

**WORKING PAPER NO. 68**

**THE POLITICS OF DEFENCE  
IN AUSTRALIA**



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## The Politics of Defence in Australia

*Jenelle Bonnor*

This paper will examine four areas that are key to the politics of Defence in Australia:

- what the general public thinks about Defence and whether they say it is likely to influence their vote;
- the extent to which Defence impacts on the community and everyday lives;
- how Defence impacts on marginal seats where an election could be won or lost; and
- the approach of the Government and the Opposition to the management of the politics of Defence.

Although Defence has not, in the past, been much of a political issue in Australia, it is more so today. As the 2001 federal election draws near, and with a significant Defence presence in key marginal seats, the Government and the Opposition will both seize on points of differentiation between them. Defence as a political issue is something that cannot be ignored.



## INTRODUCTION

The latest three-year Australian political cycle is drawing to a close and the forthcoming federal election may well be a close one. With a uniform swing of less than one per cent needed for a change of government, every vote is critical. Political parties will be trying to influence voters on a wide range of issues, with the current climate dictating a focus on the economy, health, education and regional issues. However, in marginal seats, many local factors come into play. A Defence presence may indeed be one of these factors. How much of an impact then will community opinion about Defence and security issues have on the final election result? Does what people think about Defence influence how they vote? As a result, are decisions about the defence of Australia influenced by political imperatives? Is Defence a partisan political issue in Australia?

This paper focuses on the current federal electoral cycle and will argue that Defence as a political issue is something that cannot be ignored by the major parties. Indeed, the Government appears seized of the potential of Defence voters and the impact they could have on an election outcome. The Defence Minister, Peter Reith, has released a paper that attempts to highlight differences in approach between the Government and the Opposition to the use of the army in the defence of Australia. It consciously sets out to crack the ‘sacred cow’ of bipartisan consensus that has long been an implicit hallmark of Australian Defence policy. This is a more political approach to Defence than has existed in the recent past.

This paper, therefore, will examine four areas that are key to the politics of Defence in Australia in 2001:

- what the general public thinks about Defence and whether they say it is likely to influence their vote;
- the extent to which Defence impacts on the community and everyday lives to illustrate the reach and profile of Defence as a community (rather than a national security) issue;
- how Defence impacts on marginal seats where an election could be won or lost, and
- the approach of the Government and the Opposition to the management of the politics of Defence.

Finally, the paper will draw conclusions about the salience of Defence as a political issue in Australia.

## PUBLIC OPINION ABOUT DEFENCE<sup>1</sup>

What does the Australian community think about Defence? Is it something that is likely to influence how they vote or is it something they tend to take for granted, assuming that whoever governs them will adequately provide for their security?

Public opinion about Defence has not been polled as extensively as a range of other influences on how people vote. It is also not something that is frequently polled. Although polling in itself has limitations, it is the best widespread indicator of opinion that we have (short of referenda or elections).

Up to date data on current public feeling about Defence is limited, but what is available paints an interesting picture. The main sources of current public opinion data on Defence are Newspoll, the *Bulletin*–Morgan Poll and the Australian Election Studies.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to poll data, the Government report – *Australian Perspectives on Defence* – provides a general overview of community attitudes towards Defence and security in 2000.<sup>3</sup> This report was the result of the Government’s community consultation process on its Defence discussion paper, conducted as input to the Defence White Paper that was published in December 2000.<sup>4</sup> Public meetings were held across Australia that drew over 2000 people, and a further 1100 written submissions were received. The consultation team distilled these views to reflect a majority viewpoint. The report was not intended to reflect rigorous sampling techniques, unlike poll data, and may emphasise the views and opinions of those who are more seriously interested in Defence, rather than the norm.

It is not a straight-forward exercise to interpret quantitative and qualitative data from different sources, with a range of sampling techniques. When examining this recent data, it is also useful to bear in mind contemporary factors that could be expected to heighten community awareness about and interest in Defence.

These factors include Australia's East Timor deployment from 1999, its ongoing military commitment to peacekeeping in Bougainville, frequent and prominent media coverage of illegal immigrants arriving on Australia's coastline, and instability in some of Australia's near neighbours including Indonesia, Fiji and the Solomon Islands. Although the impact of these specific issues is likely to diminish over time, a heightened interest in national security may remain.

The Defence White Paper process itself and the Community Consultation Team's activities in 2000 may also have affected the representativeness of data collected over the past year. This exercise achieved a high media profile, both in the national press and in the local press in regions visited by the Community Consultation Team. In addition, and partly balancing this, Defence has received instances of quite negative publicity over the past year or so. Operational deficiencies and cost overruns in the Collins Class submarine project and allegations of brutality by parts of the Army's 3RAR have received quite widespread and negative publicity.

Defence has therefore had a higher media profile in the last two years than has been the case in the recent past. The factors outlined above could be expected to influence how importantly people regard Defence issues, relative to the range of other issues that impact on their lives. The forthcoming 2001 election is sufficiently near to enable highly relevant conclusions to be drawn about the effect of recent opinions about Defence (based on polling) on voting patterns for this election.

Asking people how Defence influences their voting intentions is, of course, the easiest way to gain a good overview of the political salience of Defence. But measuring other factors, such as views on the adequacy of Australia's defence forces, feelings of insecurity and levels of Defence spending will start to indicate the depth of feeling on the issue.

### **Voting intentions and the importance of Defence**

The day before Australia Day 2001, the *Australian* newspaper published a poll conducted by Newspoll. Respondents had been asked to rate a series of issues according to their degree of importance influencing how they would vote in a federal election.

Newspoll found that almost half of all respondents (47 per cent) nominated Defence as 'very important' to

how they would vote<sup>5</sup>. Although Defence was ranked eleventh out of fifteen issues, it scored above other topical concerns such as women's issues, industrial relations, immigration and aboriginal issues. Extrapolated across the population, this figure alone indicates that Defence is likely to be a significant issue in a close political contest.

In another recent poll (Morgan Poll, May 2001), four per cent of respondents rated Defence as one of the top three things the Government should be doing something about.<sup>6</sup> This was down three per cent from November 1999, but was still higher than any other year since 1992. Defence ranked eighteenth in this poll, out of 27 general issues, and above issues including aboriginal affairs, rural support, the republic and interest rates.

This is not necessarily inconsistent with the *Australian* Newspoll mentioned above. A very different question was asked and it is unlikely that Defence would be generally nominated in the top three issues of concern to Australians. The fact that fewer nominated it than eighteen months earlier may indicate people believe something/enough is being done about Defence, or else other issues have overtaken their concerns.

### **Adequate defence forces?**

If Defence is very important to how almost half the population might vote (according to the *Australian* Newspoll), what issues make it so? The adequacy of Australia's defence forces may be one of them.

The Community Consultation Team's report summarised community attitudes about Defence, saying:

There was a very strong consensus that this is no time for complacency about Australia's national defence effort.

This is reflected in another Newspoll taken at around the same time (in November 2000) that found that 60 per cent of respondents did not believe that Australia had adequate defence forces to defend its national interests.<sup>8</sup>

This, in turn, is remarkably consistent with the finding two years earlier that 60.1 per cent of respondents in the *Australian Election Study 1998* did not believe that Australia would be able to defend itself successfully if it were ever attacked.<sup>9</sup>

One way of satisfying this anxiety may be action to increase Australia's defence forces. If this is the case, a political party that promises this may well be enhancing its chances of winning the next election. The Government's 2000 White Paper, of course, contains numerous initiatives to strengthen Australia's defence. It was released after this poll was taken and it would be interesting to conduct additional polling to see if the White Paper satisfied community anxiety in this respect.

### Feelings of insecurity?

But is it really a problem that the community believes that Australia has inadequate defence forces? For some it is. The November 2000 Newpoll also found that over a third of respondents (38 per cent) thought Australia would face a military threat over the next ten years. The *Australian Election Study 1998* found that 35 per cent of respondents thought that Australia's defence was not as strong as it was ten years ago (up from 29 per cent in 1996).<sup>10</sup> Both studies showed that Indonesia was the most likely perceived source of threat. However, whilst a third of people feel insecure now, this has significantly declined from the late 1960s when the proportion was above 50 per cent.<sup>11</sup>

This is consistent with the public feedback received by the Community Consultation Team who found that people were concerned about regional instability and the resultant unpredictability in Australia's strategic outlook. They also found that the public believes that the immediate threats to Australia are non-military, such as illegal immigration, drug smuggling,<sup>12</sup> attacks on information systems and terrorism.

It is interesting that although 60 per cent of Newpoll respondents believe Australia has inadequate defence forces, only just over a third of respondents feel threatened. It may be that it is only this 38 per cent (a not insignificant proportion) who would be sufficiently motivated by feelings of threat and the need to strengthen Defence to have it feature in their voting intentions.

### Defence spending

It is unsurprising, given the public's opinions revealed above, that significant numbers of people also support greater defence spending. The *Australian Election Study 1998* found that 52.1 per cent of respondents supported greater spending on Defence, which was up from 39 per cent in the 1996 *Australian Election*

*Study*.<sup>13</sup> There is a clear generational difference in attitude, with people of increasing age lending increasing support to greater defence spending.<sup>14</sup>

The Community Consultation Team also found strong public support for an increase in the Defence budget, support that was linked to changes in Australia's 'nearer region'.<sup>15</sup> In the Defence White Paper, the Government committed to increasing defence spending by \$23 billion over ten years, something that would obviously generate strong community support on the basis of these statistics.<sup>16</sup>

All these measures of public opinion give a broad indication of why Defence is an important factor likely to influence how a significant proportion of the population votes. On the basis of the above polling and analysis, Defence may influence the voting intentions of somewhere in the order of 35–50 per cent of the population. Even if it were half that, it would still be a significant factor. How strongly voters will be swayed by Defence issues is difficult to determine. But in the January 2001 Newpoll, 47 per cent actually indicated that Defence was 'very important' to how they vote. People feel insecure, so much so that over a third believe that Australia may well face a military threat in the foreseeable future. A large proportion also believes that Australia does not have adequate defence forces to address these threats. And a growing proportion of the population, especially older people, support increased defence spending.

Voters then could be expected to view positively the political party(ies) with policies designed to strengthen the Australian Defence Force and provide greater national security. But there are undoubtedly more important issues that will influence voters. Health and education, for instance, are consistently nominated above Defence. Yet the above analysis indicates that Defence is not an issue without electoral impact and cannot be lightly dismissed in an election year.

## IMPACT OF DEFENCE ON THE COMMUNITY

The public's views about Defence are not only influenced by national security concerns, but also by how the national defence effort impacts on the community at a local level. Defence can be seen as a community issue, as well as a national security one.

Although ideally determined for strategic, national security reasons, the location of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and its infrastructure will inevitably have a broader impact on the community or region within which it is positioned. This impact is a by-product of sound national requirements for the public good: the defence of Australia. Although the choice of location of the ADF should be the result of national security imperatives, the inevitable result will be that Defence money is spent in particular locations, support jobs are created, related industries may develop, community infrastructure is enhanced and a variety of other spin-offs can be seen.<sup>17</sup>

The reality is that these community benefits, particularly in regional and rural Australia (but also in some outer metropolitan areas), can influence politicians making decisions about actual or potential Defence policy and practice. With the needs of regional and rural Australia high on the current political agenda, the spin-offs from decisions to locate, retain or remove a Defence presence in a particular area may mean that national security considerations are not the only pertinent factor. Certainly, one would hope that major decisions are always made on the basis of national interest considerations. But more minor decisions, where there are no compelling national security reasons influencing location, may be less clear-cut.

#### **DISTRIBUTION OF ADF PERSONNEL ACROSS AUSTRALIA**

The reality is that there are a significant number of ADF personnel who are located in many different areas

across Australia. These locations shift over time, usually depending on the prevailing doctrine. For instance, between 1985 and 1998, numbers of ADF personnel declined by 25 per cent in NSW and 52 per cent in Victoria, and in this time increased by 225 per cent in the Northern Territory.<sup>18</sup> This largely reflected the 1987 Defence White Paper's 'move to the north' doctrine and the 'two ocean basing' of the Navy.<sup>19</sup>

As Table 1 illustrates, by 1998, despite these declines, NSW and Queensland continued to host the bulk of ADF personnel. And despite the ADF's 'move to the north', in 1998 the ACT still contained more Defence personnel than the Northern Territory and more Defence civilians than anywhere else in Australia.

Table 1 shows the sheer numbers and spread of Defence personnel located across Australia. Most of these are located in major bases, but there are a significant number of smaller ADF establishments that comprise the 350–400 separate Defence facilities across Australia. There are ADF personnel in a significant number of electorates throughout Australia.

There is of course more to the ADF than full-time military personnel and civilian support. There are also reservists and cadets, both of whom are an integral part of their local community. Table 1 illustrates that, not unsurprisingly, those states with the largest populations have the largest number of reservists. A significant proportion of Defence facilities across Australia are reserve or cadet training depots. There are also 25,000 cadets in 417 units across Australia, with strong community involvement – for example, in annual ANZAC Day services.<sup>21</sup> In small communities,

30.6.98	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	NT	TAS	ACT	O/S	Total
ADF	18904	7280	12638	2668	3724	3756	173	5713	318	55174
Defence Civilians	3952	3971	1781	1870	625	429	119	5183	13	17943
Reserves	8237	4848	6942	2398	2770	997	692	816	1	27701

*Table 1. Location of ADF Personnel, Civilians and Reserves 1998*<sup>20</sup>

the role of these ‘part-time’ Defence Force members is usually a visible and often admired one. The Community Consultation Team found that the community supported cadet schemes and observed that ‘there was a particularly close relationship between regional Australia and the local Army Reserve unit.’<sup>22</sup>

It is apparent then that ADF personnel and civilians with Defence links are no small part of many communities. There are well over 100,000 of them scattered across Australia. These people have families and friends. Many support services and industries are associated with their presence. The multiplier effect from this means that views and decisions about Defence are often formed on quite a personal level, rather than in the abstract. One could assume therefore, that Defence is not necessarily a minor issue in the day-to-day concerns and preoccupations of many Australians who have direct or indirect links to the Defence establishment.

### ECONOMIC IMPACT

This distribution of Defence personnel and facilities across Australia brings with it an economic impact. However, the economic impact of the Defence dollar on the community is hard to measure in any straightforward way. For a start, what sort of value can be assigned to the ‘public good’ benefit of defending Australia?

We know that the defence of Australia in 2000–01 will cost \$19.355 billion. In terms of outlays, some of this will be spent overseas on essential equipment and supplies. The rest will be spent domestically. This will in turn prompt related economic activity. The

multiplier effect of the Defence dollar is hard to measure. But how does one value the impact of Defence on the preservation of lifestyle, the defence of Australia’s economic zones, or the broader benefits of international stability to which Australia’s defence effort contributes.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, what other benefits are forgone by having the Defence budget in the first place? Would it make more economic sense to spend the Defence budget on some other aspect of community benefit? How does one value national security?

These are the sorts of questions that would need to be addressed in any detailed study of the economic impact of the Defence dollar on the Australian community. It is beyond the scope of this paper to provide such an analysis.<sup>24</sup>

However, the point that needs to be made is that in its simplest form, the expenditure of the Defence budget in the Australian community does have a very real impact on people’s lives – it provides income, creates employment and supports associated services and industries. A few examples suffice to illustrate.

In May 2001, the Defence Minister, Peter Reith, greeted the Budget with a series of press releases focused on every state except Tasmania.<sup>25</sup> Not unexpectedly, he was highlighting the benefits for each state of the Budget’s Defence expenditure. What was interesting, was that he chose to illustrate this with statistics on the numbers of Defence personnel and their salaries. The table below shows that with salaries and the 2001–02 Defence expenditure, there is indeed a substantial economic benefit to be gained from Defence by the community in all the states and territories nominated.

State	Budget 2001–02 \$ million	No. personnel ADF + civilian	Salaries \$ million/p.a.
QLD	635	13370	574
NT	430	5050	215
NSW	280	18970	838
VIC	110	9620	435
SA	60	4150	202
WA	41	4100	182
ACT	37	10840	550

Table 2. Defence Budget Expenditure 2001–02<sup>26</sup>

Similarly, in 2000, Senator Eric Abetz, then Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence made the point in a press release that:

Defence was responsible for employing 13,600 people in South Australia and contributed a total of \$745 million to the Gross State Product in 1997.<sup>27</sup>

Wendy Craik, then Executive Director of the National Farmers' Federation, also made the point to the Australian Defence Studies Centre 'Defence Green Paper' conference that the 150 ADF reserve depots provided significant input into local economies which could be measured in millions of dollars a year.<sup>28</sup>

She also outlined the importance of Defence spending to regional economies, citing Townsville City Council estimates that the impact of the relocation of 10 Terminal Regiment and the Army Maritime School to Townsville would bring an initial \$27 million in construction, and a further \$25 million to the area. The additional ongoing benefit of the move would be \$32 million annually.

In their submission to the Community Consultation Team, the Newcastle and Hunter Business Chamber from NSW said that 'the ADF and the civilian workforce is a significant contributor to the regional economy', together with the major increase in Defence industries in the Hunter.<sup>29</sup> The Community Consultation Team's report quoted Hunter Valley Research Foundation estimates that the Singleton Army Base contributed approximately \$50 million per annum to the local region, and RAAF Williamtown's contribution was about \$200 million per annum.<sup>30</sup>

These examples illustrate the significant impact of Defence money on the local communities in which it is spent. They also illustrate the value placed on the Defence dollar by local communities. Attracting and retaining that money can become a significant imperative for those local communities.

Politics may well become part of the tactics or decisions of all players when real community benefit is involved. Members of Parliament (MPs) never hesitate to lobby for the interests of their electorates. Defence projects can be a particular focus of this, given the level of investment often involved. The introduction in 2000 of a 'two-pass Government approval process'<sup>31</sup> for major Defence investment initiatives inadvertently opens up further opportunities for lobbying.

The new process has been adopted to enhance accountability with more extensive Government involvement in Defence acquisition and capability decisions. As this will entail more involvement at the political level (through Cabinet), there is increased scope for MPs to represent their specific interests to Ministers. This is how a democracy works – MPs are meant to be representing their constituencies – but there is certainly potential for added complexity in the political decision-making process.

### Community Myth-Making

Anecdotal evidence indicates that crowds are increasing at annual ANZAC Day marches and younger Australians are showing more interest in the national identity aspects of Australia's involvement in war. Recent Government decisions on compensation to prisoners of war and the award of a medal to national servicemen are gestures that the community would see as appropriate. How this might translate to the ballot box is difficult to determine, but continuing to perpetuate this interest certainly serves to maintain the profile of Defence in the community.

This profile has been reinforced through the choice of Australian of the Year 2001. The naming of an individual as Australian of the Year usually reflects not just an enormous personal contribution to Australian life, but the person becomes a role model, with the choice reflecting the mood, values and aspirations of the community.

Lieutenant-General Peter Cosgrove, Chief of Army and formerly the Commander of the International Forces in East Timor (INTERFET) was named Australian of the Year in 2001. His citation by the National Australia Day Council was quite extraordinary and embodies elements of myth-making around a new hero:

And if there is one man, who in modern times, embodies the legacy of the ANZAC<sup>32</sup> spirit, it is Lieutenant-General Peter Cosgrove.

General Cosgrove's achievements are undoubtedly impressive and his appointment well deserved. He is a highly visible role model in the Australian community through his involvement in East Timor, and became popular with his forces, the Government and, importantly, the general public.

It is, however, unusual to appoint a serving military chief to the position of Australian of the Year. It was a popular choice. Aside from his personal qualifications for the role, the fact that this was done illustrates the current high profile that the armed forces have in the Australian community. His appointment will continue to reinforce that profile over the year. It may not have been part of a deliberate strategy to do so, but it is undoubtedly useful in maintaining the visibility of Defence.

Overall, this discussion about the impact of Defence on the community has illustrated that Defence can and does affect the every day well-being of many Australians. It is a community issue, not just a national security issue. It does not influence lives in the same way as health or education perhaps, but still could be expected to influence voters' attitudes to Government and Opposition policies, and thus their voting intentions.

### DEFENCE AND MARGINAL SEATS<sup>33</sup>

Given the feelings of the public on Defence, and the very real impact it has at a local community level, Defence may help determine who wins the next election. Only a handful of Government marginal seats need to change hands to bring the Opposition to power. In marginal seats, where every issue and every vote counts, community opinion about Defence and security could make all the difference to the election outcome.

According to Malcolm Mackerras' electoral pendulum for 2001,<sup>34</sup> if Labor wins the marginal seats of Richmond, Herbert, Eden-Monaro and Hinkler, and retains Paterson, it could win the next election. All these seats have margins of between 0.1 per cent and 0.5 per cent.

In addition, all these seats have a Defence Force presence, some more pronounced than others. This means the votes of Defence personnel and those associated with them could be vital to the election outcome.

Herbert has a very significant Defence presence including the Lavarack Army Base in Townsville, RAAF Townsville, and a variety of other facilities. Paterson has RAAF Williamtown – an air force operational and support base – as well as an army training camp and an air weapons range. Richmond

and Hinkler have small Army Reserve training depots. Eden-Monaro now also has a Defence presence. Last year, the then Defence Minister announced the establishment of a \$30 million Defence Service Centre in Cooma, employing 100 people and opened in December 2000.<sup>35</sup>

Of the next seventeen seats that require a swing of less than three per cent to be lost to the Government (according to the Mackerras electoral pendulum), at least nine have a Defence presence. Often only Army Reserve depots or training areas, these small properties are usually still a key part of the local community and economy, as discussed earlier.

However, in seats like McEwen (1.1 per cent margin) that has a large Army base at Puckapunyal and Lindsay (2.3 per cent margin), where Air Force Headquarters is located, the Defence vote could be critical. This also applies to the new seat of Solomon (2.4 per cent margin) in the Northern Territory, centred on Darwin, which hosts a large Defence presence at Headquarters Northern Command, Larrakeyah Army base and a range of other facilities.

The next most marginal Government seat – Flinders (3.8 per cent margin) – is held by the Defence Minister, Peter Reith, and contains HMAS Cerberus (a large naval recruitment and training establishment), a naval weapons range and Portsea (an army training base).

Of the other eighteen marginal seats currently held by Labor with a margin of 3.8 per cent or less, only the new seat of Lingiari (3.8 per cent margin) in the Northern Territory has a major Defence presence – including RAAF Tindal and a range of other facilities scattered right across the Territory. Bass (0.1 per cent margin) in Tasmania has a moderate Defence presence, with a couple of other seats hosting smaller depots.

Conventional wisdom indicates that Defence communities are traditionally more conservative in their voting patterns. Although again beyond the scope of this paper, it would be interesting to undertake a booth by booth analysis in areas heavily populated by Defence personnel to see if this is indeed the case. If so, the Government would have a key interest in maintaining the support of Defence personnel, particularly in marginal seats and particularly in the key marginal seats discussed above. This is borne out by 2001 Newspoll public opinion polling. On being asked who would handle Defence best, 40 per cent of

respondents nominated the Coalition, with only 23 per cent nominating Labor.<sup>36</sup>

In this way, the Government would have a more compelling interest in distinguishing itself on Defence than does the Opposition. A Government seen to be strongly committed to the defence forces and the defence of Australia is likely to be more popular in key marginal seats with a significant Defence presence than an Opposition trying to neutralise the issue. Given the largely bipartisan approach to Defence of the recent past, if the Opposition can neutralise Defence as an issue, it can campaign on other issues of importance to people in these key marginal seats.

### THE GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH

There is every indication that the Government clearly recognises the importance of the Defence presence in key marginal seats and the salience of Defence as an issue that could influence voters. While this does not drive its Defence policy, an intersection of public support for a strong Defence Force, imperatives in regional Australia, the Prime Minister's personal commitment to Defence, a new, more politically active Defence Minister and over twenty key marginal seats make this an obvious strategy.

It would be surprising if the Government had not identified Defence as one of its key issues in the lead up to the next election. Undoubtedly – if media reports are anything to go by – economic management, managing tax reform, small business and telecommunications services are more prominent than Defence. But the fact that the Treasurer, Peter Costello, referred to Defence in the second sentence of his recent Budget speech, and put it in the context of a 'stronger Australia', indicates that Defence is towards the front of the Government's agenda.<sup>37</sup> The Government has also clearly identified meeting the needs of regional Australia as a priority, and Defence intersects this priority quite well.

#### Regional Australia

Most of the major Defence bases are located in regional Australia. At the end of January 2000, as part of the Government's regional Australia strategy, the Prime Minister made an explicit commitment not to withdraw any further government services from regional areas, saying:

I don't want to see any further services, government services levels withdrawn from or taken away from the bush. I indicated yesterday and again this morning in Bourke that one of the things that I've asked my Ministers to do ... that in any future Government decisions that, in effect, a red light flashes if that Government decision involves a reduction in the delivery of an existing Commonwealth service.<sup>38</sup>

This applies equally to Defence.

The Prime Minister's commitment was repeated by his then Defence Minister, John Moore, who said '[t]he Prime Minister and I have repeatedly stated that there will be no reduction in the Defence presence in regional Australia.'<sup>39</sup> As the Prime Minister's statements make clear, this decision has been taken for essentially economic and political reasons of relevance to regional Australia, rather than strategic reasons.

Indeed, the media release from which the Minister's quote was taken, was issued to deny Labor allegations that the Graytown ammunition and explosives test facility in Victoria was to close. Labor too is playing politics with Defence. Graytown is located in the marginal electorate of McEwen. The Minister goes on to say that '[i]n accordance with the Prime Minister's commitment to rural and regional Australia, there will be no change to Defence operations conducted at Graytown.'<sup>40</sup>

Similarly, the then Defence Minister also welcomed the relocation of the Soldier Career Management Agency (135 people) to Fort Queenscliff in Victoria to fill the gap left by the move of the Army Command and Staff College to Canberra, acknowledging the local member's efforts in this regard.<sup>41</sup> The electorate is Corangamite in regional Australia, and is held by the Government with a margin of 4.6 per cent. The Minister, in his media release, once again emphasised how this decision illustrated the Government's commitment to regional Australia.

At the end of November 2000, the then Defence Minister again put an explicit regional spin on the decision to relocate the ADF Helicopter School from Canberra to Nowra and Oakey.<sup>42</sup> Whilst the latter is in the safe Government seat of Groom (13.1 per cent margin), Nowra is in another marginal seat: Gilmore (4.2 per cent). This move will save Defence a significant amount of money; in the Queenscliff decision the rationale seemed less clear-cut.

On the release of the White Paper, the Minister put out a special media release highlighting the benefits for regional Australia – and these were quite considerable.<sup>43</sup> Townsville and Darwin, in particular benefited, as did Brisbane, Oakey, Amberley, Albury/Wodonga, the Hunter region in NSW and South Australia.

In addition, it was reported that the outcome of the outsourcing of the Defence Integrated Distribution System project was delayed due to the Prime Minister's office conducting an analysis of the project's impact on regional Australia.<sup>44</sup> This project, worth \$1.3 billion, will affect logistics operations at 34 military bases across Australia and transfer 1400 positions to the private sector. According to the report, this project will affect eleven electorates with margins below six per cent: six held by the Government and five by the Opposition.<sup>45</sup> In this instance, the tension between achieving greater efficiencies in Defence and regional impact is significant indeed.

Any Government Minister (not just the Defence Minister) makes policy or project decisions on the basis of a range of influencing factors. They may receive advice from their department, their personal staff, fellow MPs, their party secretariat, the private sector and their ministerial colleagues, among others. They may make the decision themselves or around the Cabinet table. They will inevitably take into account a range of legitimate factors such as the policy significance of the decision for the portfolio, the economic impact on the community, the opportunity cost of the money involved, international dimensions, domestic regional impact and electoral impact. Each decision will ascribe different importance to these various influencing factors. In the instances outlined above, the weight the Defence Minister saw fit to give to regional imperatives in his public announcements of the decisions is obvious. The Government appears very conscious of the impact of Defence in regional areas.

### **The White Paper**

The Government released its Defence White Paper in December 2000.<sup>46</sup> A new White Paper was undoubtedly necessary, given the strategic changes to Australia's nearer region over the previous few years, critical 'block obsolescence' Defence equipment decisions facing the Government and various pressures

on the administration and management of the Defence organisation. The interesting aspect of the White Paper, from the perspective of this discussion, is the extent to which government ministers and the Prime Minister were involved in its formulation, and the extent of public input into its outcomes. Although drafted for compelling national interest reasons, the White Paper process also illustrates the political importance the Government places on Defence.

- *Public input*

It is not unusual for governments to release public discussion papers on major policy issues. It can be a risky strategy as the response may be unpredictable. It can also be part of acculturating the audience to important shifts in policy. Importantly, it can also be used to encourage public debate about issues that are key to the country's future. And in the current climate of enhanced awareness of and interest in Defence issues, it is also good politics to encourage a debate about Defence.

The Government released a public discussion paper on Defence about six months prior to the release of the 2000 White Paper.<sup>47</sup> This was clearly part of a deliberate strategy of engaging the community more closely on Defence and building a constituency for important (and costly) decisions that would inevitably have to be made. In releasing the paper, the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister said:

Australian Governments have not in the past extensively consulted the community on matters to do with national security. We are consulting now because it is important that all Australians should have their say on the important defence choices we face ... We encourage all Australians to express their views on these critical defence issues.<sup>48</sup>

At the same time as the discussion paper's release, as outlined earlier, a community consultation process was initiated. Members of the public could express their views in writing, via e-mail, by speaking to the Community Consultation Team or to their local Member of Parliament. The Government promised to 'tak[e] this consultation phase into account' in formulating the White Paper, but did not indicate it would be bound by it.<sup>49</sup>

The extent of the community consultation process was really quite unprecedented in recent Australian Defence history. The Community Consultation Team conducted 28 public meetings around Australia, attended by more

that 2000 people, and analysed a further 1100 written submissions. Despite criticisms about the project's lack of rigour and although attendees at these meetings were obviously self-selecting (and unfortunately mainly male), the opportunity was there for all Australians to have their say.<sup>50</sup> After some debate, the Government released the Team's report about a month prior to the release of the White Paper.<sup>51</sup>

The extent to which community views were taken into account in deciding the outcomes of the White Paper is difficult to determine. Happily, many of the conclusions of the Community Consultation Team were consistent with the content of the White Paper. The strong support for increased funding for Defence expressed in the Community Consultation Team's report would certainly have made it easier for the Government to make the hard decision of allocating a significant budget increase to Defence at a time of competing budget priorities in an environment of fiscal restraint. The community also saw the primary role for the ADF as the defence of Australia, with strong support for participation in peacekeeping operations and for the US alliance, all compatible with the Government's broader defence agenda.<sup>52</sup>

These and other views expressed in the Community Consultation Team's report are consistent with the approach of the White Paper. Importantly, the public was given the opportunity to have its say and the process did assume a reasonably high media profile in the national and local press. It proved to be a useful way to maintain and enhance the community's interest in Defence.

- *Ministerial involvement in the White Paper*

It is inevitable that a document as important as a Defence White Paper would have considerable ministerial involvement. But it appears that this White Paper had more ministerial involvement than a number of its most recent predecessors. The involvement was not just of the Defence Minister, but the Prime Minister and a number of other senior ministers as well. The Secretary of the Department of Defence, Allan Hawke, described the White Paper process thus:

I do think the government has broken the mould on this. One of the differences between this white paper and its predecessors is that ... its being driven by the ... National Security Committee, chaired by the Prime Minister.<sup>53</sup>

The vehicle for increased ministerial involvement came from the mechanism of the National Security Committee (NSC), a Cabinet committee unusual amongst others in that it is chaired by the Prime Minister and comprises the Deputy Prime Minister, Treasurer, Foreign Minister, Defence Minister and Attorney-General. Other ministers are coopted as necessary, and in the consideration of the Defence White Paper, the Finance Minister was also involved.

The National Security Committee was established when the Howard Government was elected to power in 1996. Its stated aim was 'to act as the focal point of decision making on national security.'<sup>54</sup> Prior to this, the Labor Government had operated a Security Subcommittee of Cabinet that had met on an irregular and ad hoc basis. The new National Security Committee assumed a more prominent and central role in security decision-making than had previous Cabinet committees of the recent past. It made decisions, for instance, on the Sandline crisis in Papua New Guinea, Kosovar refugees and the East Timor deployment. One former senior minister described it as one of the best and most effective forums in the government.<sup>55</sup>

The National Security Committee also coopts senior officials as required. In practice, this occurs at most meetings and these officials not only brief ministers, but actively participate in the deliberations as well. These officials usually include departmental heads, drawn from the Secretaries' Committee on National Security that provides support for the NSC. As the Prime Minister is the chair of the NSC, decisions taken in that Committee do not normally require Cabinet endorsement. It is a very powerful committee.

Not surprisingly, the deliberations of the NSC are confidential. But there were plenty of leaks during the Defence White Paper process that appeared as newspaper reports. These reports indicated the very real debate and involvement of ministers in the decision-making process.

For instance, the *Australian* devoted much of its front page on 19 September 2000 to a story entitled 'Defence Splits Cabinet: Meeting of Senior Ministers was a "Bloodbath"'.<sup>56</sup> This story reported an NSC meeting on 21 August where ministers decided to postpone the decision on the acquisition of Airborne Early Warning and Control aircraft due to Defence's inability to clearly explain the rationale for such a purchase, its enormous cost and how it fitted within White Paper priorities that ministers had not yet agreed.

Another article in the *Australian*, on the day of the release of the White Paper, explored just how much responsibility the NSC ministers had taken on themselves in making the decisions of the White Paper, rather than leaving a lot of the detail to the Defence Minister and his bureaucrats, as has happened in the past.<sup>57</sup> It outlines how, during an NSC meeting on 11 October, the Prime Minister had ‘expelled’ all the bureaucrats from the meeting, leaving the six NSC ministers alone to deliberate on Defence policy. They reportedly made all the final decisions on the White Paper – on budget and equipment – during this meeting.

From these newspaper reports, it was clear how much debate went into deciding the Defence budget. From the reports, ministers were divided over the significant amounts of money involved. Yet the final decision was that the Government increased Defence spending by \$500 million in 2001–02, a further \$500 million in 2002–03, and a rise of three per cent each year after that until the end of the decade. This \$23 billion increase represents a huge amount of spending forgone on other economic, social and regional imperatives, not to mention the retirement of debt. This decision alone indicates the importance ministers attached to the defence of Australia. Few other spending decisions of this magnitude have been announced during the Coalition Government’s term in office.

The close engagement of the Prime Minister and NSC ministers with the Defence White Paper is overdue in Australian Defence history. Why this was the case can only be a matter of speculation, but informed speculation would point to a number of factors.

Firstly, the NSC had proven itself to be a useful, indeed vital, instrument of decision-making on national security matters. Since 1996, ministers had become used to being closely involved in major security decisions and it was a natural progression to the close consideration of the Defence White Paper.

Secondly, Defence has had a reasonably high, but often negative, profile among ministers over the last few years as consecutive Defence Ministers in the Howard Government have tried to overhaul the administration and management of the Defence organisation. This included then Defence Minister Ian McLachlan’s Defence Reform Program and John Moore’s sacking of his departmental head, Paul Barratt, and the bitter wrangle that ensued. There was a sense in which the Defence organisation was distrusted, particularly its

ability to manage public resources and its ‘poor business practices’.<sup>58</sup> It would therefore have been inconceivable to leave much of the formulation of the White Paper to Defence itself, as had happened under previous governments.

This translated into a third factor: how efficiently Defence was managing its current budget, how much fat was in that, and whether the huge proposed expenditure of the White Paper was justified in a tight fiscal environment. Reports of the time indicated a clear stand-off between the Treasurer and the Finance Minister (and the Secretary of PM&C) on the one hand, and the Defence and Foreign Ministers on the other.<sup>59</sup> The former were concerned about value for money, efficiency and the opportunity costs of the proposed expenditure, particularly as Defence had been exempt from the efficiency savings imposed on all other departments in previous years. The Prime Minister obviously came down on the side of broader defence and security considerations, as such a deadlock can only be broken by a Prime Minister, but it must have been an interesting tussle around the Cabinet table. However, if recent speeches by the Secretary of Defence and the Chief of the Defence Force are anything to go by, the efficiency and accountability messages have obviously been clearly heard.<sup>60</sup>

Fourthly, the Prime Minister’s position was probably partly the result of his close personal interest in defence matters. This is a long-term interest but was focused when his ‘headland’ defence speech in October 1995 resulted in considerable political debate.<sup>61</sup> He paid very close attention to the Coalition’s 1996 election Defence policy and it was due to his personal decision that the Defence portfolio did not have to deliver efficiency savings in the 1996–97 budget, the only portfolio to escape. He has maintained that interest in Government.

Fifthly, and most importantly, the decisions of the Defence White Paper were undoubtedly critical to Australia’s long-term security, given the very significant decisions that had to be made on strategy, equipment and budget. It would have been remiss of ministers in these circumstances not to pay very close attention to its development.

Lastly, however, there are the political factors. The heightened public awareness of and support for a strong Defence Force as a result of the East Timor deployment, the Community Consultation Team’s activities and findings, Defence’s impact on regional

Australia and its presence in key marginal seats would indicate that ministers were only too aware of the political importance of their decisions on the White Paper. That it was well received by commentators and the community reflects the care with which it was crafted, at both the political and bureaucratic levels.

### A New Defence Minister

The retirement of John Moore and the appointment of Peter Reith as Defence Minister in January 2001 have brought a more overtly political approach to the Defence portfolio. Although it is early days, Mr Reith has already released a paper designed to draw out the differences between the Government and Opposition.<sup>62</sup>

The Minister is quite explicit in his aim of questioning whether bipartisanship really does exist in Defence policy. This has long been a ‘sacred cow’ in Australian Defence policy: despite niggling around the edges, both sides of politics have supported a similar approach to Defence for many years. Yet in his paper, the Minister says:

[T]here is no bipartisan policy approach in the area of Australian Defence policy . . . bipartisanship should not be used – as Labor is using it – as an excuse for not developing policies or as a wall to hide behind . . . [t]here are differences between the parties and these differences should be exposed to greater public scrutiny.<sup>63</sup>

The Minister’s paper lists areas where he believes bipartisanship does not exist. He has chosen mainly to focus on differences in approach to the role of the army in the defence of Australia.

Media commentators have pointed to the risks of trying to ‘fracture’ the bipartisan Defence consensus.<sup>64</sup> However, as with any other area of public policy, it is legitimate to scrutinise all positions in a debate. Defence should be no exception to this. Indeed, in some ways it is even more important to have clear policy positions available, given the ramifications for national security. If the Minister’s aim is to encourage a political debate on Defence, then that is no bad thing. Given the findings earlier in this paper, should the Government be able to persuade the community that it has better Defence policies and is a better manager of national security than the Opposition, it could expect to gain votes in seats key to winning the next election.

Certainly since Peter Reith has been Defence Minister, there has been a more vigorous Parliamentary debate on Defence, much of this initiated by the Minister. Questioning the Opposition in the Parliament on its policy towards acquiring two extra Collins Class submarines is an illustration of this. Indeed, from 1 January – 23 May 2001, the Defence Minister was asked 23 questions without notice in Question Time, eight from the Opposition and fifteen from his Coalition colleagues. In the same period in 2000, when John Moore was Defence Minister, he was asked only one question, from a coalition backbencher.<sup>65</sup>

The Minister has a range of motives for engaging the Opposition on Defence. There are votes in questioning the Opposition’s (and its leader’s) credibility on Defence. In addition, the Minister is one of the Coalition’s best Parliamentary and political performers, so it is unsurprising that he seizes opportunities from the political aspects of his portfolio responsibilities. He has a high media profile and visibility in the community, so it can be expected that this will help Defence to maintain its profile in people’s minds.

### THE OPPOSITION’S APPROACH

It is difficult to get a clear and detailed idea of Labor’s political approach to Defence. Although the Labor spokesman on Defence releases numerous media statements on topical issues, the Opposition has not released a Defence policy. It is the lot of oppositions to receive less focus than governments and to be seen as reactive rather than proactive. They also have considerably less resources than governments with which to develop detailed policies. Most of the Opposition’s statements and speeches are, unsurprisingly, critical of the Government and aspects of its management of Defence, but offer little to indicate what its own detailed Defence policy will be, although its broad parameters have been sketched out by Kim Beazley.<sup>66</sup> Like the Government, the Opposition has a leader who, as a former Defence Minister, is very interested in Defence.

Labor, no doubt, would have been surprised by the Defence Minister’s rejection of bipartisanship in Defence policy. When the White Paper was released, the Leader of the Opposition, Kim Beazley, embraced bipartisanship saying ‘the Opposition finds the broad policy framework enunciated in the White Paper to be

an appropriate basis for defence policy and military strategy in Australia.<sup>67</sup> The Opposition appeared to support key elements of the White Paper, including funding, although it did try to differentiate itself on some elements, especially in terms of Australia's relations with Asia.<sup>68</sup> This broad support must have satisfied the Prime Minister, who in his White Paper tabling speech to the Parliament said 'I believe the result should maintain the healthy level of bipartisanship on the basics of Australia's strategic policy that we have seen in this place for many years.'<sup>69</sup>

The Opposition is clearly aware that Defence has become more of a political issue in this electoral cycle than previously. Its leader, Kim Beazley, has been quoted as saying the Government was 'trying to tweak the foreign and defence policy issues, the national security issues, in a way that is politically positive for them.'<sup>70</sup>

An illustration of this is the political debate over the United States' proposal for National Missile Defence (NMD). The Government has come out strongly in support of the US proposal, acknowledging that the Australia-US joint facility – Pine Gap – would play a key role in NMD and emphasising its support for the US alliance. Apart from the policy implications of the proposal, the Community Consultation Team's report indicated that a clear majority of the community strongly supported Australia's alliance with the US.<sup>71</sup> Support for NMD does not do much harm in electorates with significant Defence communities.

In contrast, the Opposition Shadow Foreign Minister has strongly opposed NMD, together with a former Labor Prime Minister, Bob Hawke. Indeed the Labor Party's Platform 2000 (adopted prior to the latest US proposal) is clearly opposed to NMD, saying 'it is Labor's view that NMD has the potential to trigger a new nuclear arms race and gravely undermine global disarmament and non-proliferation agreements.'<sup>72</sup> However, the Opposition Leader has wound back this position substantially, indicating that passive involvement through Pine Gap may be acceptable, but active involvement was not. He did this by talking about the indivisibility of knowledge – referring to data collected by Pine Gap that would be used for NMD as well as a range of other purposes. Leaving aside the difficulty Labor will have within its own ranks on this issue, Kim Beazley is clearly trying to hose this down as an electoral issue, given the strength of his shadow spokesman's remarks.<sup>73</sup>

In the Australian political scene, Oppositions are increasingly withholding their policies until just prior to or during an election campaign. In the case of Defence, this may be a risky ploy. If, in the public's minds, the Government entrenches its position as more active and committed on Defence, Labor may leave its run too late if it tries to distinguish itself on Defence policy. Alternatively, if Labor can neutralise Defence as an issue – by adopting a bipartisan consensus on the issue – then it can campaign on other issues important to winning an election.

## CONCLUSION

Defence is likely to impact on voting preferences in Australia in a 2001 election. Even though public opinion polling indicates almost half the population might consider Defence as 'very important' to how it would vote, it is difficult to determine how much weight voters will give to Defence issues, compared with other areas of importance to their lives.

However, it is undeniable that Defence does have an influence on a significant proportion of the community, whether it is through the physical presence of Defence personnel and bases throughout Australia, the economic impact of the Defence dollar in the local community or a general unease about national security. Defence may not have the profile of health or education services, but its impact is not insignificant. This impact is magnified by the considerable Defence presence in key marginal seats across regional Australia: seats in which an election could be won or lost and where Defence may become very important in influencing votes.

The Government is clearly aware of this impact, and its approach to regional Australia certainly seems to have informed its approach to more minor (but not insignificant) decisions within the Defence portfolio. The Prime Minister and Cabinet Ministers have been more closely involved in Defence decision-making, as the formulation of the Defence White Paper makes clear. While there are real national security and efficiency reasons for that, it also reflects the perceived political importance of Defence.

The Government is conscious of the advantages for it in being seen to be a good and strong manager of national security. For Defence to continue as a politically important issue, it needs to remain high in

the public's awareness. The public consultation process throughout the White Paper, together with Mr Reith's attempts to generate more of a debate about differences in Defence policy between the parties, will help to maintain the salience of Defence as an issue in the community.

There is more in it for the Government to be active on Defence. Opinion poll data indicates that it is the Government that is seen as the better manager of Defence.<sup>74</sup> The Government needs to retain key marginal seats with a significant Defence presence to

stay in power, and it is the Government that is enjoying a higher profile on Defence through the East Timor commitment and the release of the White Paper. Yet, for the flip side of these reasons, Defence is not something that the Opposition should downplay.

Defence has not, in the past, been much of a political issue in Australia. Yet as what might well be a close federal election draws near, the Government and the Opposition will both seize on points of differentiation between them. Defence is an area that might just count when all the votes are in.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> By public opinion, this paper means general community views, not views of experts or parties active in the defence field such as those often canvassed by Parliamentary committees and other inquiries.
- <sup>2</sup> The Australian Election Studies are conducted at the time of a federal election. See Clive Bean, David Gow and Ian McAllister, *Australian Election Study 1998* (computer file), Social Science Data Archives, (Canberra: Australian National University, 1998) and Roger Jones, Ian McAllister and David Gow, *Australian Election Study 1996* (computer file), Social Science Data Archives, (Canberra: Australian National University, 1996). See also Ian McAllister and Toni Makkai, 'Trends in Public Opinion Towards Defence and Foreign Affairs in Australia', Paper presented at 'Defence and Australia. A Public Symposium on the Defence Green Paper', an Australian Defence Studies Centre conference held in Canberra, 8 August 2000.
- <sup>3</sup> *Australian Perspectives on Defence*, Report of the Community Consultation Team, September 2000 (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2000).
- <sup>4</sup> *Defence 2000: Our Future Defence Force* (Canberra: Defence Publishing Service, 2000).
- <sup>5</sup> 'The Australian Newspan', *Australian*, 25 January 2001, p.2.
- <sup>6</sup> 'Fix Education, Health, Electors Tell Government', Finding No.3398, 'The Bulletin-Morgan Poll', 8 May 2001, <http://www.roymorgan.com.au/polls/2001/3398/>.
- <sup>7</sup> *Australian Perspectives on Defence*, p.1.
- <sup>8</sup> 'The Australian Newspan', November 2000, [www.newspan.com.au](http://www.newspan.com.au).
- <sup>9</sup> Bean, Gow and McAllister, *Australian Election Study 1998*.
- <sup>10</sup> Jones, McAllister and Gow, *Australian Election Study 1996*.
- <sup>11</sup> McAllister and Makkai, 'Trends in Public Opinion'.
- <sup>12</sup> *Australian Perspectives on Defence*, pp.1–2.
- <sup>13</sup> Jones, McAllister and Gow, *Australian Election Study 1996*.
- <sup>14</sup> McAllister and Makkai, 'Trends in Public Opinion'.
- <sup>15</sup> *Australian Perspectives on Defence*, p.10.
- <sup>16</sup> *Defence 2000*.
- <sup>17</sup> My thanks to Dr Stefan Markowski, School of Economics and Management, University of New South Wales at ADFA, for sharing his thoughts on this subject.
- <sup>18</sup> Allan Shephard, *Trends in Australian Defence: A Resources Survey* (Canberra: Australian Defence Studies Centre, 1999).
- <sup>19</sup> Department of Defence, *The Defence of Australia 1987* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1987).
- <sup>20</sup> This table is drawn from Shephard, *Trends in Australian Defence*, Tables 9 (p.59), 48 (p.143) and 39 (p.125).
- <sup>21</sup> *Defence 2000*, p.72.
- <sup>22</sup> *Australian Perspectives on Defence*, p.26.
- <sup>23</sup> See also an exploration of this issue by Admiral Chris Barrie, Chief of the Defence Force, 'Defence: Better Capability, Greater Efficiency', Address to the Committee for the Economic Development of Australia (CEDA), 15 May 2001.
- <sup>24</sup> Defence has commissioned ACIL Consulting to examine the impact of Defence spending on the Australian economy. The study is not yet finalised. See Barrie, 'Defence: Better Capability, Greater Efficiency'.
- <sup>25</sup> See Peter Reith, Media Releases, 22 May 2001, 'Defence Budget: Good News for Victoria', 'Defence Budget: Good News for Western Australia', 'Defence Budget: Good News for the ACT', 'Defence Budget: Good News for the Northern Territory', 'Defence Budget: Good News for NSW', 'Defence Budget: Good News for South Australia', 'Defence Budget: Good News for Queensland'.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>27</sup> Eric Abetz, 'Building Partnerships between Defence and Industry in South Australia', Media Release, 25 February 2000. The personnel figure is different from that in Table 2 and may include Defence industry.
- <sup>28</sup> Wendy Craik, 'Who is on the Security Team?', Paper delivered to the Australian Defence Studies Centre conference, 'Defence and Australia: A Public Symposium on the Defence Green Paper', Canberra, 8 August 2000, p.4.

- <sup>29</sup> Newcastle and Hunter Business Chamber's Defence Industry Committee, 'Submission to the Federal Government's Defence White Paper Community Consultation Team', 10 August 2000, p.1.
- <sup>30</sup> *Australian Perspectives on Defence*, p.26.
- <sup>31</sup> See Allan Hawke, 'One Year On', Paper based on an address to the Defence Watch Seminar, The National Press Club, 27 February 2001.
- <sup>32</sup> National Australia Day Council, 'Australian of the Year 2001', [http://www.nadc.com.au/awards/aoty\\_winner.html](http://www.nadc.com.au/awards/aoty_winner.html).
- <sup>33</sup> An earlier version of this section was published as Jenelle Bonnor, 'But Can Still Turn Defence into Attack', *Australian Financial Review*, 28 November 2000, p.51.
- <sup>34</sup> See the Mackerras 2001 federal election pendulum in Malcolm Mackerras, 'Howard's Future Swings on Mere 0.6 per cent', *Australian*, 3 January 2001, p.4. Associate Professor Mackerras has indicated to the author that he intends to revise the pendulum to allow for the fact that Ryan (Qld) is now a Labor seat and he expects Aston (Vic) also to join Ryan when a by-election is held for that seat. Such a result would leave the Government with a notional majority of only six seats. Clearly every seat counts.
- <sup>35</sup> John Moore, 'New Era in Service Delivery for Defence Personnel', Media Release, 30 March 2000; Bruce Scott, '\$30m Defence Service Centre Creates 100 Jobs in Cooma', Media Release, 1 December 2000.
- <sup>36</sup> 'The Australian Newspan', 25 January 2001.
- <sup>37</sup> See Peter Costello, Treasurer, 'Budget Speech 2001-02', Delivered on the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2001-02, House of Representatives, 22 May 2001, <http://www.budget.gov.au/speech>.
- <sup>38</sup> John Howard, 'Transcript of the Prime Minister, Address at Nyngan Community Luncheon, Nyngan, NSW', 31 January 2000, Prime Minister's Office, Canberra.
- <sup>39</sup> John Moore, 'Government Support for Graytown', Media Release, 16 August 2000.
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>41</sup> John Moore, 'Queenscliff's Future Secured', Media Release, 10 November 2000.
- <sup>42</sup> John Moore, 'Relocation of Helicopter School', Media Release, 30 November 2000.
- <sup>43</sup> John Moore, 'White Paper Delivers for Regional Australia', Media Release, 6 December 2000.
- <sup>44</sup> Peter La Franchi, 'PM's Office Steps into Defence Project', *Australian Financial Review*, 6 October 2000, p.62.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>46</sup> *Defence 2000*.
- <sup>47</sup> Department of Defence, *Defence Review 2000 – Our Future Defence Force*, A Public Discussion Paper, (Canberra: Defence Publishing Service, June 2000).
- <sup>48</sup> John Howard and John Moore, 'Foreword', *Defence Review 2000*, p.v.
- <sup>49</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>50</sup> For a critique of the community consultation process see Graeme Cheeseman and Hugh Smith, 'Consulting the Public on Defence', Working Paper No. 62 (Canberra: Australian Defence Studies Centre, 2000).
- <sup>51</sup> *Australian Perspectives on Defence*.
- <sup>52</sup> *Australian Perspectives on Defence*, pp.1-2.
- <sup>53</sup> Allan Hawke, 'One on One', *Defense News*, 9 October 2000, p.54. For a description of the White Paper process, see also Hawke, 'One Year On'.
- <sup>54</sup> *Australia's Defence: Liberal and National Parties' Policy – 1996*, 1996 coalition election defence policy paper, p.5.
- <sup>55</sup> Communication to the author.
- <sup>56</sup> Robert Garran, 'Defence Splits Cabinet: Meeting of Senior Ministers was a "Bloodbath"', *Australian*, 19 September 2000, p.1. See also Robert Garran, 'Defence in Clear and Present Danger', *Australian*, 10 October 2000, p.4.
- <sup>57</sup> Cameron Stewart, 'Military Manoeuvres in the Cabinet Room', *Australian*, 6 December 2000, pp.1-2.
- <sup>58</sup> See Hawke, 'One Year On'.
- <sup>59</sup> See for instance Garran, 'Defence Splits Cabinet'.

- <sup>60</sup> See Hawke, 'One Year On', and Barrie, 'Defence: Better Capability, Greater Efficiency'.
- <sup>61</sup> John Howard, 'Australia's Defence Policy', Address to the Victorian Branch of the Australian Defence Association, 5 October 1995.
- <sup>62</sup> Peter Reith, 'Defence 2000 and the Defence of Australia', Ministerial Information Paper, April 2001, <http://www.minister.defence.gov.au/2001/2kdef.htm>.
- <sup>63</sup> Ibid, p.3.
- <sup>64</sup> See for instance Geoffrey Barker 'Reith Strategy Is Off Course', *Australian Financial Review*, 2 April 2001, p.30.
- <sup>65</sup> Search of the House of Representatives *Hansard*, <http://www.aph.gov.au>.
- <sup>66</sup> Kim Beazley, 'Address to the Sydney Security Forum', University of Sydney, 18 August 2000.
- <sup>67</sup> Kim Beazley, 'Ministerial Statements: Defence 2000 – Our Future Defence Force', House of Representatives *Hansard*, 6 December 2000; repeated also by Stephen Martin in his Address to the Australian Defence Studies Centre Forum, 'Defence White Paper 2000 – New Policy for New Times?', Canberra, 12 December 2000.
- <sup>68</sup> Beazley, 'Ministerial Statements: Defence 2000 – Our Future Defence Force', and Stephen Martin, 'Government Endorses Labor's Strategic Approach to Defence', Media Statement, 6 December 2000.
- <sup>69</sup> John Howard, 'Address to the House of Representatives on Presentation of the Government's White Paper on Defence Policy', Parliament House, Canberra, 6 December 2000, p.10.
- <sup>70</sup> Katharine Murphy and Brendan Pearson, 'Beazley Goes on the Attack over China', *Australian Financial Review*, 1 May 2001.
- <sup>71</sup> *Australian Perspectives on Defence*, p.8.
- <sup>72</sup> *ALP Platform 2000*, Adopted at the 42<sup>nd</sup> National Conference, Hobart, 31 July–3 August 2000, pp.15–21.
- <sup>73</sup> For interesting perspectives on the political dimensions of the NMD debate see Fred Brenchley, 'Rocket Racket', *Bulletin*, 22 May 2001, p.33; and Brian Toohey, 'Beazley's High-Risk Defence Ploy', *Australian Financial Review*, 19 May 2001, p.33.
- <sup>74</sup> 'The Australian Newspoll', 25 January 2001.