calling for a cease fire in Gaza, without mentioning Hamas.

Australia does not have the crewed ships of the right type in sufficient numbers - so this will be a stretch on RAN/ADF to support. Particularly over the main leave period.

The recent U.S. Senate approval of AUKUS, subject to Presidential sign-off, should also act as a warning. A deeply transactional future President may well set commitments and dollars against delivery. Including commitments to spend and deploy, when requested. ■

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STRATEGIC FLEET TASKFORCE REPORT

In a much unheralded launch, the final unsigned (unclassified) report was released on 7 November, in Fremantle. Significantly the launch was led by MWU National Chairman Mr Paddy Crumlin. Other members of the strategic task force included: Mr John Mullen; Ms Angela Gillham; Dr Sarah Ryan, and Major-General Jason Walk. The lack of signature details in the final report and attendance at the launch of all Task Force Members suggests that this was a minority report. Hence also its low-profile launch out of Canberra, apparently led by Paddy Crumlin and John Mullen.

The Strategic Needs identified by the Taskforce as being essential to Australia's economic and social security were:

- Coastal shipping of refined petroleum from Australian refineries or import terminals to Australian end-users, including to regional and remote ports in northern Australia;
- Conducting independent cargo operations (self-load/unload) where a natural disaster or other disruption affects the supply of key goods in Australia's regions or Pacific neighbours;
- Enhancing capability to facilitate Defence or national mobilisation via the shipping of vehicles, equipment, and stores to northern Australia;
- The coastal shipping of containerised cargo between Australian ports to deal with smaller short-term disruptions;
- The movement of project and over-sized cargo domestically and internationally; and
- The coastal shipping of dry and non-liquid bulk cargoes that are key inputs to domestic manufacturing.

The 16 recommendations of the Taskforce (12 of which taken up immediately by Government) were:

1. Address the cost-gap between foreign-flagged vessels and Australian flagged vessels through taxation incentives and government assistance. (not taken up immediately (NTUI))
2. Composition of the fleet to include container vessels, multipurpose vessels, RORO or ROLO vessels, liquid bulk vessels, dry-bulk vessels, and break bulk vessels;
3. Establish a strategic fleet levy on vessel arrivals to fund the strategic fleet (NTUI);
4. Register future Strategic Fleet vessels on the Australian General Shipping Register (Agreed);
5. Improve the Australian International Shipping Register (Agreed);
6. Review the Coastal Trading Act (Agreed);
7. Increase Fair Work compliance activities on foreign-flagged vessels operating under Temporary Licence;
8. Legislate the power for government to requisition ships;

9. Better coordination between government and industry on maritime training;
10. Implement a training levy;
11. Establish a cadetship programme funded by the training levy (NTUI);
12. Mandate a minimum number of training berths on strategic fleet vessels (NTUI);
13. Align Defence and civilian maritime training and qualifications (Agreed);
14. Consider a short-term increase in migration for STCW seafarers;
15. Monitor the outcomes through a Post Implementation Review.
16. Other measures (Agreed):
 - a. Working with Defence
 - b. Partnerships with other countries and companies
 - c. Links to decarbonisation efforts and the use of green-fuels
 - d. Ships operated by government agencies
 - e. Servicing Australian External Territories
 - f. Partnerships with states and territories

Although supported by the MWU, the Government is unlikely to be in a position to legislate and implement in full in 2024, when its focus will be on domestic issues and winning the 2025 Federal election. In all likelihood this will be yet another review that achieves less than the sum of its recommendations.

MWU ACTIVISM SETTING DFAT FOREIGN POLICY?

On 10 November, the MWU called for an end to war crimes in Palestine, noting "Israel alone made the decision to fire barrage after barrage of missiles into one of the most densely populated cities on earth, and Israel alone is responsible for the deaths of more than 10,000 people who've been slaughtered during the sustained and indiscriminate aerial bombing of residential buildings and civic infrastructure". While calling on Hamas to "immediately release the 220 Israeli hostages, [the MWU] called on Israel to release the thousands of Palestinian workers from Gaza who were working in Israel when the war started, that have been detained without charge in military facilities".

The MWU also demanded that Australia must end its complicity, with "Australian politicians lining up to parrot the phrase *Israel has the right to defend itself*".

On 24 November, the MWU released a statement noting, *inter alia*,

the violence, murder and destruction being wrought throughout the Middle East; opposition to the illegal occupation of Palestine, and the peaceful assemblies and demonstrations throughout Australia which call for an end to hostilities in Palestine and Israel. We call on state governments and the

various police services throughout Australia to facilitate these peaceful assemblies without escalating or provoking conflict.

Questions

Questions regarding the "illegal occupation" are frequently code to mean all of Israel (from the Jordan to the Sea) – noting that Gaza has not been "occupied" since 2005 and that Egypt could have at any time opened its borders with Gaza. The attack on 7 October, the brutalisation and rape, murder of 100s of women and children has changed the calculus, potentially irrevocably.

At no stage has the Arab world, or the Iranians, offered safe passage for the Gaza inhabitants. Nor accepted their own responsibility and culpability for events now unfolding. At the same time, significant elements of western intelligentsia, the left, unions, and feminist movements have remained silent on the rape and murder of women. UN Women finally condemned the act after significant remonstrance at the end of November – eight weeks after the tragedy unfolded.

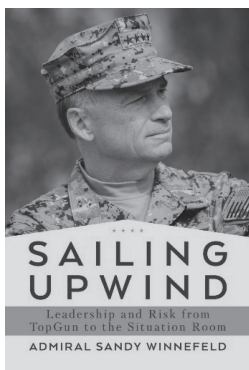
There is significant risk that events in Israel-Gaza will spill over into a wider global conflict, including the Iranians and Houthi rebels in Yemen – who have launched rocket attacks into Israel, and against shipping in the Red Sea. Iran, one of the *No Limits Axis* partners, with China and Russia, governs an arc from the Straits of Hormuz, through Syria to the Lebanon, and the Mediterranean – applying its terrorist movement, Hezbollah. Although not directly supported by Iran – being a Sunni rather than Shia terrorist organisation – Hamas is a terrorist organisation. Proscribed by Australia and many western nations. Its mandate, with Hezbollah, is the removal of the state of Israel, from the "Jordan to the Sea."

One of the first acts of the UN was to create the State of Israel. The removal of the State of Israel, would spell the end of the Rules Based Order (so championed by the unions), a bastion of Democracy in the Middle East, and the UN.

The MWU might like to get its propositions right; noting predecessors of the MWU sympathy for the USSR and National Socialism in Germany, up and until the German invasion of Russia – and opposition to its own Government. This may sound all too familiar.

The MWU is at risk of making things worse, including in Australia – and again being on the wrong side of history. Peace in the Middle East will not be realised by the eradication of Israel or Gaza. The removal of Hamas – a terrorist organisation with a 30,000 strong militia and a military budget of \$500M a year – and the establishing of free, and fair elections in Gaza just, just might. That may be something to seek and pray for over the festive season?

It is unclear exactly what Ms Penny Wong will achieve in her mission to the Middle East in the New Year. Given her recent statements and potential bias on the matter. ■



SAILING UPWIND

Leadership and Risk from TopGun to the Situation Room

By Admiral Sandy Winnefeld

USNI (April 15, 2023)

ISBN-10: 1682478742

ISBN-13: 9781682478745

Hardcover: \$50.00

Admiral Winnefeld grew up in a Navy family. After commissioning from the NROTC program, he flew the F-14 Tomcat and served as a TOPGUN instructor. He subsequently held command at every level in the military. He culminated his service as the ninth Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

This is an honest appraisal by Admiral Sandy Winnefeld of the situation the USN and indeed the western world finds itself in, today. It is cathartic and essential reading for any of those in command, or serving today. The Admiral concludes, *inter alia*:

This century's turbulence in global economics, health, and security leaves us facing a murky future. Democracy and the global operating system are under attack from both the outside and the inside

While we were preoccupied with the fool's errands of counterinsurgency and nation building, [Russia and China] developed new, full-spectrum ways of waging war with which we are having a hard time coping.

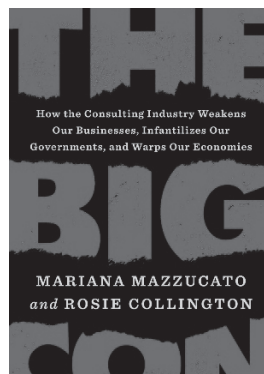
Winnefeld posits that [the West] cannot afford a "Kodak moment" in a rapidly changing world where our competitors are on the offensive:

our system is also under attack from the inside from our increasingly toxic political culture. What began as a post-World War II distribution of American political opinion inside a centrally aligned bell curve gradually divided into two disparate humps on either side of neutral that began to accelerate apart due to the advent of politically aligned twenty-four-hour news media.

He warns about the deepening level of anger and dysfunction of our political class are causing the world's long-held admiration for the United States to fade. Finally, he raises four existential questions upon which the western world and "our children's future depends": on the answers to these questions.

1. Absent an existential national crisis, will our political leaders ever overcome their impulse to put job security over national security?
2. Will they work together on compromise solutions to our nation's problems?
3. Will they withdraw into populism and isolationism, or will they view the United States as having a special role that sometimes puts global interests ahead of narrow national interests?
4. Will they do what it takes to keep our nation strong in all ways—not merely through its military but through all the other elements of power in the face of ambitious and confident global competitors?
5. Will they approach the world with principled strength, which is what our allies respect and our adversaries fear?

An illuminating book from the top of shop – and one any would be aspiring politician or military leader, would do well to read.



THE BIG CON:

How the Consulting Industry Weakens Our Businesses, Infantilizes Our Governments, and Warps Our Economies

by Mariana Mazzucato and Rosie Collington (Author)

Allen Lane (Mar 7, 2023)

ISBN: 9780593492673

Hardcover: \$50.00

Mariana Francesca Mazzucato is an Italian–American–British economist and academic. She is a professor in the Economics of Innovation and Public Value at University College London (UCL) and founding director of the UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose (IIPP). The New Republic have called her one of the "most important thinkers about innovation".

Rosie Collington is a PhD candidate under the supervision of Professor Mariana Mazzucato and Professor Rainer Kattel. Her research develops an account of the state as a producer, and address gaps in knowledge regarding green economies, from a Marxist perspective. She has previously worked as an Adjunct Lecturer in Political Economy (SOAS University of London, 2021) and as a Seminar Lead at both undergraduate and Master's level at UCL.

Mariana Mazzucato came to prominence with her 2021 book *Mission Economy*, also reviewed by *The NAVY*. [1] This book is somewhat of a gambol tying together case studies, including by Mazzucato's PhD candidate Rosie Collington. Does it work, yes and no. As a light read detailing the failures of the consultancies addressed in the big "Con", it raises serious questions. As to what to do – the book fails. Taking, as it does, more of an activist approach. Than one designed to heal, bring the middle together and allow for institution building. Ironic, since that was exactly what UCL was intended to do – as a bridge between Oxford and Cambridge.

Notwithstanding, its key critique of the Big CON's has relevance to Australia, noted in the Editorial:

Management consultants are frequently used by corporate executives or governments to provide a veneer of authority – and a convenient scapegoat – for controversial "reforms."

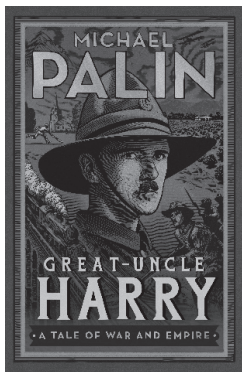
It is claimed by a nameless Conservative minister that Whitehall has been "infantilised" by its reliance on management consultants. Mazzucato and Collington's argument claims – as can be seen in Canberra (see also Flash Traffic on the Canberra Industrial (Social) Complex) – that consultancies have weakened businesses and hollowed out state capacity. "The more governments and businesses outsource," they write, "the less they know how to do."

The author's attest to what has been long known when working in Defence or the APS and confronted with baby-faced consultants straight from their second degrees (from the top international universities) and parachuted in from one of the big firms who "know better than workers on the office floor or staff or the specialists", when in actuality they know diddly-squat. The industry relies on the immoral and unethical principle that "knowledge can be purchased, as if "off a shelf", and all the consultant need do is figure out what can be stolen from Crown/ Commonwealth; who can be bought – and, more worryingly, who is a threat. So, they can be removed in cosy discussions between Ministers, and the C-Suite leads of these Con-artists. They rarely bring new knowledge or problem solving to the table – but wrap up the existing concepts and ideas, and sell them back to Commonwealth – at 10 to 20-times the cost of doing it oneself. Except one can't, since the knowledge has been lost, given away, or bought off. As in *values for money*... Oh, my mistake, *value for money*?

The authors argue that consulting is, at least in part, a confidence trick – as implied by the title. The problem is that since the 1980s, the western world has embarked on a series of Performance Management regimes, Lean, 6-Sigma, etc., etc., - each of which stripping out yet more knowledge from Governments as to how to do, be, behave, and change. To the point now, that the body politics can no longer change – for ever being valued, measured, and weighed. Rather than grown and invested in.

A sad book – worth the time to think and read over the festive season.

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GREAT-UNCLE HARRY

A Tale of War and Empire

By Michael Palin

Penguin (14 May 2024)

ISBN: 9781804940655

Paperback: \$37.50

This is a deep and compassionate romp through the history of the Palin family, with specific relevance to the ANZAC memorial – for Michael Palin's Uncle joined the New Zealand Army and the 12th Nelson Company of the Canterbury Infantry Battalion in August 1914. When Harry was already thirty. He had been somewhat of a traveler – never settling down, or finding himself. Including jobs in Colonial-era India, and from 1912 as a labourer/come jackeroo in Canvastown, NZ.

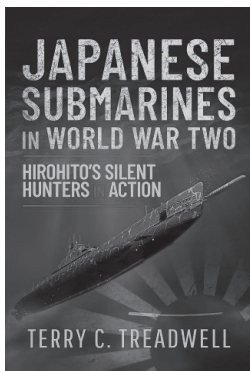
Harry goes in with the New Zealander – who already considered themselves as better soldiers than the Australian diggers – on 25 April 1915. In what was later to be named Anzac cove. A bitter sweet memory is then drawn

of Harry by Michael Palin, who has faithfully tracked down the regimental diaries through visits to the UK Kew Records Office to reconstruct the last years of his Great Uncle. A lost soul, Harry never quite finds love although he knows and seeks it out – through it, one sees a humble, shy man thrust unwillingly into the crucible of history. He dies at the battle of Morval on 25 September 1916 – one of those extended little battles of the failed Battle of the Somme, that begun on 1 July 1916.

Palin felt he had a call – as do many of us whose forebears fought at Gallipoli, on the western front, in the desert, Atlantic, and Pacific Ocean campaigns, at Kokoda and, more recently, in Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan – to return and uncover the details. As a debt to those young men, many like Harry who never found home other than in the Army – and never returned. To this day, Harry's remains have not been identified.

Michael has done his great uncle a lasting favour, for his story is now eternal. And it could be the story of so many Uncle Harry's from India, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada and the old dominions. It is a story of another world – and yet as vital and distinct today, to recall. As it was then. No soldier who fought in WW1 is now alive, and the memories of WW2 are held by those who joined as 18 years olds in the later years. Now in their late nineties. Palin writes that this is not the end of Harry's story but part of the constantly evolving process of finding out more about how we live and how we die – giving those who've disappeared (in battle and from living memory) “a voice, and a story to tell.”

A great book, unputdownable and a sad, telling, summer read.



JAPANESE SUBMARINES IN WORLD WAR TWO

Hirohito's Silent Hunters in Action

By Terry C. Treadwell

USNI (15 May 15)

ISBN-10: 139909422X

ISBN-13: 9781399094221

Hardcover: \$67.50

Terry Treadwell was born and educated in Bournemouth. Having served in the Royal Air Force, in telecommunications, and travelled the world quite extensively, including working in Australia for a short period, he was European Correspondent for Naval Aviation News and Wings of Gold for ten years.

Treadwell argues that the Imperial Japanese Navy developed the submarine faster than any other country in the world. But because of rivalries between the two military hierarchies, the Army and the Navy, they never utilized the submarine to its full extent.

During World War II, Japan deployed several unique submarines. These included the Type B1 which carried a Yokosuka E14Y1 reconnaissance seaplane in a watertight capsule attached to the deck of the submarine. One of these aircraft carried out two bomb attacks on a forest in Oregon by dropping six incendiary bombs, taking the war to the American mainland. The use of aircraft from submarines as scout planes proved not to be as successful as hoped, mainly because of the difficulty after launching the aircraft of finding the submarine again in the vast Pacific and Indian Oceans.

This included the deployment of midget submarines and the attack on Sydney Harbour, on 29 May 1942. Also, the midget submarines that attempted to attack Pearl Harbor, and the one-man human torpedo submarines (Kaiten). There were other notable actions involving IJN submarines. This included I-17 that attempted to shell, unsuccessfully, an oil refinery off the coast of Santa Barbara, causing a major panic along the West Coast of America.

Atsushi Oi – an ex-captain in the Imperial Japanese Navy, graduated from the Japanese Naval Academy at Etajima in 1923, and was sent to the United States where he was a student at the University of Virginia and Northwestern University. Afterwards serving as Executive Officer of 21 Special Base Force in Java; member of the Operations and Policies Bureau, Navy General Staff; and Operations Officer, Grand Escort Command Headquarters. From June, 1947 to March, 1951, he was engaged in Pacific War history research in GHQ, Supreme Commander Allied Powers – writing in *Proceedings*, June 1952, Vol. 78/6/592, argues that:

- Japan failed in anti-submarine warfare largely because her navy disregarded the importance of the problem.
- The IJN “froze thinking and effort by adopting one chosen means of maintaining the national security to the exclusion of others.”
- The Japanese Army and Navy were separate forces of equal standing and authority.
- The Japanese Navy, held the single concept that the Combined Fleet was the sole embodiment of the Navy – while the task to protect “the sea-borne trade was miserably slighted.” – the Navy was more eager to win a fleet action than to succeed in A/S warfare.
- Although the result of a fleet action is obvious, the effect of shipping losses is insidious even to a keen economic observer until it becomes irretrievably acute.

This is an important contribution. Treadwell details the submarine losses suffered by the Japanese Navy, as the war progressed – which are all recorded. While historical in context, the five questions raised by Captain Atsushi Oi JMSDF (IJN) are, perhaps, not addressed:

1. Have “we” identified the war we are fighting / likely to fight?
2. Are “we” thinking and able to envision what that war may look like?
3. Are “we” sufficiently joint to be more than the sum of our respective parts?
4. What are our blind-spots / shibboleths – can “we” conceptualise the language of the next war?
5. Can “we” (politically, economically, militarily) afford to lose capabilities, in order to use them? And vice versa. The QUEEN ELIZABETH / CANBERRA question.

In sum, a good read worth purchasing – that, perhaps, might have dug a little deeper?



HATCH: Commissioning of Project-636.3 Russian Submarine MOZHAISK November 2023.



MATCH: Launch of the Italian FREMM Frigate SPARTACO SCHERGAT (F598) in Genoa, November 2023.



DESPATCH: HMAS MARYBOROUGH II (P95) Decommissions 3 Oct 2023 (Image POIS Leo Burmgartner).