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AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE POLICY

A STUDY OF EMPIRE AND NATION (1897-1910)

L. D. Atkinson

The work for this thesis was conducted entirely by the candidate.

(L.D. Atkinson)
War — and the preparation for war — is only part of political intercourse, by no means an independent thing in itself.

(after Clausewitz)
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What did a remote generation of Australians mean when they talked of Empire? Why were defence discussions so confused that historians still dispute the genesis of the Royal Australian Navy? Why should the Commonwealth have been first among the emergent Dominions to contemplate universal military training? Why did Australians rush toward the European maelstrom in 1914? Why was it believed that ANZAC laid the foundation for a fighting tradition and signified the birth of a nation? I have chosen to investigate these broad issues in the details of Australian defence policy before the Great War.

A preliminary survey of colonial opinion at the turn of the century, when troops were being cheered to fight the Boers in South Africa and men witnessed the meeting of the first federal parliament, convinced me that any investigation which looked back from 1914 would be misleading. It was also necessary to follow the course of contemporary discussion from the late nineteenth century; and it seemed desirable to continue the examination until 1917 when the assumptions of peace had been thoroughly tested in war. Detailed enquiry in this work, however, ceases in 1910. It is a convenient stopping point. By then enough was revealed to indicate answers to the general questions which had informed my research. By then statesmen had found a viable solution to the three interconnected problems which provide the main themes for this study: the search for a satisfactory relationship between nation and Empire; the quest for national security to suit all attitudes within available resources; and the creation of effective and distinctive Australian forces. Another generation of Australians, less remote, continued to be influenced by that solution.

The decision to exclude any detailed examination of changing Imperial policy or to draw comparisons between the status of the Commonwealth and other emergent nations was taken after one of many fruitful discussions with Sir Keith Hancock. Accordingly, the Imperial context, on which no great light could be shed with sources available here, has
been taken for granted and the emphasis placed upon unravelling the issues as they appeared to Australians. I am deeply indebted to Professor Hancock not only for his assistance and encouragement, but for preventing this work from the myopia it might otherwise have suffered.

Any attempt to present for the first time a rounded study of policy must necessarily involve the examination of a process rather than the sustained analysis of separate issues. This is the case in this work where attention is focussed on policy-makers and administrators. In subordinating parliamentary attitudes and public opinion I have often drawn freely from the surveys prepared by H.L. Hall, C. Grimshaw, and D.C.S. Sissons. Divining the basis of official decisions and discussions from the scattered and fragmentary departmental material was far more difficult. Archivists of the Commonwealth Archives Office under Mr. L. Maclean greatly eased the difficulties of research and I wish especially to thank Mr. James Gibbney and Miss T. Exley for their thoughtful guidance and patient assistance. In order to make intelligible the hesitation, the prevarication, and the indignation which accompanied the process, I have sketched portraits of many of the key figures. These forays into biography seemed justified by the light that could be thrown on the texture of contemporary attitudes, on policy decisions, and perhaps on the men themselves. The hazards were somewhat reduced with the aid of Mr. L. Fitzhardinge of the Australian National University and Professor J.A. La Nauze of the University of Melbourne. General discussion with Mr. Fitzhardinge about the whole period and about the role of W.M. Hughes was always illuminating; and I am particularly grateful to him for making available drafts of his forthcoming biography of Hughes. Alfred Deakin looms large in this work; his role presented problems of a complex kind. Though I did not have general access to the Deakin Papers, Professor La Nauze allowed me to see material in his custody relating to defence without which the later chapters could not have been written with any degree of confidence. He had also kindly made available to my supervisor a copy of his own chapter on Deakin's concern with defence policy, to appear soon in his Life of Deakin. I should like to make this clear
since it is possible that there may be some coincidence in the use we have made of the same material.

For the details of naval and military organization, plans and prospects I have relied on additional sources. The Archives Branch of the Department of the Navy under Mr. I. Menear was particularly helpful and I would like to thank Mr. John Ware of that section for releasing material not available elsewhere and for answering with such care all my questions. I am also grateful for the sources on federal military affairs uncovered by Mr. Bruce Harding and his staff at the Australian War Memorial; to Mr. Warren Perry for discussion, correspondence, and articles on the work of Major-General Hutton; to Sir Frederick Shedden, at present in the midst of a history of the Defence Department; and to Mr. G.L. Macandie, one-time secretary to the Naval Board, who served under Captain Creswell for many years.

From the outset I encountered a problem in the scale of this work. Each of the three major themes could be a subject for independent study and with all pulling in different directions it was difficult to strike an appropriate balance. The initial result was that many of the first eight chapters were four times their present length. I am, therefore, deeply indebted to Dr. K.S. Inglis for editing much of the work and correcting the remainder. The flaws which remain are due to my ignorance or obstinacy, or both.
SUMMARY

The continuing debate about the role of Australians in their own country and the position of their nation in the Empire provides the dominant theme of this work. It suggested that the study of defence policy might appropriately be divided into four parts, each coinciding with a particular era and all in chronological order: colonial, federal, national, and Imperial.

Colonialist defence policy was the result of an effort to make the self-governing portions of the Empire self-reliant in military affairs. In Australia this was achieved through dependence on British advice and cooperation with Whitehall to produce a special squadron which would ensure local security. Yet self-defence in the era 1860-1897 meant, in essence, the defence of the capitals. Little interest was taken in mutual support and less in national schemes. Since the prime danger lay in fugitive attack from the Queen's enemies which the Royal Navy promised to limit, this view seemed to many justified. If colonial policy was stabilized, however, colonial attitudes were not. To the questions "What should Australians do when the Queen was at war? How could they maintain their dignity and their security?" came a variety of answers: separate from the Empire; declare the colonies neutral; unify the Empire; and federate Australia. By the end of the century the federationists' solution was accepted and the first federal parliament set out to ensure that the old colonial forces could support each other and that Australia, while not neutral, might assume an attitude of passive belligerency until it examined the justice of any Imperial conflict in which it was involved.

Federalist defence policy between 1901 and 1905 involved the amalgamation of colonial schemes and remained federalist in substance so long as it respected colonial policy and practice. It was successfully
implemented by applying the principle of self-reliance, as it had been understood in Australia, to the whole Commonwealth.

Nationalist defence policy had far less respect for colonial or state susceptibilities. It strove to assert the authority and the identity of the central government over all Australians. It rejected federalist solutions either because national aspirations were not fulfilled or because too much cooperation with Great Britain had involved an unmanly dependence. The emergence of Japan and the dwindling of British sea power between 1905 and 1909 seemed to many nationalists adequate justification to ignore Imperial commitments and to defend Australia until it became an impregnable fortress in coloured seas. Debate proceeded apace on the form a national navy and a national army should take. National sentiment justified the discussion; Imperial sentiment provoked men to object to the creation of a "little Australia".

Imperialist defence policy was sketched in 1909. It satisfied national aspirations by creating a sea-going navy and a mass citizen army. It satisfied Imperial sentiment because that navy would materially assist the British in time of war and because, from the reservoir of trained manpower produced by universal military training, expeditionary forces could be organized. With some of the trappings of a nation-state, the Commonwealth entered into an unwritten alliance with Great Britain to defend the Empire.

*

From this brief summary it is clear that the study involves changing attitudes and policies. The work has therefore been structured so that the assumptions and the developments of each era are presented in the opening pages of each of the four major parts. Since it is the texture of those assumptions with which we are concerned further precis
here would not serve any useful purpose. It is, for instance, impossible
to state briefly what passions moved Imperialists in Australia without
doing violence to contemporary views.

Insofar as there is one proposition basic to the investigation, it is this: defence policy was influenced as much by sentiment as by
the demands of cost and security. Aware from the early nineties that
they were creating a nation, Australian statesmen demanded that defence
systems satisfy their aspirations as well as allow an appropriate
relationship with Great Britain. Insofar as there is one continuous
argument it is this: until a distinctively Australian policy was forged
integration into any general scheme of Imperial defence was impossible.
Aware that they were endowed with a large measure of security from the
amalgamation of colonial policies between 1901 and 1905, Australian
statesmen demanded naval and military proposals more worthy of the
nation they represented. The year 1909 saw the culmination of
protracted discussion and the blurring of many differences between
Australian and Imperial sentiment. Largely at the advice and the
suggestion of the British, a defence policy was forged which seemed
to satisfy the demands of nation and Empire.

* *

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PART ONE

COLONIALIST DEFENCE POLICY : SELF-RELIANCE WITHIN THE EMPIRE

(1860-1900)

... (This) House, while it fully recognizes the claims of all portions of the Empire on Imperial aid against perils arising from the consequences of Imperial policy, is of the opinion that Colonies exercising the rights of self-government ought to undertake the main responsibility of providing for their own internal order and security, and ought to assist in their own external defences ...

RESOLUTION, HOUSE OF COMMONS, 1862.
Vivid among childhood memories, Alfred Deakin recalled in 1907, were red-coats on Australian soil. These soldiers of the Queen protecting the colonies from her European enemies doubtless fired young minds with the military exploits of the British race. Maintained partially at Australian expense, they also signified the limitations imposed on local autonomy and the humble, even servile, status of the colonies in Greater Britain. Like Deakin, many others in the first Commonwealth parliament could remember how this changed. They, too, could recall the withdrawal of British troops after 1870. They, too, had long accepted the two fundamental assumptions involved: the Royal Navy would defend the Empire from invasion and ensure the flow of overseas commerce; the self-governing colonies would ensure local security by the creation of their own forces. They, too, had witnessed the development of colonial policies in strange accord with the doctrine of self-reliance put most succinctly by Gladstone: *self-government begets self-defence.*

For although the Australian colonies had found no great difficulty in implementing the doctrine, they did so in a spirit of cooperation and dependence upon Great Britain unusual in the Empire. Almost from the outset colonial self-reliance in the Antipodes bore few of the features with which some said it had been endowed. Australians did accept the restraint Gladstone had put upon colonial expansion; they had no wish to bear the cost of military adventures in the South-Western Pacific. But rather than place blind faith in British sea supremacy they had demanded fixed portions of the Royal Naval shield. And they had spurned the suggestion that the devolution of responsibility for defence prepared — at the policy level — the road for the dissolution of the Empire. Out of this had come security. No British possession, read a strategic assessment from Whitehall in 1890, was less likely to face foreign aggression than Australia.

Yet neither then nor later did Australians accept measures merely because they offered security. The clash between republican and
Imperial federationist over the despatch of troops to the Soudan indicated that national aspirations and Imperial sentiment were too intensely anti-pathetic to be accommodated in settled defence policies. The colonial jealousies which frustrated federal military discussions revealed the difficulties of any who sought to create united and distinctive Australian forces. Even while Gladstone's principle was being transmuted into detailed schemes, colonials continued to debate those issues which the doctrine did not settle: their future within Australia and the status of the nation within Greater Britain.

By the turn of the century the terms of that debate had changed. The premiers attending the Jubilee Celebrations no longer felt that there was a gap between existing policy, future prospects and colonial opinion. It was left to the policy-makers of the first parliament to amalgamate colonial defence policies - and interpret anew self-reliance in the federal context.
CHAPTER ONE

THE APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE: COOPERATION FOR SECURITY

(1865-1891)

(I hope that British assistance in financing the Victorian turret-ship, the Cerberus, will be) but the first of many acts of mutual aid and cooperation between the Mother Country and her Australian Colonies.

PREMIER OF VICTORIA, 1866.

... the members of the Conference pledge themselves to use all legitimate endeavours to procure the efficient fortifications and land defence of the several ports of the Australian Colonies, at the cost of the several Colonies interested ...

RESOLUTION, INTER-COLONIAL CONFERENCE, Sydney 1881.

It is possible that an attack may be delivered by a small squadron of iron-clads .... It could make demands on cities for bullion, stores, and coal .... It could effect a certain amount of harm by bombardment .... The more lasting effect would be the destruction of trade, and with it the recuperative power of the country for years ...

ADMIRAL TRYON, 1885.
Between 1875 and 1887 British investigations revealed the inadequacy of port and local defences throughout the Empire. In an age of steam the navy needed protected bases and the mercantile marine harbours of refuge. In an age of possible conflict with France, Russia, or both, Australians demanded security. To satisfy both Whitehall and the colonies men like Sir William Jervois, Colonel Scratchley, and Admiral Tryon came to Australia. They clarified the basis of existing defences, advised systems for adequate self-defence, and modified the Gladstonian doctrine.

Like other Imperial advisers, they found that while Australians could fear for their safety, they did not remain apprehensive. There was a rhythm in the colonial response to international crises - a pattern of panic and confidence, of anxiety and nonchalance with the passing of each war scare. The tempo was quickening. The Crimean War had been seen as a dread exception; friction with Russia in 1885 seemed to follow close upon the troubles of 1878; Fashoda preceded the Spanish-American War and conflict erupted in South Africa shortly afterwards. Once it had been possible for Australians to argue that their very remoteness from Europe was their best protection. Yet even in the fifties, the suspected presence of Russian cruisers in South American waters had been enough to stir great alarm. Whatever protection distance had offered was rapidly reduced decade by decade. Once telegraphic communication with Europe had been introduced the colonists could be stirred greatly by news of conflicts in the old world. By the end of the eighties it seemed to some that the chances of attack had been increased by the appearance of European powers near Australia. For others the Asian hordes to the North presented a danger. But it was not until the late nineties that many acknowledged in peacetime what the wary had long felt: security rested not only on local defence but on the might of the Empire.

Another difficulty facing Imperial advisers was the reluctance of one colony to support another. To many colonists self-defence had come to mean the protection of the key urban areas which were in turn the
centres of government, the storehouses of gold and wool, and the major harbours for commerce. If confidence in peacetime made problems of united effort seem irrelevant, panic intensified the development of separate policies. Scattered on the perimeter of the continent, too distant from each other to offer mutual assistance, too remote from the sources of British aid to hope for relief, the capitals became in times of crisis a series of garrisons in a state of siege.

Such fears could be removed only by an authoritative statement of the scale of attack which the colonies might be called to face. How much protection did the might of Great Britain afford? To what degree should local defences be taken? Imperial advisers on the spot gave uneasy, vague, and often contradictory answers. It was, however, common for them to foresee graver dangers than their counterparts in London. Often they did not — and could not — know; often they attempted to take account of colonial moods; usually, they realized that the graver the threat postulated the more likely they were to get their schemes implemented. All rested their case upon the premise that Great Britain would maintain her sea supremacy. Invasion was therefore out of the question. Provision for local security, it was agreed, was pointless without this assumption. Yet they differed about the scale of the raids to which the periphery of the Empire might be subject: fugitive attack by raiders, systematic destruction of commerce by cruiser squadrons, bombardment by larger war ships, and landings by expeditionary forces — all were suggested.

By 1890 the Colonial Defence Committee in London could provide authoritative answers. Its assessments were based on strategic appreciations from the intelligence sections of the Admiralty and the War Office. Its predictions were briefly put: so long as port defences were adequate the Australian colonies had to face merely the prospect of fugitive raids conducted by less than four unarmoured cruisers. But Australians distrusted these calculations made at the centre, not the periphery, of the Empire. By and large, politicians responsible for defence legislation accepted the assessments of Jervois, Scratchley and Tryon, rather than
those from Whitehall - and continued to do so.*

Thus it was that both fears and assessments encouraged the colonials to demand security against all possible enemies. To this end, they saw safety in five lines of defence: British supremacy on the high seas; the unrestricted flow of overseas commerce; the protection of coastal shipping; the defence of the capitals and their harbours; and the safety of hearths and homes. As the officer chosen to implement the general schemes sketched by Sir William Jervois, Colonel Scratchley exhorted the colonies to accept the burden of the last three lines of defence. By the end of the eighties, they had done so, but in a manner that left only the first entirely to Whitehall.

*

Even before the withdrawal of British troops the colonies had learnt to rely upon the man who voluntarily gave a little of his time each year to military duties. At first great reliance was placed upon volunteer units. Men were not paid for their services; they were offered instead other inducements. But so dependent was the volunteer system upon crises and enthusiasts that it was soon deemed a failure. The alternative was expensive, and some enthusiasts refused to countenance it. Even so, experiments with militia units whose officers and men were paid a fixed sum annually in return for their attendance at parades and camps of training promised success. And after a series of enquiries in the eighties this solution was adopted in principle by most colonial governments. In New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland every effort was made to convert volunteer to militia units. In South Australia both systems were used, while in the other two colonies the volunteer system continued. At about the same time rifle clubs were formed whose members received the free use of ammunition and the rifle ranges in return for regular attendance. In some cases elementary drill was expected of the members, and in others,

* The detailed reasoning of the Colonial Defence Committee is presented in Chapter Four below.
drill and musketry instructors were provided. For riflemen were to form a reserve of the partially-trained manpower for the militia units. The basis of land defence - the guarantee of safety for hearths and homes - was thus the citizen who was also the amateur soldier. The citizen-soldiery provided the officers and men for batteries of garrison and field artillery, companies of engineers, regiments of mounted rifles, and battalions of infantry. Such an arrangement satisfied the colonial democratic tradition, the expediency of raising military forces from a small and scattered population, and the slender financial resources of the colonial governments.

Though employed as a military adviser Scratchley could do little more than encourage the militia movement. His value lay elsewhere. For he was primarily concerned with the defence of the major ports and recommended the organization of forces to that end. He advised the construction of coastal batteries on vantage points at harbour entrances. These and other fixed defences demanded technically proficient soldiers to operate them; regular troops with special training would have to be employed. This was not a great departure from colonial practice. Various attempts had been made to raise small bodies of regular or fully-paid troops and initially their duties had included the formation of artillery, infantry, and even cavalry units. However, in Victoria the prime role of the regular troops, numbering a little more than a hundred, had been the maintenance of the coastal batteries; they had also been given the additional task of training the citizen-soldiery. This system, Scratchley explained, was worth emulating. The citizen-soldier could continue to predominate, special volunteer units could aid the regulars in tending to the defence installations while the remainder were organized into small mobile field forces to defend the coastal batteries from enemy landing parties. Such defences, both he and Jervois had assured the colonies, would protect the possible bases of naval operations; they would provide harbours of refuge for British and colonial floating commerce; and they would deter attack upon the capital cities either in the form of bombardment or raiding parties.
The Jervois–Scratchley recommendations were considered by the colonial governments between 1880 and 1885. Concerned only with their own security they rejected Scratchley's suggestions for a common military law and common military organization so that the forces could support each other in extreme circumstances. The port defence schemes of Jervois they accepted. And, as both men had urged, they resolved to take full responsibility for all local defences irrespective of the British interests they might be protecting at their own cost. In this they had gone further towards self-reliance than any other portion of the Empire.

In return they expected a quid pro quo and demanded that the Imperial Squadron based at Sydney should be strengthened - at the expense of the British government. The Australian Station had been made a separate command in 1859 and the colonies had repeatedly requested the reinforcement of the Squadron to uphold their second line of defence - the free flow of overseas commerce. Reluctantly the Admiralty had met these requests until, despite the assortment of British vessels in Sydney, the Australian Station possessed greater strength than such a backwater in Imperial seas warranted. But it steadfastly refused, on strategic and professional grounds, to distribute the strength of the Imperial Squadron among the colonial capitals to supplement the coastal batteries under construction.

Partly to ensure further the safety of their capitals and partly to provide themselves with the protection the Admiralty refused, some colonies created local naval forces. From the mid-fifties the two senior colonies, New South Wales and Victoria, had purchased small ships for the defence of their harbours in the absence of British squadrons. To clarify the status of colonial vessels, the Imperial government had passed the Colonial Naval Defence Act in 1865. This authorized the colonies to raise volunteers as part of the Royal Naval Reserve and to maintain vessels for harbour defence, localized operations, and police duties. Colonial ships, however, could voyage outside territorial waters only if certain conditions were satisfied: officers commissioned in the Royal Navy had to be in command; special Orders-in-Council had to approve the operation; and Admiralty Instructions had to be obeyed. At colonial discretion the
vessels could fly the White Ensign under the direction of the Senior British Naval Officer on the Australian Station or the Blue Ensign under local control. In time of war they could be inducted into service with the Royal Navy by Orders-in-Council at the request of the colonial government concerned. Though untested in times of emergency and obscure in many respects, this act remained the legal basis for colonial naval forces until 1911.

The first vessel commissioned under the legislation, the turret ship H.M.C.S. Cerberus, added to misunderstanding and featured in subsequent naval discussions, particularly those emanating from Victoria. In 1886 the premier of that colony persuaded the British government to provide £100,000 toward the capital cost of the Cerberus; Victoria, then the richest of the Australian colonies, paid £25,000. Hailed in many quarters as the prime example of mutual aid and cooperation between Great Britain and its self-governing colonies, this assistance was given on the understanding that the ship would pass automatically in time of war to the control of the Admiral on the Australian Station who would be free to use it at his discretion. Further confusion arose from mistaken assessments of the capabilities of the Cerberus. In its day it was of revolutionary design, being one of the first mastless ironclads with unobstructed arcs of fire from fore and aft turrets. But its sea-going potential was small and it was originally constructed - and by 1871 only fit for - harbour defence. As a British commission into imperial defence observed in 1882: the colonies had little desire to maintain sea-going vessels for action beyond local waters. In short, the British had assisted one colony to provide for more effective port defence.

Applying current British practice to the colonial situation, both Jervois and Scratchley struggled against this tendency. Such were the possible ravages to colonial shipping, Scratchley warned, that floating defences should be of two kinds: defensive and offensive. While the Royal Navy managed the enemy on the high seas, the colonies should eventually plan to keep raiders from their coasts. For defence operations armoured turret ships or unarmoured gunboats were necessary, depending
upon local geographical conditions. To protect the shipping in all large harbours torpedo boats were considered an essential adjunct to the fixed defences. For offensive operations Scratchley advised the colonies to consider the purchase of ironclads and swift cruisers. The ironclads could serve as floating gun platforms in harbour defence or as effective coastal patrol vessels; swift unarmoured cruisers could pursue and capture the raiders whose efforts had been thwarted by the other measures. Scratchley had, then, presented the framework for an integrated scheme of defence, federal rather than colonial in implication.

The provision of floating defences, the colonies decided, was an expensive business. After a period of fitful experimentation, New South Wales decided to rely on the Imperial Squadron based at the capital. It did, however, later acquire two torpedo boats. The Victorian government did the same to supplement the naval force it had created in the sixties. The colony of South Australia purchased the special service cruiser, the Protector, to watch over her gulfs. In the same period, Queensland's defences were enhanced by the arrival of two gunboats designed for the relatively placid waters inside the Barrier Reef. Like the senior colony, the other three supplemented their small cadres of permanent sailors with members of the naval militia, the volunteers, and the Royal Naval Reserve. But the vessels even the richest colony could afford were incapable of coastal patrol and united action. They were, in reality, part of the garrison forces scattered along the fringe of the continent.*

In 1885 Admiral Tryon arrived in Australia determined to steer these naval aspirations in a different direction, away from disparate groups of small vessels towards a united effort to finance a special squadron of the Royal Navy which would adequately uphold the third line of colonial defence - the protection of coastal commerce. From the seventies various British authorities had urged the colonies to pay an annual contribution for the maintenance of British sea supremacy. Now

* The vessels of the colonial naval forces are listed in Appendix A. Further discussion of their capabilities - and illustrations of some of them - appear in Chapter Seven below.
in the midst of another international crisis and the fervour which accompanied the despatch of troops to the Soudan, many Australians were prepared to consider such a departure from the tenets of self-reliance. Moreover, many of the colonies had not yet finally decided their local naval policies; and the more Tryon depicted the crippling effects of a devastated or blockaded mercantile marine, the more the colonies felt they needed coastal—not merely port—defence. Initially, then, he convinced the premiers that they should pay for a squadron of special service cruisers to be manned and controlled by the Admiralty yet retained in both peace and war on the Australian Station. He offered a further inducement. Local seamen could train in the squadron which would pass to the colonies once the agreement with the British had expired: in a decade Australians would possess the nucleus of a national coastal service.

At least one youthful Victorian liberal, concerned already with dreams of national unity and a new Empire ready to acknowledge the rights of Australians, was deeply impressed. Twenty years later Alfred Deakin was to recall Tryon's proposals. Others were not as impressed. They were reluctant to pay more than a small proportion of the cost for a squadron clearly serving both British and colonial interests. They were not ready to involve themselves either in a quasi-federal or an Imperial scheme of naval defence—except on their own terms. The implications of this became clear at the Colonial Conference of 1887.

*

At that Conference the British representatives reviewed the changes in Imperial policy since 1860. In an age of modern warfare, increasing colonial wealth, and European expansion, it was suggested, security was to be found in Imperial cooperation, not isolation. Such a tendency might well end in an Imperial kriegsverein with each part of the Empire offering mutual aid against all foes of the Crown; it might well be encouraged by colonial contributions of money—and perhaps men—for Imperial purposes.
This grand vision of an autarkic Empire was considered irrelevant by the Australian delegations. They had responded to each change in Imperial policy to ensure their own security; they had come to London ready to discuss an appropriate modification of Tryon's naval scheme; and they knew the departure they were taking from the doctrine of self-reliance. Some thought it justified by the stand of Alfred Deakin: just as colonial interests in the islands of the South-Western Pacific should be considered Imperial interests in London, colonial defences were Imperial defences in Australia. Others viewed the financing of a local squadron as the cheapest form of local defence. A few welcomed the scheme because united action seemed to anticipate federation. But all welcomed discussion of the scheme because they considered it involved local — rather than Imperial — interests. They were not, therefore, deterred by the greater issues it raised: the payment of contributions to the British Treasury, the lack of representation in the Imperial government, the problem of strategic control. Nor were they upset by the indifference of the other delegations. For it was generally agreed that if the colonies of Australasia could not afford naval defence, they must hire it at the cheapest price.*

On this basis the Naval Agreement of 1887 was formulated. The colonies agreed to pay £106,000 annually to the British government — and no more. The Admiralty undertook to construct, equip, and man a fleet of five third-class cruisers for the protection of floating commerce in Australasian waters. These would form the Australian Auxiliary Squadron whose presence was in no way to interfere with the continuance of the colonial navies nor with the addition of more efficient and powerful vessels to the Imperial Squadron. It was to be a third and far more homogeneous naval force consisting of ships of greater capability than those suggested by Tryon. There were, however, no provisions to train Australian seamen. The ships, on the termination of the Agreement after a decade, would remain with the Royal Navy.

* New Zealand was included in this discussion and was a party to the Naval Agreement of 1887. This aspect of naval discussions is omitted unless the attitude of New Zealand influences Australian policy.
Nevertheless, the gains seemed considerable. For a sum which
did not cover the cost of maintenance and salaries—let alone construction,
replacement and depreciation—they received a fixed portion of the Imperial
fleet. No matter how poorly their colonial navies fared nor how far
distant the duties of the Imperial Squadron, the Australian Auxiliary
Squadron would remain in their waters. It would, of course, be under the
sole control of the Commander-in-Chief on the Australian Station. He
could request the use of these vessels outside coastal waters in times of
crisis. But he could so deploy them only after all colonies had given
their consent.

There were two disadvantages not fully appreciated at the time.
The Australian representatives knew they were purchasing cheap naval
protection; they did not feel that they were providing the model for a
general defence system. Nevertheless, some Imperialists were to argue
that the colonies were subsidizing the Royal Navy and had bound themselves
to the great issues of Imperial defence. Nationalists were also later to
object. Although there was little sign that the colonial governments
wished to create a national coastal service, the terms of this Agreement
involved a large sum over ten years. There would be little to show for
the expense.

Other matters of importance were decided at the Colonial
Conference. The colonies agreed to make arrangements for the inspection
of their fortifications and forces by an Imperial officer. Subsequently
Major-General J. Bevan Edwards, the General Officer Commanding in China,
visited Australia in 1889. Some degree of united action was achieved in
the erection of fixed defences on Thursday Island and King George's Sound,
two stations of importance to the Royal Navy. After prolonged discussion
about the allotment of costs, the colonies jointly undertook to provide
the fortifications and men; the Imperial government, while stressing that
it was laying no precedent for future policy, agreed to provide the
armaments.
By 1891 the five lines of colonial defence were established. Great Britain was rebuilding her battle fleets - at her own expense. The Imperial Squadron had been considerably strengthened by the replacement of obsolete vessels. The Australian Auxiliary Squadron had arrived. The colonial naval forces had received most of their vessels. Fortifications for most capital cities were under way or complete; arrangements were being made for fixed defences at other places such as Thursday Island and King George's Sound. The duties of the regular soldiers had been carefully defined. Volunteer units were being converted to militia. Defence schemes for the mobilization of garrison and field forces were being prepared for submission to the Colonial Defence Committee. Achievement was manifestly uneven between the defence of one colony and another and even between forces under the one command. But whatever the defects in implementation - and they were considerable - policy was clear. Self-reliance did not mean complete self-defence. Without impairing local autonomy the Australian colonies had each found security through cooperation and dependence upon Great Britain.

It was at the level of formal and informal political discussions that the questions were posed: Was not this dependence too great? Was not this cooperation too active?
An English minister — one man — in a certain high office may drag England into a needless war, and with England all her colonies and dependencies, and the colonies have no option .... What arrangement can be made by which when England is drunk, the colony I lived in may continue sober?

ANONYMOUS, 1883.
The first irresistible impulse for active participation in an Imperial war arose from the death of General Gordon. Colonists were stirred by military heroism and Christian martyrdom on the Nile. They were also acutely aware of the hostility of Russia and Germany. To a few it seemed necessary to make some positive move which would uphold the honour of British arms, indicate the solidarity of Greater Britain, and join the Christian cause against the Saracens. This seemed the occasion to depart from the policy of colonial self-reliance and honour the pledges made twenty years earlier on the passing of the Colonial Naval Defence Act. So it was that in 1885 Australians were despatched to Egypt to aid the British cause in the Soudan Campaign.

On his own initiative the Premier of New South Wales, W.B. Dalley, had formally offered military assistance to the Crown. Lord Rosebery's Liberal government promptly accepted - so long as the colonial contingent remained under the direct control of Lord Wolseley. In all New South Wales raised some 770 men for service at Suakim. Not to be outdone, the Victorian government offered the services of its gunboats. Previously - during the Maori Wars and the first Boer War - individual colonists had volunteered and served with Imperial forces. This was the first occasion in which organized colonial troops were sent overseas to cooperate with the British Army.

Dalley's action was undoubtedly popular in Sydney. Telegrams of support came from all the other colonies; some were prepared to follow his example if the experiment proved successful; representatives of Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania came to bid farewell to the troops. With some justice, contemporaries looked upon the contingent as a symbolic Australian expeditionary force, demonstrating at once the intensity of Imperial patriotism and the force of national sentiment. During the initial waves of enthusiasm even the Bulletin, the staunchest of nationalist periodicals, acknowledged the prevalence
of an attitude it later attempted to denigrate: "the existence and vigour of a sentiment which many doubted and some denied - the sense of the essential unity of the Empire". By the act of the senior colony, it seemed, Australia was no longer a subservient dependency of Great Britain but her compeer and ally.

There were opponents to Dalley's gallant offer. They included Sir Henry Parkes, soon to re-enter the political arena as premier and leading advocate of Australian federation; the working classes of such districts as Newcastle and Balmain; members of the Congregational Church; and writers for the Bulletin. They acknowledged from the outset that they were in the minority. They argued that there was no national or Imperial emergency. They pointed out that Britain was not legally at war; she was reconquering and pacifying Egypt. The purification of foreign governments, it was forthrightly asserted, was no business for Australians; the subjugation of peoples struggling to preserve the freedom of their soil was unmanly and immoral. Furthermore, if the despatch of a contingent set a precedent then Australians might be expected to participate in all unjust Imperial wars as well as national emergencies. Finally, they considered it an affront to national dignity - twenty years later Richard Jebb's phrase "national self-respect" was to be used - for such a small force of colonials to be swallowed up in the British Army under the sole command of an Imperial officer.

Despite such opposition in Australia a precedent was established in the minds of British and colonial Imperialists: from this gesture emerged the conviction that units of colonial troops capable of being brigaded with regiments of the British Army could serve as an Imperial reserve. The conviction was reinforced by Dalley's subsequent offer to despatch the contingent wherever else it might be needed in the Empire.

Yet such a scheme was manifestly premature. The most urgent military problem was the absence of cooperation between the various colonial forces, not their use overseas. Colonial defence schemes of
the day omitted any consideration of the defence of Australia. Each
colony seemed to view its neighbours as if they were separate nations.
There was a desperate need for one scheme, a united effort, a common
defence act, and a federal army for effective home defence. Foreign
ventures could not cloak this.

No less pertinent was the case of Dalley's opponents especially
when the waves of enthusiasm had receded. They had made it plain that
military adventures were the exception to settled policies, not the
foundation of new. Local control over local defence was their demand; to
eschew the calumnies of Empire was their aim. When, in the spirit of 1885,
the Naval Agreement was justified before the colonial legislatures,
opposition was no less profuse - and no more effective. On this occasion,
however, Parkes, now Premier and federationist, championed the measure as
the cheapest form of naval defence in which the colonies and Great Britain
cooperated. In the eighties not only did opinions on the future of
Australia vary greatly. They were changing.

* * *

Of all the components of nationalism none was more decisive in
compelling Australians to face the problems of their status in the British
world than the role they might be forced to play when the Crown was at war.
Four courses were open to the colonists: separation; the declaration of
neutrality; Imperial federation; or cooperation with Great Britain.

Separatist arguments as stated by John Dunmore Lang in 1852 and
extended by R.T. Thomson in 1888 found a remarkably wide set of supporters
among public men and the press. Yet their effectiveness at the level of
politics seems to have been slight. Colonial response to the Crimean War,
the Indian Mutiny, and the Soudan Campaign, no less than the history taught
in schools, imported British newspapers and magazines, music, novels, and
theatrical shows, and the welcome given royal visitors, indicated a large
but often silent reservoir of approval for things British and thus for
the status of the colonies in the Empire. Even so, talk of separation
continued, particularly among the radical and Labour Party politicians of
Queensland and in the pages of the Bulletin, only to drop from the
vocabulary of rhetoric by the time of the Boer War.

Then the Bulletin, while not refusing to give up its right to
criticize things British, declared it stood for alliance, not independence.
The Australian Natives Association, which in the eighties had considered
separation at least an open question, was confident now that a nation could
be created within the Empire, and was soon to look upon plans for Imperial
unity with favour. In 1885 B.R. Wise, commenting on the despatch of
colonial troops to the Soudan foresaw two alternatives: separation or
cooperation with Great Britain in some form of alliance. By 1900 he
marvelled at the change in opinion during a little more than a decade.
Separation was no longer an issue.

Thomson's polemic was not, however, to be forgotten. Unlike
Lang, he had balanced the demand for independence with the problems of
security. For the protection of the small but expanding Australian
commercial interests in coastal shipping and towns against lesser attacks
he had recommended a locally controlled flotilla of torpedo boats. In the
face of full-scale invasion Australians could withdraw into the arid
interior. The enemy, beset by the insurmountable difficulties of
subjugating a free people and the vicissitudes of guerrilla warfare, would
soon abandon any desire for conquest. These solutions were as simple as
they were compelling.

While the desire for separation had flourished, however
incoherently, in New South Wales and Queensland, it was in Victoria that
the second course – the right of the colonies to declare their neutrality
in any Imperial war – was given its most thorough examination by Sir
Charles Gavan Duffy.
He complained that although the colonies did not have a voice in the conduct of the foreign policy of Great Britain they were likely to be attacked by enemies the British might provoke. Yet, like the separationists, he eschewed Imperial federation; unlike them, he rejected the idea of complete independence as disastrous. How, then, were the colonies to be protected?

The solution Duffy offered in 1870 was that the colonies should possess treaty-making powers. They could then proclaim their neutrality, if they so wished, to the world. There the difficulties began. Would British authorities depart from the fundamental constitutional principle that the Crown was one and indivisible? In any case, would the enemies of the Queen accept the neutrality of a colony, particularly when that neutrality was not absolute? For Duffy's doctrine implied that the colonies would be neutral if the war was fought for an unjust cause and belligerent if the cause was just. What constituted a just war? The criteria were vague. What if Australians wished to intervene in an unjust war? What if the war began out of ambition and became one of defence? What if military strategy dictated the offensive in the opening stages of a defensive war? Were not all wars for the defence of some interest?

To these questions Duffy gave no answer. There was little support for this doctrine of conditional neutrality. British authorities were antipathetic and devastating in their criticism. The plight he described found sympathy in the hearts of many colonial politicians, but provided no solution to their problems.

Other Victorians, frankly admitting the duality of allegiance to King and country, concluded that no distinction could fruitfully be drawn between colonial and Imperial interests and became Imperial federationists. When the Imperial Federation League invaded Australia during 1885, it chose the anglophile upper middle classes of Victoria as its beachhead. Soon it gained the support of the colonial military cliques, the expatriate lobby, the Anglo-Australian plutocracy of Victoria and Tasmania, and some pastoral, grazing, and planting interests in Queensland.
The League attracted diverse political support. But its days were numbered. Its aims were the permanent unity of the Empire by federation, an Imperial defence system, and a programme of mutual economic benefit. The means it advocated were confused. Its propaganda rested on the elaboration of simple and emotive propositions: the manifest destiny of the Anglo-Saxon race; hatred of the Yankees; the need of Australia for the British naval shield; the prospect of mutual prosperity through reciprocal tariff agreements; and the bond of blood and sentiment which bound an Empire demanding organization to make it a mighty, self-sufficient unit. Therein lay prosperity, amity, and security.

Radical nationalists rejected the movement with savage vigour. Indeed many of the republican organizations were formed primarily to do battle with the Imperial federationists. The Australian Natives Association, a moderately radical and nationalist body with more respect for wealth and property and more concern for the continuance of ties with the Empire, became the League's principal antagonist in Victoria, in the belief that nothing, not even Anglo-Saxon unity, should stand in the way of Australian federation. By 1890 the Imperial federationists viewed the radical nationalists as degenerate Britons, traitorous and red-republican, and the moderates as crypto-republicans, unphilial Britons, and crude opportunists. By 1894 the parent body in England had been disbanded and its ancillary in Victoria admitted defeat. Some supporters blamed the radical upsurge of the maritime and shearing strikes; others blamed the success of the Australian federation movement; and the Bulletin gloated over the remnants of the gilded-loafers and toadies of Imperialism.

This, reduced to a sketch, is the picture vigorously painted by the most persuasive of the movement's historians, C.S. Blackton. But by setting fervent separationist against ardent Imperalist he offers a misleading explanation of its failures - and significance.

The League afforded an opportunity to reaffirm belief in the unity of the Empire and the benefits of the Imperial connection at a time
when European rivalries for prestige and territory were intensified. Few supporters accepted all the Utopian principles; less adhered to any of the many schemes that the hard core of conservatives, academics, and professionals formulated. The views of C.H. Pearson, a member of an intellectual, urban, Anglophile set in Melbourne, and a man whose fears for the future of the Anglo-Saxon race and the security of Australia far outstripped those of many Imperial federationists, are instructive—especially when it is remembered that he was not a native-born Australian; often the most effective statements of Australian nationalism came from men who maintained that sound liberal views of the British world were applicable to any Imperial problem. Pearson placed his hopes in Australian federation and a voice in foreign policy, not by representation in an Imperial parliament but by discussion in the councils of Empire. As for any scheme of united Imperial defence, he sardonically observed, no Australian would not care to guarantee Alsace and Lorraine.

No matter what fire and zeal Blackton's radical nationalists put into their attacks upon the Imperial Federation League, its sudden demise owed much to the scepticism of some who may have appeared to support it.

Nor does Blackton give sufficient weight to differences between members of the Imperial Federation League in Victoria and its parent body in England. In appeal, composition and aims, there were essential differences hidden below the rhetoric of Empire and race. Though defeated, the members of the League in Victoria did voluntarily withdraw from the contest in 1893 to allow the Australian Natives Association greater freedom to enlist support for the Australian federation movement. Subsequently the Australian Natives Association made it clear that it sought neither separation from the Empire nor independent republican status. From 1900 the remnants of the League in Victoria were as jealous as the staunchest nationalist of the rights of Australians to control their own affairs. By 1905 Alfred Deakin could be elected president of the organization. By 1907 even the Bulletin could applaud Deakin's proposals—commended by the League—for an organization promising closer Imperial unity. While
the parent body carried on with a shadow committee, the Imperial Federation (Defence) Committee, which vainly attempted to thrust its policies on the emergent Dominions, the members of the League in Victoria were sympathetic to the aims of federal parliament. They had become, to use Richard Jebb's phrase, colonial nationalists.

The future, however, belonged to the conservatives and radicals, the Imperialists and nationalists of the federation movement. In their concern for piecemeal political and social engineering, they cautiously resolved the apparent conflict between the demands of colony and nation, nation and Empire. They reached for solutions to the problem of Australian security. It was they who charted an acceptable route along the fourth course open to colonialists. It was not a simple task.

*    *    *

The first federal convention of 1891 was dominated by conservatives, pastoralists and merchants, figures of import in the upper houses of the colonial legislatures. They wanted to maintain property rights and liberties from the threat of the labour parties. Though defence was supposed to be one of the reasons for their meeting, their main interests lay elsewhere – in the powers over external tariffs which the federal government was to have and the extent of the suffrage which was to give it authority, and in removing the barriers to better colonial government.

These conservative elements continued to be represented at the conventions. Among them were some, particularly from New South Wales and Queensland, who had flirted with the idea of separation from the Empire. But the bank failures of 1892-1893 put an end to this kind of colonial ebullience. The withdrawal of British credit threatened not merely commerce and business but the activities of the colonial governments already burdened with debt. Federation, it was suddenly hoped, would give Australian stocks a new prestige, stability, and uniformity in the British market.
Talk of separation was not merely irrelevant to the major issues they faced and seemingly stupid in a decade that saw a challenge to Royal Naval power by the Dual Alliance, but unsettling for the burghers of the city of London.

Many of the Free-traders in the first parliament were the heirs to such views. They were ready to struggle against any move by the British government that endangered Australia's autonomy. Beyond this, they possessed no cogent national policy towards the Empire. They were colonialists in a national parliament. The perpetuation of loose federal ideals - particularly in finance and defence - owed much to them and their interests.

The first Labour Party spokesmen - among them separationists of many hues - were for a long time suspicious of the federation movement. This suspicion was fed by a confusion in many minds between Australian and Imperial federation. It was feared that one would lead irrevocably to the other. More important were the limited aims of Labour. The maritime and shearing strikes of 1890-1891 had brought the Labour movement close to disaster. Political parties in each of the colonies pressed for piecemeal social reform with considerable success. The gains were uneven; but they would be far less, it was suspected, if Labour representatives were outnumbered in a national assembly whose constitution was in the hands of conservatives and liberals. Initially, they too wished to remove the barriers to colonial development.

In some respects, then, the first Labour politicians in federal parliament were colonialists and in others they were nationalists. By 1901 representatives of Labour could agree on a platform of adult suffrage, old-age pensions, compulsory arbitration, resistance to a standing army, and complete restriction of alien immigration. But they did not agree about defence policy and its Imperial context. This had to await ad hoc alignments and personal leadership, particularly from J.C. Watson, the parliamentary leader of the party.
The initiative, therefore, fell to the liberal-nationalists in the federation movement who believed that Australia should remain within the Empire and that every attempt should be made to accommodate the Australian interests within the Imperial policy. These liberals, whom Blackton termed the moderate-nationalists, agreed with the conservatives on the need to regain the confidence of British investors. But unlike the colonialists, many looked forward to a federated Australia with a more coherent concept of nation. Elections should be conducted, they argued, with the widest possible franchise so that the influence of the oligarchies of wealth in the colonial legislatures would be annulled; all industries should be protected; all citizens should be protected against poverty; a national government should rule the nation to meet national problems that could not be restricted within colonial boundaries. They hoped a united Australian voice in London would reclaim the national inheritance in the South-West Pacific lost by the indifference of Whitehall. While respecting colonial rights, they wished to establish the identity and the authority of the central government within Australia and in the British world. They also believed that federation was the only source of effective self-defence.

After 1901 the liberals under the leadership of Barton and Deakin were to inaugurate a defence policy involving the amalgamation of the colonial forces. Insofar as this policy respected existing colonial policy and practice, it was federalist in substance. Insofar as it later sought to assert the authority and identity of the federal government, it was to be nationalist in character. Federalist defence policy was a stop-gap; national policy involving both armed services was the long-term aim. This Alfred Deakin made clear publicly in December 1907.

Even before these attitudes had taken shape, many leaders of the federation movement had quickly grasped how those few Imperial problems as important as local ones might be solved through the medium of the Colonial Conference. In London they learnt to discuss over a conference table particular issues which were of concern to them. The experience of this and the later Conferences of 1894 and 1897 were to convince
federationists that close relations with the British world could be rewarding.

Cooperation and dependence upon Great Britain for the better exercise of local autonomy - these were to be the assumptions of the defence policy contemplated by the federationists. Discussion of Australian security in this spirit during the Conference of 1887 had led to the creation of the Australian Auxiliary Squadron. It led also to the request for the services of an imperial officer to inspect their colonial units and to advise them on the organization of a uniform military force capable of cooperative action in times of crisis.

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In 1889 Major-General Bevan Edwards arrived in the colonies to tender advice. He quickly came to the same conclusion as other military advisers: that Australia could only be effectively defended by the federation of all military forces.

Edwards was not precise on the degree of danger the colonies faced. But he did consider that attacks upon the capital cities by powerful squadrons of armoured vessels were as likely as the landing of troops in sufficient numbers to capture towns the size of Newcastle. He also dwelt upon the perilous isolation of Western Australia and Port Darwin. Only a field force of some 30,000 to 40,000 men capable of rapid concentration, he argued, could thwart desperate enterprises and maintain colonial confidence in times of crisis.

To meet a graver danger than ever before contemplated Edwards drew a distinction between passive and active defence. Garrison troops composed of efficient regular troops aided by the militia and volunteers would defend the capitals and key ports in the traditional fashion. Field forces composed of militia regiments, under unified command, were to oppose
large raiding parties landed at some distance from the towns and to prevent invasion by an expeditionary army. Each unit was to be kept at low strength in peace and expanded in war. To this end, men could be easily inducted from local rifle companies and rifle clubs. But to create an effective reserve, he warned, Australians must consider "whether every man on attaining the age of 18 or 20 should not be compelled to join a rifle company".¹

There were of course many difficulties to be removed. Railways had to be built and organizations made uniform. A common defence act had to be passed by all the colonies to allow the use of their forces beyond their own borders. Common discipline had to be achieved. Different rates of pay had to be settled, the amount of training demanded of each soldier in return differed in each colony. Above all, the colonies had to agree to act in concord.

But did Australia stand in sufficient danger to justify such a large military force? If it did, then assurances from Whitehall that the Royal Navy would protect the Empire from territorial aggression were dangerously misleading. If it did not, then any statesman would find difficulty in justifying a force of the size needed for efficient military preparations. Therein lay the dilemma to be faced by subsequent commanders.

As was very probably the case with Kitchener two decades later, Major-General Edwards could justify his recommendations by referring to his confidential brief from the War Office. He had been instructed to assess the readiness of colonial troops "for employment in joint operations or in purely local defence" and to discover whether colonial governments would pass military legislation so that their units could operate abroad under the Army Act. For, the War Office thought, the time would soon approach when the colonies "conscious of their power and the interests at stake, may be disinclined to await attack after war shall have broken out (and) will initiate such operations as may make the Enemies of the Empire in the Pacific and China Seas and Indian Ocean look after their own possessions".² In other words the federal army was strategically justified
only if it was conceived as part of an imperial reserve.

The federationists claimed responsibility for Australian security. They had been provided with a project for naval defence by Admiral Tryon. The terms of this had been settled in London. Now Bevan Edwards had presented general principles of military defence. The virtues and faults of these could best be examined by Australians.

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In his famous speech at Tenterfield on the 24th of October 1889, Sir Henry Parkes used Edwards' report to emphasize the necessity for federation. Only by federation, he was to insist in many an oration, could Australia's security be maintained. Great Britain, France, Russia and Germany confronted each other in Asia. Japan was modernizing its society. The industrious and numerous Chinese, once blessed by Western civilization and the arts of war, would become Australia's certain enemy. These Asian hordes would not be content with the bombardment of the capitals. They would invade the North-Western section of the continent. They could not be dislodged. Worse, from there they would infiltrate the rest of Australia! Nor could honour and patriotism be neglected. National control over national forces was essential - Australians belonged to the one country and would soon owe their allegiance to one government.

Defence, however, remained merely the occasion for Parkes' campaign. It was not the cause of the success of the federation movement, nor at any time was it a major issue in the colonial legislatures or the federation conventions. At the 1891 convention the first concern of the delegates was the suffrage and the powers of each house of the federal parliament. Discussion of the defence issue was sparodic and brief.

Yet there was an interesting difference between the Victorians in favour of federation and the New South Welshmen who opposed it.
Alfred Deakin, supported by other Victorians, insisted that there should be only a small standing army and that reliance should be placed on the citizen-soldier, upon a federal force of militia and volunteers. But George Dibbs of New South Wales insisted that Australia should depend on the Royal Navy. A standing army would be costly. It would introduce a spirit of militarism. It could open the way for despotism. If Australia was invaded, Dibbs declared in faint echo of Thomson, the population would rise as one to protect their freedom. The best measures for local defence were, therefore, to inculcate patriotism and a fierce devotion to liberty; to provide a reservoir of riflemen; to train school children who, in return for free education, should be obliged to undergo military training.

At the time Dibbs' stand was seen as purely obstructive. Yet it is possible to perceive more than bombast in his espousal of a nation in arms. The call for compulsory training was most often to be heard in New South Wales where conservative military influence was strongest. Protectionist though he was, Dibbs may well have been suggesting a correlation between a central government with limited powers, moderate tariff policies, and an unpaid and hastily improvised army, rather than an expensive regular force. A standing army or a militia and volunteer force - on the Victorian model - of any size called for great government expense, to be met in part by customs revenue and centralized control. Perhaps William Morris Hughes - the future Mahdi of a mass army - had perceived a similar correlation.

Nevertheless, these were differences in emphasis. For there was a remarkable consensus of opinion that the regular army of the federal government should be small and that the military defence of Australia should rest on the citizen-soldier. The direction of policy was clear. Federal forces were to be used primarily, if not solely, for defence.

Once the convention became concerned with the main business of constitution-making Parkes' resolution on defence was passed without dissent. The federal army, it was later decided, would possess the power to protect every state against invasion and domestic violence.
At the 1898 convention clauses of the constitution were considered one at a time. Again defence caused very little comment. Alfred Deakin, with the support of C.C. Kingston of South Australia, did, however, return to the problem that had caused misgivings in New South Wales. What were to be the powers of the Governor-General over Australian armed forces?

Deakin insisted that the constitution should provide for the regulation of the services by the Governor-General in Council, that is by the Executive Council. In this way the federal government would have full control and there would be no margin of authority given to the Governor-General solely as the Queen's representative. Barton and other delegates from New South Wales successfully resisted Deakin's attempts to amend the constitution on this point. Apart from the advantages of acting in accord with existing constitutional principles, they argued, it was essential that direction of military affairs — particularly in the field of discipline — must be free from political interference.

What sphere of interests would the federal forces be called upon to defend? Did they have to defend all interests in Australian waters? If so, how could that sphere be defined? The discussion at the convention was inconclusive.

And what of naval defence? Random suggestions for an Australian navy indicated an ill-articulated hope, not a cogent policy. The reason for this doubtless lay in the success of the Naval Agreement of 1887 and the provision of a fixed piece of the Royal Naval shield under whose protection the federation movement flourished. Colonial patriotism and colonial jealousies were too strong, and colonial treasuries too poor for the consideration of national naval defence. At the 1891 convention, Free-traders and the representatives of the less populous states, who had most to lose if a central government took control of tariffs, argued for dependence upon the Royal Navy. References to an Australian navy were few and expressed distant hopes for forces able to protect ports.
Nevertheless, beyond the formal arenas of the colonial legislatures and the federal conventions George Reid, the Premier of New South Wales, strove to explore and implement the more acceptable aspects of Bevan Edwards' report and, to this end, convened a series of military conferences for the commandants of each Australian colony.

By 1896 the officers had drawn up a cogent scheme for the defence of Australia and drafted a federal defence agreement for ratification by all governments. Yet Reid's efforts to achieve common policies and legislation "during the inevitable interval between the present time and the completion of the Federal design" were thwarted. Though his failure belongs to the history of federation, the findings of the military conferences have a wider significance. They provided the basis for the first Commonwealth Defence Bill in 1901. Moreover, some of the military officers — above all, Major-General E.T.H. Hutton — who met at Reid's bidding were later to play major roles in shaping national defence.

Despite alarm expressed in the New South Wales legislature, the advice of these conferences was not in any sense militaristic. It was professionally sound, competent, and thorough. Though the representatives seemed convinced of the need for federation and federal defence, each was aware of the sentiments and supremacy of his civil superiors. Moreover, the commandants, doubtless aware of the political and military excesses of Bevan Edwards referred their findings to the Colonial Defence Committee for authoritative support and advice. This they received. As a consequence, the strategic basis for federal defence was orthodox. Raids from French and Russian forces operating singly or in alliance from Pacific bases were postulated as the probable danger. There was, therefore, little that was new in the assumptions of the schemes fashioned by the conferences.

The formation of a field force the officers believed essential. But it had to be much smaller than Edwards had envisaged. After providing two federal garrisons for the defence of King George's Sound and Thursday Island and leaving some 9,000 citizen-soldiers for garrison duties, the
conferences decided that the federal field force was to have a peacetime establishment of some 7,300 officers and men. It was to be expanded in time of war to a strength of 12,200. Since Australia's population then numbered only some 4,400,000 and the nation seemed less likely, than any other part of the Empire, to have to face aggression, an army of this size satisfied both political aspirations and prudent strategic assessments.

Lack of sufficient manpower to create units in peace and expand them in war was then and later to be of concern. The conferences decided that the federal scheme would rest in the first instance upon a system of voluntary recruitment. However, the officers recommended a principle already incorporated in the Queensland Defence Acts: that every Australian male could be called upon to bear arms in times of grave emergency. Furthermore, there was provision in times of crisis - and presumably peace - for military quotas to be maintained by a ballot system if voluntary recruitment failed to attract sufficient numbers. The inescapable obligation to serve a nation in arms during times of emergency was woven into assumptions of federal defence.

The question of pay was similarly fraught with political and social issues. The conferences decided to make the pay of all militia privates equal to the minimum rate for an unskilled labourer - six shillings a day. From this difficulties arose. Mobilization of the field forces would cost the colonial governments a fortune. Friction would result between permanent and citizen-soldiers from disparate pay; and, on the same grounds, it would be difficult for Australian units to serve with the British Army. The solution lay in a system of deferred pay. Thereby it was hoped federal action and Imperial cooperation could be achieved without friction.

Not even in such matters as training, drill, and discipline could the conferences avoid political issues. Following the wishes of his civilian superior, C.C. Kingston, Brigadier J.M. Gordon from South Australia exhorted his colleagues to simplify infantry drill. Defence of Australia
in the absence of a threat of invasion would rest; he declared, upon some form of guerrilla fighting. No marching kit was necessary. Elementary drill, simple weapons, cheap uniforms, and casual training were enough. This faint echo of the call made by men like Thomson was rejected. Military opinion stood firmly against guerrilla warfare by untrained hordes. Such a course might be cheap or in accord with some popular ideas, but, it had been argued, it was most dangerous. Quite apart from the indecisive nature of irregular warfare, Australians would not wish the shooting of hostages, the reprisals, and the laying waste of towns that inevitably accompanied it. It was rejected on this occasion on other grounds: the standards of training should not fall below that set by the Imperial government for its own forces.

On one matter the conferences were adamant. Whatever system of military discipline the various governments might deem best for their troops, once the federal forces were mobilized they would operate under the British Army Act of 1881 and the Queen's Regulations. This was considered essential for an efficient federal army. It would also be convenient when Australian forces again acted in concert with the British Army.

The technical discussion of the most suitable weapon for the militia revealed different assessments of the quality of Australian troops. The issue before the federal military conferences was the uniformity and interchangeability of weapons within Australia and within the Empire. Hutton felt Australians should possess the best possible weapon of the day - the Lee-Metford magazine rifle.* This, he said, was used by English volunteer forces; Australians could easily master it. The representatives of Victoria and South Australia were equally convinced that their militiamen and volunteers would be unable to handle any complex weapon. It was therefore decided that wherever possible to convert the .45" single-loading Martini-Henry rifle. The resulting weapon, the Martini-Metford, would have a calibre of .303" but would retain the single-loading, falling-block

* For technical details see notes to this Chapter.
breech mechanism. As obedient agents of their parsimonious and cautious colonial governments, the military officers - Hutton excepted - were willing to countenance an obsolete weapon.

They did, however, address themselves to problems of greater moment to the federationists: the control and coordination of all forces. To whom would the Commander-in-Chief be responsible? In the final draft of the proposed federal defence agreement provision was made for the formation of a Council of Defence composed of two delegates from each of the two senior colonies and one from each of the others. Hutton argued successfully that the Council should not merely be a military institution. It should possess the direct advice of an Australian naval officer on local harbour defence and, after more informal consultations, receive the recommendations of the Royal Naval officer in command of the Australian Auxiliary Squadron, without whom it would be impossible to make strategical assessments. This ensured not only information about enemy movements, sea traffic, and the defence of ports, but the provision of transport for Australian troops to give them strategic mobility where railways could not and naval advice about the direction of any campaign the federal army might be called on to fight. In time "of war, imminent National Emergency, or Great Danger, so declared by proclamation" the Council would take full control. Then it could call, mobilize, equip, and finance the federal army, distribute it at will after consultation with the General Officer Commanding, and demobilize the troops only when it thought fit.

Who would control the Council of Defence? Would all colonial interests be satisfied? How could finance be raised? If the Council, as envisaged, called for reinforcements, would not that infringe colonial autonomy? Such questions were posed inferentially by the opponents of federation and by the Victorians suspicious of Reid. They were left unanswered.

Throughout most of the period under consideration little politico-strategic thinking was done by Australian politicians. In part
this was the result of inexperience. In part it flowed from dependence on the Royal Navy and geographical distance from the centres of military power. In part it was justified by suspicion at possible involvement in Imperial wars. In part, it was restrained by that tenet of the Gladstonian doctrine which compelled the colonies to pay for all wars they might provoke. Yet, the Victorian government had contemplated in 1887 the use of its forces to forestall the French in the New Hebrides; and the dream of Australian hegemony over the South-West Pacific remained an important strand in political thought and nationalist posturing. Hostility to Imperialism apart then, there were sufficient reasons to consider the sphere of interests in which Australian arms might be legitimately and effectively used to preserve — or to gain — national interests. Military men thought in such terms, and made suggestions. Whenever they did so, their advice was either ignored or condemned by politicians.

The advice of the federal military conferences was no exception. On a matter of central importance — the definition of Australia's sphere of interest, which the army might be called upon to defend — the soldiers could expect little direction from their civilian superiors and had to intrude upon policy. The first military conference of 1894 defined an area 110° E. to 170° E. and 0° S. to 50° S. The citizen-soldiers of the federal forces could therefore be called upon to conduct operations in the Eastern sector of the Dutch East Indies, Southern New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, New Caledonia and the New Hebrides, as well as in the Australian colonies. Under Hutton's influence the second conference increased this area from 110° E. to 180° E. and 0° S. to 50° S. The Australian sphere of interest was now to include most of the Dutch East Indies, all of New Guinea, the Bismarck Archipelago, the Gilbert, Ellice, and Fiji Islands, and all of New Zealand. It was among Australia's vital interests, went the implicit argument, to deny any enemy the continued use of bases of operation within its sphere of interest.*

* See Map No. 1.
Such actions might well have involved cooperation with the British Army. This raised the problem of colonial participation in imperial wars. The solution offered by the conferences was simple and effective. Australian troops were not to be ordered to serve outside the area defined. But any part of the citizen forces, either groups of men or whole units, could volunteer for service overseas under provisions similar to the British Militia Act of 1882. As we shall see, while this became an important feature of the British territorial system, it was successfully resisted in the Commonwealth parliament. The escape clause envisaged by Hutton for those men who wished to serve both Queen and country in any crisis was effectively sealed by radicals who remained suspicious of Imperial involvement.

It was not this sensible, realistic, and yet politically dangerous foray into policy that prevented the acceptance of the federal defence agreement laboriously drafted by the conferences. It was the nature of federationist politics. Crown Law officers of New South Wales were given the unenviable task of drawing up a bill for their government which was to serve as a model for all others. Tasmania remained interested and enthusiastic. South Australia passed an act calling for universal service in a grave emergency and allowing its troops to serve anywhere in Australia; but there its efforts ceased. Queensland remained content in the knowledge that the Colonial Defence Committee had presented its defence legislation as the interim model for the other colonies; but its premier remained hostile to the scheme. Western Australia held that the notion of federal defence was unreal until the construction of a transcontinental railway. The Victorian government adamantly refused to vote the $20,000 per annum necessary for the scheme. It felt that the ear-marking of troops for federal service would be impolitic and would create friction and ill-feeling in the services; it suspected that the selection by ballot for national service would be found repugnant, but no less so than service of Victorians under the Army Act; it rejected a Council of Defence which had the power to send Australians to Africa or India without reference to an Australian legislature; it was even reluctant to convert its rifles to the Martini-Henry type. Above all, it feared that implementation of the scheme
would divert the federal movement from the desired course — the acceptance of the Constitution Bill and the provision of defence under a Commonwealth parliament.

So the military officers called together by Reid, despite a general review of their proposals by the colonial premiers in 1897, were to see little immediate return for their labours. Some of them were, however, able to see the embodiment in Commonwealth legislation of some aspects of Bevan Edwards' project which they had tailored for the federationists.

* * *

Forty years of discussion of the problems of security and Imperial relations were to leave their mark after 1901. In the prolonged debate over defence policy and Australia's role in the Empire all the views represented had roots deep in the nineteenth century.

From the separationists came the conviction that Australian defences should be self-sufficient, and that the continent could be defended by hastily enlisted patriotic citizens who, trained briefly in the use of the rifle, would form a mass army. Nationalism would be manifest in the nation-in-arms, in forces that could not be readily employed to fight Imperial wars. While Australians could hold off the invader by threat of guerrilla warfare from the interior, a coastal force of torpedo boats would beat off the lone commerce raiders. It too would have little concern for the large responsibilities of Imperial defence.

The neutralist solution proposed by Gavan Duffy continued in a form that military planners could ignore only at their peril. The dual loyalty to King and country that none denied by 1900 made it imperative that Australians decide how far they would cooperate with Great Britain in the light of the justice of the conflict in which she was engaged.
Australians might be independent Australian-Britons, but they were Australians first and Britons afterwards.

For the latter-day Imperial federationist the doctrine of national self-reliance was anathema. They had stressed the importance of the Royal Naval shield to Australia, the continuance of contributions to the Admiralty, and the need for an expeditionary force to serve with the British Army in the defence of the Empire. Their less ardent followers could admit both the need and appeal of these measures yet insist on adequate self-defence as a prerequisite.

The solution found by the federationists was neither permanent nor doctrinaire. It called for a constant examination of national aspirations and the imperial policies that might help their realization. As federalists they contemplated the perpetuation of colonial defence policies after 1901. As nationalists, they looked forward to solutions in some ways similar to those who believed in national self-sufficiency — yet with reservations. For as Imperialists, they were also concerned with security of the Empire, and had experienced the benefits of dependence and cooperation with Great Britain. They could look forward to a national army of citizen-soldiers for the defence of Australia and at the same time consider the military programme offered by the Imperial federationists. For they could despatch an Australian army to fight in an Imperial war so long as their control over the forces was not in jeopardy during peacetime and so long as they were not committed to a fixed course of action by prior agreement. They had also learnt that naval protection could be hired from the Admiralty. They knew this could involve them in Imperial defence. But they also wished to see a national navy. Such a goal, they realized, could only be fully achieved with the approval and the assistance of the British government. Active cooperation with Great Britain, they knew, might prove necessary; the autonomy of the Australian government had to be preserved.

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That the attitudes of the eighties had changed became clear at the turn of the century. During the Colonial Conference of 1897 the premiers strove to define the nation's role in the Empire. During the South African War Australians displayed a fervent attachment to the British world. Each in their way marked the conversion of political and public opinion to the stand adopted by the federationists.

Even so, it left them with lingering doubts. As parliamentarians of the Commonwealth they were to wonder whether the premiers had been concerned too little, and the public too much, with commitment to Empire.
CHAPTER THREE

COMMITMENT TO EMPIRE: CONFLICT AND CONFLICT (1897-1901)

Under our present relations we have a weight (in the British world) beyond anything we deserve.... The influence of the Colonies upon public opinion in England, considering what we contribute towards the cost of the Empire, I think is marvellously out of proportion.

GEORGE REID, June 1897.

(The) struggle today is not a struggle between the Boers and Great Britain, urged on by a coterie of land-grabbers headed by Cecil Rhodes, but the struggle has reached such an acute stage that it is a matter of national existence - whether the prestige of the British Empire is to be sullied and to suffer humiliation in South Africa at the hands of its traditional enemies on the continent who, when they find her in difficulties, may make a dash for her possessions.

SENIOR DAWSON, 20 December 1899.

(Our) only warship, the Protector, is preparing to start for China with our gallant soldiers to assist in restoring order among the excited Mongolians, who are reported to be trying to murder all the European residents. We feel that, should the sad necessity arise, our Jack Tars will be found as ready and daring as our soldier boys have shown themselves in defence of Queen and Empire.

"UNCLE JACK" in the Children's Hour, August 1900.

The Greater Britons of the South are proud of the land from which they sprang; their pride in Imperialism is as high as that of England itself. The readiness with which Australians responded to the call to arms for South Africa is the proof.

The AGE, 27 February 1903.
To the splendour and pageantry of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee came the premiers of the self-governing colonies. This was not only a time for a new generation of Englishmen to venerate their sovereign. It was the occasion for proud review. Great Britain might stand alone in Europe facing the alliance between France and Russia and the sabre-rattling of the German Emperor. But never had her might been greater. Never had sentiment bound the men of self-governing Greater Britain more closely to the Crown. Never had the resources of India and the smaller dependencies been considered with such profound satisfaction. Truly, London stood at the centre of the British world and a great Empire. If the spirit of the celebrations for the Queen in 1887 had seemed royal and nation-wide, that of 1897 was manifestly Imperial.¹

All this the colonial premiers saw, and they were greatly pleased. They also acknowledged that their pleasure was to a great degree due to the efforts of one man—Joseph Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for the Colonies.²

As their host, Chamberlain was responsible for the prominence they enjoyed. They were feted and honoured. The bearing of their military contingents in the procession to St. Paul's Cathedral was acclaimed. They were seated with members of Lord Salisbury's Cabinet so that they might the better see the royal progress. They were presented to the Queen. They were made Privy Councillors. They were provided with a special yacht to observe the awesome parade of British naval strength. They were dined. Duly they swelled the flood of rhetoric, expressing loyalty to Crown and Empire. They felt the force and persuasion of the desire for Imperial unity. In 1887 the representatives of the self-governing colonies were expected, in the view of Alfred Deakin, to be overawed, respectful and subservient. In 1897 it was as if Chamberlain wished to impress the premiers not merely with the majesty of Empire but with the role they played in its destiny.³
As Secretary of State for the Colonies, Chamberlain was the man to solve those local problems concerning the Empire. The Australian colonies desired to pass legislation excluding coloured aliens, irrespective of British treaties with foreign countries and the susceptibilities of the Indian government. They, like New Zealand, were deeply concerned at the success of foreign powers in the islands of the South-West Pacific and at the loss of British predominance in Samoa and the New Hebrides. Some of them, like Canada, wished to pursue their own tariff policies unfettered by the most favoured nation treaties England had signed with European nations. Clearly such issues impinged upon Imperial policy. Wherever possible, the desires of the premiers were accommodated with characteristic vigour.  

As a devotee of Imperial unity, Chamberlain wished to discuss plans to found relations between Great Britain and the self-governing colonies upon more than existing constitutional arrangements and sentiment. Inspired by colonial support for the Crown during the crises of 1896, he had declared:

To organize an Empire - one may almost say to create an Empire - greater and more potent for (the) peace and civilization of the world than history has ever known - that is a dream if you like, but a dream of which no man need be ashamed.  

The first step towards making the dream a reality was to create a British Zollverein with free trade between all parts of the Empire and with duties imposed by the several parts on foreign products only. A common defence policy leading thus to a change in political relations and perhaps proceeding to some form of Imperial federation, Chamberlain believed, rested on a uniform commercial programme.  

As a politician, Chamberlain was quick to perceive that this vision, no matter how desirable in itself, called for almost impossible sacrifices by the colonial governments, each of which had long pursued tariff policies to suit its own interests. What, then, if the concept of an Imperial Zollverein proved unacceptable, would the premiers consider a system of tariff preference? What would they demand in return?
With these questions in mind Chamberlain invited the premiers to meet informally at the Colonial Office. Those from the Australian colonies were thus compelled to face the problem of Imperial unity and the solutions Chamberlain had in mind. They were obliged, therefore, to summarize the attitudes of their colleagues and their electors towards the main aspects of the programme previously expounded by the Imperial federationists in Australia. In the spheres of commerce, political relations, and defence they had to consider the role their colonies, and the future federated Australia, could play in the Empire.

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First in seniority and acumen among the Australians was George Reid, Premier of New South Wales. The rotund, genial, and much-caricatured Reid had held that position since 1894 with the support of the Labour Party. A wonderful platform orator, his capacity for judging the tenor of public opinion had been much sharpened by that alliance. Though born in Scotland, he had come to New South Wales as a young child and there his interests and first loyalties lay. Contemporaries often argued that Reid's only interest in politics was to keep in power. He was, however, an astute political radical. At the time of the Conference he supported the federation movement in Australia. So, on all but tariff policy - for Reid was a free-trader - he proved an excellent spokesman for prevailing Australian nationalism. 8

Next in seniority, but by no means in acumen, was Sir George Turner, Premier of Victoria since 1894. He valued himself as a straightforward man of business and it was he who was given the task of reducing expenditure for the Victorian government during the crises of the early nineties. He tended to consider each proposal in politics and defence from the point of view of cost. The epitome of the shrewd and cautious colonial politician, he had taken a minor part in the federation movement and was later to be Federal Treasurer from 1901-1904. From that position he was to exercise great influence on Commonwealth defence policy. 9
"First in seniority and acumen ..."

"... shrewd and cautious ..."
Of different temper was C.C. Kingston, Premier of South Australia from 1893 to 1899, later to be Minister of Trade and Customs in the first federal parliament. By conviction Kingston was a democrat prepared to pursue radical policies. Acute and quick-tempered, he stood out as a spokesman for Australian nationalism.

So, too, did Sir John Forrest, surveyor, explorer, and Premier of Western Australia for more than a decade. Though born in Western Australia and educated in Perth, Forrest held in esteem all things British. This has led some historians into believing that Forrest was an Imperialist with insufficient sympathy for Australian aspirations. His behaviour at this Conference and his actions as Minister of Defence for the Commonwealth Government from 1901 to 1903 belie this claim. He was not an active policy-maker, nor a progressive administrator, nor even an astute or lucid speaker. But he knew the temper of his fellow Western Australians and of federal parliament, and attempted, as a minister, to act in accord with it. Like his more prominent colleagues, Forrest had attended the federal conventions of the nineties.¹⁰

Neither Chamberlain nor his proposals could easily overawe such men. Each was sharply aware of his own interests and most had grasped that conference was a means of furthering them. On this occasion their confidence was reinforced by Chamberlain's manner. He had expressed the desire for a frank and informal meeting. As chairman, he displayed sympathy and quick understanding of colonial views and seemed more prepared to provoke discussion than to guide it.

* Imperial sentiment, Chamberlain argued, needed the support of material considerations. A common trading policy was essential. He made no secret of his belief that free trade within the Empire was best for

* Though Sir E.N.C. Braddon of Tasmania and Sir Hugh Nelson of Queensland were to differ slightly from the others, their contributions are of little consequence for this work.
everybody. Nevertheless, he acknowledged that it was impractical for the colonies to consider at this stage an Imperial Zollverein of the German kind because of the different tariff policies they had pursued. They might, however, raise their tariffs on foreign goods, leaving duty only for revenue purposes on British products. Sir George Turner's terse exposition of the protectionist policy of Victoria, and the probable resistance of vested interests, ruled out this course of action. Chamberlain was quick to let the matter drop. There remained the possibility that the colonies could pursue their own tariff policies while giving British trade a decided preference, as Canada had done. If the colonies felt they must have tariff autonomy, Chamberlain said, then the people of Great Britain would be "... much touched and gratified if they were of their own free will to offer us some preference".11

What would the colonies get in return? Not enough, the Australians decided, after listening to Chamberlain at length. Sir John Forrest put the colonial view plainly. Kingston explained that distinct advantages could result only from reciprocal tariff arrangements. Such a step Great Britain could not consider. A common trading policy was not achieved. In the discussion of commercial relations it was obvious that the premiers considered Imperial autarky far less important than the freedom needed for local development.12

This proved also to be true of political relations. Chamberlain remarked that the concept of Imperial federation had been widely discussed in Great Britain. Its realisation, he felt, would only come very gradually. But a beginning could be made. There was, he insisted, "a real necessity for better machinery of consultation".13 Whatever form this machinery took, he warned, the greater the steps towards allowing the colonies a share in the management of the Empire, the greater would be their obligation to contribute money.14

Richard Seddon of New Zealand was more impressed than any other by Chamberlain's proposal. The Australians, especially Reid, demolished it. He protested that no practical scheme had been put before the premiers.
Until imperial visionaries could present a practical proposal, which would not endanger colonial self-government, the imperial connection had better rest on sentiment and conference. Matters were most satisfactory as they stood. In the process of expounding Kingston's assertion that no desire for a change in political relations was to be found in the colonies, Reid gave an accurate statement of Australian attitudes to Empire, and a warning:

The test of our relations, I submit, will be the next war in which England is engaged. She is not likely ever to be engaged in an unrighteous war or in an aggressive war. If engaged in a defensive war you would find that sentiment would determine everything. Our money would come; our men would come; but you require some national emergency to show that ... (it) is only in those moments that you can make the people one in a sense of sacrifice. They are accustomed in the Colonies to mind their own affairs; they are accustomed to imperial defence without paying for it, and it has crystallized almost that relationship .... (The) present relations have produced an Empire, and a state of things within that Empire which is not paralleled ... in history ... Now it is no light thing to change those relations, and the onus, I say, is tremendous upon those who wish to. 15

Only in one significant respect was Reid's portrait not accurate. During the South African War Australians came to the aid of the Empire without any apparent pause to consider whether the war was just or unjust. Even so, until public demand for participation rose to a clamour Reid was to argue that the war was unjust and unworthy of Australian commitment.

Kingston drove home the final shaft of Reid's argument. Would the British government, he asked, be prepared to accept equal representation in an imperial parliament for all parts of the self-governing Empire, irrespective of population? In short, would Australia have the same weight as Great Britain? Answered Chamberlain: "I should say certainly not ... I think that would be clearly impossible." Retorted Kingston: "Better be as we are." 16

For the Australian premiers, imperial federation was a dead issue. They rejected larger schemes of imperial organization; they found in regular conferences the means of settling issues of common and imperial concern. The political attitudes bearing on defence problems carried no
longer any hint of separation or neutrality. Australians might be passively neutral in an unjust Imperial war; they would be actively belligerent in a just conflict. Sentiment was their foundation stone, not a Zollverein or an Imperial council. They therefore saw no contradiction between the pursuit of their local interests, the aspirations of Australian nationalism, and the desire for the unity of Greater Britain - so long as colonial autonomy was not endangered and no Imperial obligation pre-determined. 17

It remained to apply these sentiments to the particular problems of naval and military policy.

In his opening speech Chamberlain had sketched the dangers he thought might face the self-governing colonies. Canada, he predicted, could have conflicting interests with Japan, Russia and the United States. War, in all of these cases, was not uniformly probable, he admitted, but the Dominion might be compelled to make concessions if it were not for the might of the Imperial Navy. Likewise, Australia was threatened by a conflict of interests with European powers in the South-West Pacific; and it was quite possible for difficulties to arise - possibly from immigration policy - with Japan and China. Against these alarming prospects could be set the Imperial Navy that protected this portion of the outlying Empire.

In this spirit he recalled the parade of the Royal Navy that the premiers had just seen, a demonstration of might that Great Britain was compelled to maintain only because of the protection of Imperial interests and Imperial trade. All wars of the nineteenth century in which Great Britain had been involved, he suggested, had been for colonial interests. The interests of Great Britain had not been a prime consideration. Therefore, all had a common interest in maintaining the might of the Royal Navy. It behoved the self-governing colonies to pay financial contributions for its upkeep, the more so if the colonies aspired to partnership in the management of Empire. He instanced the Naval Agreement of 1887 with the Australasian colonies as a model for a system of contributions. 18
His choice of model was unfortunate and he made a tactical error in allowing discussion of the Agreement to proceed before the presentation of the larger scheme. Captain L.A. Beaumont, the Director of Naval Intelligence and a permanent member of the Colonial Defence Committee, was left, with neither Admiralty brief nor ministerial direction on the other issue, to address himself critically to the working of the 1887 Agreement. 19

He deplored the restrictions placed on Admiralty control over the vessels of the Australian Auxiliary Squadron. Under the Agreement that squadron was to remain within Australian waters and could only be used outside them in time of war with the permission of the colonies. Furthermore, the Australian colonies, he argued, looked upon particular vessels of the squadron as a means of local defence in its most restricted sense— that is for the defence of the harbours of capital cities. If the commonly accepted principle of this Agreement were extended, the consequence would be to split up squadrons and to destroy their use in times of war. Moreover, in peace, the Australian Auxiliary Squadron, hitherto restricted to coastal waters, was needed to fulfil the duties of the Australian Station which extended far into the Western Pacific. Chamberlain put the matter succinctly:

(The) interests of the Australasian Colonies are very great in those islands in the Pacific ... We have interfered again and again, and we are likely possibly to be called upon to interfere in the future, in order to secure those islands, and other islands ... as part of the future inheritance of Australia. Therefore ... the fleet which is called the Australasian Fleet should at all events be permitted to visit all the islands in which those interests exist. 20

The Australian premiers agreed that such a course of action was possible and just. In short, the colonies had some responsibility to uphold Australian–Imperial interests in the South–West Pacific. 21

But the Admiralty wanted more than that: it desired full strategic control over all its vessels in peace and war. Though for many decades the strength of the Royal Navy had been distributed to various stations throughout the world where Admirals were responsible for a
particular sphere of interest and though the Australian Auxiliary Squadron was created in accord with this practice and theories of coastal defence prevalent in the eighties, the Admiralty was reasserting its right to concentrate all fighting vessels at will.* The mere mention of the doctrine of fleet concentration by Beaumont and Chamberlain was enough to evoke protest from the Australian premiers. 22

Reid drew a clear distinction between Australian defence and Imperial defence. Insofar as the Australian Auxiliary Squadron was posted on the Australian coast under agreement it was part of an Australian defence system and should be only of peripheral concern for the Admiralty. It was viewed as the "outer line of local defence"—quite independent "altogether of Imperial naval defence of the (Empire) as a whole". 23 Australian politicians, therefore, could not allow the concentrations of this squadron in distant seas either in times of peace or war. Neither their colleagues nor their electors would tolerate such a stand. In another illuminating and realistic exposition of the Australian attitude to Empire in which both parsimony and sentiment were involved, he put the case thus:

In committee of supply in Australia there is an intensely critical and narrow local spirit at all times ... It does not perhaps fully reflect the opinion of the population, but it prevails. It is quite consistent that those very people, if war threatened, would be ready to vote any amount and go by the thousand to fight for the old country; but the Australians have two different feelings.

* Early in 1897, for instance, at the alarm expressed over the increase of Russian naval strength in the Far East the Admiralty had decided to make arrangements for the concentration of vessels of the Australian, China, and East Indian Stations. This was fully in accord with the doctrine of fleet concentration which postulated that the Royal Navy, by assembling its battle fleets and cruiser squadrons at decisive points, would compel the enemy to concentrate his strength lest his ships be destroyed piecemeal. Concentration, it was later clearly argued, would thus protect the colonies from attack by large armoured forces. However, the doctrine was not yet in the ascendancy though its prominence had been augured.
See below Chapter VII.
When it comes to business he is as keen a hand as you can deal with; when it comes to the patriotism on the platform, he is most gushing, and you have to reckon with him in those two ways; but when it comes to a time of action he is up to his form, and will be ready to make good all his demonstrations of loyalty; but it is very difficult to get him to take up this partnership with the British Empire, which is a gigantic concern in view of the fact that in most Colonies their financial position ... has been strained, especially of late years ...

(If) Sir George, for instance, or Mr. Kingston ... were to propose £50,000 as a contribution towards the Imperial fleet ... we should be met with a tremendous outburst, I am afraid, that would do more harm than good, that would cast a slur on the feelings which prevail. 24

Mr. Goschen, the First Lord of the Admiralty, tried to soothe the Australians. While ready to welcome any direct and unconditional colonial contribution towards the Imperial Navy as a symbol of political cohesion, he promised that the government would be willing to continue the Naval Agreement of 1887 and that the Admiralty would find no administrative difficulty in keeping the Australian Auxiliary Squadron on the Australian coast. More reassuring was his statement of strategic principles. No large organized expedition, he stated, could be despatched from Japan, United States or France without the Admiralty knowing of it and meeting the threat aggressively by the concentration of its forces on the high seas. Neither principle nor practice, Goschen hastened to add, meant that the Australian Auxiliary Squadron would be withdrawn from Australian waters. That Squadron had been provided to protect floating commerce in a particular zone and there it would remain.

By this forthright statement Goschen put an end to Australian fears. He did, however, object very strongly to the prevailing view that ships of the Squadron should be used primarily for harbour defence, and that in times of danger, they should be parcellled out for the protection of the capital cities. The Admiralty demanded full control of all vessels in the Squadron within the zone to which they had been allotted. Just as the ports of England, he argued, were to be protected by the concentration of local
naval defence forces in coastal waters, so the Australian Auxiliary Squadron must be able to assemble as a unit in times of danger on any point on the Australian coast.25

The Australian premiers were not only relieved. They were satisfied.* Along with Seddon of New Zealand, they formally resolved that the Agreement should continue along the lines Beaumont and Goschen had finally recommended. It was characteristic of this Conference — indeed a microcosm of Australian relations within Greater Britain during the turn of the century — that the views they expounded should be accommodated.26

In the process much had been clarified. The Australian premiers had felt compelled to summarize both colonial and national views on naval defence. They had made it clear that the Naval Agreement of 1887 was a bargain from which they received adequate protection for the lowest possible sum. The Australian Auxiliary Squadron must remain in their coastal waters and not be used to reinforce the main fleet. It was an essential part of their local defence. Furthermore, they conceived naval protection only in terms of local squadrons ready to defend harbours and the coast-wise shipping routes. Even though the Squadron was freed to uphold British-Australian influence in the South-West Pacific, imperial interests on the high seas, whether mercantile or territorial, were not their concern in peacetime. Neither politically nor financially could they afford to be interested in such matters. It followed that Australia would not contribute to the maintenance of the Imperial fleet. The naval defence of the Empire was the responsibility of Great Britain. Then, as later, the most fruitful discussion of the relations between political attitudes and defence occurred in committee, not amid the rhetorical posturing in parliament.

* The only dissentient was Kingston, who had produced a memorandum calling for the formation of a Royal Naval reserve in Australia. The colonies, he suggested, ought to provide men rather than money for the piece of the Royal Naval shield guaranteed by the Naval Agreement. The issue had not, however, been discussed with his colleagues or the problems it presented considered. It was an isolated suggestion which we will examine more closely later. See below Chapter VIII.
The premiers had also expressed the views of the federation movement. In 1897 there were complaints that the hiring of fleets was unmanly, that the Australian nation should be responsible for all its defence, and that the Agreement involved taxation of colonists without representation in the Imperial government. Nevertheless, the campaign in Australia for a national navy had not yet taken a coherent shape. Nor did its champions wield any significant political influence. Partly through severe limitation of finance and partly through the experience of the Naval Agreement, the federalists were to see no dishonour in hiring a squadron. The clash between federalist and nationalist naval policies was yet to come. So, as we shall see, was a collision between the strategy enumerated by Goschen when he admitted that the seas could be divided into zones within which squadrons of the Royal Navy would be stationed to protect floating trade and harbours, and the doctrine of fleet concentration which assumed that the Admiralty had full control over all its naval strength.

The discussion of military problems avoided large Imperial issues. In the main the premiers were invited to consider details of organization. No agreement was arrived at; but important matters were traversed. It was tentatively suggested that the colonies might provide men for the wars of the Empire. Great stress was laid upon the benefits of cooperation between the forces of adjoining colonies that might federate in the near future. Self-sufficiency and the capability for self-defence were given a prominence that was to be perpetuated by the Commonwealth in all its military planning, especially after 1905. Even so, the discussion revealed great ignorance of military matters and suspicion of military men on the part of the Australian premiers. Only Reid faced even the more general problems of federal military defence.

The general principles of colonial military policy, as seen by the War Office, had been expounded in numerous memoranda from the Colonial Defence Committee. They were thought to be well-known. But to ensure a common basis for discussion the premiers were each given a copy of a memorandum drawn up by the Colonial Defence Committee in 1896.
After restating the reasons why the colonies should maintain fixed defences at major ports to counter enemy cruisers and units of militia to deal with raiding parties, the document broached the subject of field forces. Where the land frontiers of adjoining colonies were great, went the argument, and federation was possible or imminent - such as in South Africa and Australia - every move must be made for mutual support by common legislation, uniform arms, common military law and regulations, and common organization. Only thus could field forces for effective defence come into being. The document then stressed the importance of defence rather than offence as the principal role of the colonial forces. It did so with commendable insight into colonial problems:

Doubtless a time will come when the increasing strength and resources of the self-governing Colonies will enable them to materially assist the mother country, by placing at her disposal for operations in any quarter of the globe bodies of troops formed from the excellent material of strong, self-reliant colonists, but at present the development of their own vast resources in times of peace, and the effective protection of them in time of war, is undoubtedly the best contribution the Colonies can offer to Imperial defence.

Yet the Colonial Defence Committee did not envisage a policy of passive belligerency on the part of the colonies, nor neglect of their responsibilities in Imperial military defence. The document concluded:

To this, however, there is an important exception. England may be engaged in the future, as she has frequently been in the past, in a war which carries with it no danger of attack on the Colonies. In such a case the offer of assistance from them would be prized, as it has been on more than one occasion, not only for its real value, but also as evidence of that solidarity on which the greatness of the British Empire must ultimately rest. 28

This was an invitation and a hope. The colonies were not being pressed into providing any kind of formal Imperial military reserve. Too much had to be done within the colonies before that could be considered.

Neither the Committee in its tentative phrasing nor Chamberlain in his grandiloquent appeal for an interchange of military units so that all could share "in the dangers and the glories of the British army",
had suggested that any Imperial war could be unjust. The issue was
understandably not discussed. Instead the premiers were invited to consider,
one by one, the more detailed recommendations of the Colonial Defence
Committee.29

Would the colonies accept the principle of interchangeability for
military units? Once appropriate legislation for overseas service was passed
and each section of the Empire had contracted to pay its own forces, it was
suggested, there should be no difficulty in launching the scheme. Apart from
the fares no extra costs need be involved. Reid and Sir Hugh Nelson, the
Premier of Queensland, were quite agreeable to the proposal.* So, too, was
Laurier of Canada. Turner, concerned at possible expense, wished to defer
the matter until the Australian premiers met early in 1898. So the proposal,
though by no means abhorrent in principle to the premiers, was left to
colonial initiative.30

Would the Australians press ahead with the scheme of federal
defence on the lines proposed by their military commandants in 1894 and
1896 before the achievement of federation? Would all the other colonies
follow the example of South Australia and Queensland in this respect and
legislate to allow Australians to serve outside their particular colonies
for the defence of the British nation? Reid was the only man present who
acknowledged the need for common legislation and common organization to
produce a federal army rather than an untrained rabble. The other premiers,
despite the reports of the commandants, had plainly not thought about the
issue. Kingston, himself a one-time volunteer soldier, displayed a suspicion
of things military and hostility towards Reid's previous forays into
federal military policy. Australians should not allow, he insisted,
the formulation of military plans without the strictest governmental
control. There should be no federal force until there was a federal
government. This project was also shelved. Cooperation for defence

* New South Wales did send a group of militiamen from the New South Wales
Lancers for training in Aldershot in late 1898. No other Australian
colony appears to have taken advantage of the offer. Members of the
Lancers were in Britain when the Boer War began.
between federationists stopped short at the Australian Auxiliary Squadron and the defence of Thursday Island and King George's Sound, both of which were accomplished under the aegis of the British government. 

Would the premiers accept the need for uniform military law and regulations throughout the Empire? This question had profound implications. Common military law was essential for the induction of colonial military units in the British army. Some Australian nationalists, particularly the radicals from Victoria, felt that their sturdy and independent troops should not be asked to suffer the unmanly servility nor be subject to the harsh punishments they thought resulted from service under the British Army Act and the Queen's Regulations. Most of their troops were citizen-soldiers, members of militia and volunteer units. They therefore had pressed for modifications in British military law. Such objections were given point when Australians were punished severely or shot by the command of British officers during the South African War. The premiers were asked on this occasion merely to agree in general to the principle and take what action they thought fit. Only Laurier and Turner expressed vague approval.

Would the colonies agree to a uniformity of arms and equipment? In Australia the guns of fixed defences were of various makes, calibres, and degrees of obsolescence. The same applied to small arms. The premiers of the Australian colonies had agreed in March 1896 to the principle of uniformity of arms. They were now told that the British government would soon offer new small arms at reduced prices. Canada was refitting its forces with a Lee-Enfield magazine rifle. Australia could at least convert its single-loading Martini-Henry rifle into a Martini-Enfield rifle and thus change the calibre to .303. However, the Australian premiers, like the others, wished to wait until a positive offer was made to them by the British government.

Would the colonies ensure their self-sufficiency in times of war by developing their own ammunition plants? In 1896 the Australian premiers had expressed a desire to establish a cordite factory. At the time they had
to depend upon a private firm in Victoria, the Colonial Ammunition Factory, and the importation of war-like stores. With their desire the Committee had heartily agreed. Yet on this occasion no such measure was approved. Turner’s response was characteristic: how could the colonies establish such a factory with their meagre resources? Only Reid pressed for a factory like Canada’s. 34

Would the colonies improve the education open to volunteers, militiamen, cadets, and members of the permanent forces? Would the Australasian colonies found a military school on the same lines as Kingston Military College in Canada? Again it was only Reid who was enthusiastic. The reluctance of the other Australian premiers indicated once again that they left military matters to military committees but took little notice of their recommendations. 35

Consideration of naval defence had at least produced agreement on the extension of the area of service of the Australian Auxiliary Squadron and satisfaction by the premiers in the continuation of the Naval Agreement. Consideration of military problems had produced nothing. Nevertheless, the exchanges of opinion were of some use. Once the Boer War had begun, one of many justifications for Australian participation by the despatch of contingents was that the premiers had arrived at a tacit agreement in 1897. This was not true. But the success of the Colonial Conference of 1897 must have played some part in getting the Australian colonies ready to commit themselves to the British cause.

One more matter deserves our attention. It seems strange that George Reid, noted by historians for his ambivalence towards the Australian federation movement, should have grasped so quickly the principles of federal military defence and urged them on his colleagues so insistently. He had of course his own reasons and was aided by men like Major-General Hutton, who as General Officer Commanding the Military Forces of Australia after 1901 attempted to solve the problems the premiers had so readily dismissed. Nevertheless, Reid would have made
an excellent Minister for Defence for the Commonwealth. Defence policy in his hands would have been direct and forceful and substantially different in some respects.

*

So it was that the pomp and circumstance of the Jubilee did not overawe the Australian premiers. Nor were they beguiled by the vision of organized Empire. Cordial relations with Great Britain they wished to preserve; the freedom to fashion life after their own design they jealously guarded. Colonial autonomy and Imperial unity they felt had been achieved. Both would be perpetuated by sentiment and by consultation through such media as regular conference. Confronted by Chamberlain's schemes, they looked beyond immediate issues to dominant Australian attitudes. Some of the views expressed were colonial; others more nationalist; all reflected various strands in the federation movement. They drew a sharp distinction between the interests of a nation soon to be united and the difficulties of closer formal relations within Greater Britain. Of these the first was the more important. On this understanding, there was no conflict, it seemed, between nationalism and Imperialism and few difficulties that admitted no solution.

In the realms of both policy and attitudes there had come to pass a great change since the eighties, a change which was to guide defence policy in federal parliament - but not before its assumptions had been vindicated in Imperial wars.

* * *
The Jamieson Raid had already introduced many Australians to the problems brewing in South Africa. Colonial response was at first ambivalent: wrongs existed on both sides but the British had blundered. Faith in the democratic rights of the Uitlanders was so balanced against the suspicion that Whitehall held insufficient respect for local autonomy that the Boers emerged as people to be admired for their sturdy independence and simple virtues. Yet once the Kruger telegram had been publicized and Jamieson feted in London, ambivalence and suspicion faded. In support for the British cause lay the seeds of a minor crusade. Colonial attitudes towards the later conflict were those of 1896 compounded and intensified.36

From May 1899 until the outbreak of hostilities in October colonial parliaments followed, not led, the public demand for participation in Imperial war. Admiration for the Boer cause was undermined by resolutions of support for the Uitlanders, by condemnations of Krugerism, and by the growing conviction that nowhere within the Empire - nor outside it - should British superiority be questioned. There was no doubt about who should be paramount in South Africa. On the 16th of May, the Age growled:

It never occurs to the Boer that if he had the right to take the land from the natives in the interests of a semi-barbarous settlement, Great Britain has the same right to supersede the Boer in the interests of higher civilization. 37

Scenting battle, both professional and citizen troops offered their services as soldiers of the Queen and some premiers informed Chamberlain of the spirit aroused in their colonies. By early September, supporting Milner to the hilt, the Age, like most other daily papers, had decided that war was inevitable. Had not the Boers challenged the military prestige of Britain? Did they not act - albeit with great efficiency - as if Britons could be defeated?

In their ignorance and folly the Boers think they can .... the present troubles therefore ... can only be removed by blood-letting. 38

Many were already convinced that Australians should assist in this crude surgery. Men had volunteered; war fever was mounting; white feathers were ready for distribution.
Despite agitation at home and appeals from the Uitlander Council abroad, George Reid had, from July 1899, attempted to restrain his fellow premiers. While Kingston suggested direct military assistance or the despatch of the Auxiliary Squadron, Reid, in the midst of an election, maintained that expressions of sympathy for the oppressed British in South Africa would be a sufficient gesture of solidarity. He did, however, agree in August to a conference of military commandants. Chamberlain had already intimated that the War Office would accept the offers of colonial units of 125 men which could be integrated in the British Army. The commandants were adamant that a complete Australian regiment, drawn from all colonies and commanded by Australians, should be sent as a symbol of a nation soon to be federated — if the premiers would agree upon cooperative action. All seemed to await the lead of the senior colony. Reid, however, lost the election without answering the questions that continued to worry him: Was the approaching war just? Did financial interests and the treatment of the Boer states point to an immorality Australians should not condone? His successor, one whit less dubious, sought the comment of Lord Milner who replied that the war "might ... be in a small degree a capitalist's war; but it was also much more. It involves the union or disruption of the Empire." In this spirit, the New South Wales government promised to participate. But no united Australian military contribution was to be made; each colony was to follow its own Imperial destiny. For, impatient at Reid's restraint, Queensland had offered a contingent as Chamberlain had recommended on the 10th of July — three months before the outbreak of war.

During the disasters of November–December 1899 colonial opinion was consolidated. Thereafter, Milner's stance was elevated into the simple proposition enunciated by Edmund Barton: The Empire, right or wrong! The failure of British arms and fear of European intervention justified the enthusiastic acts of those who had committed their governments without parliamentary approval. They and their supporters exulted in Anglo-Saxon superiority, suggested that the nation could not realize its destiny without blood, argued that Australians were fighting a war of secession, and held that their support for Great Britain demonstrated
BRITISH OFFICER : AUSTRALIAN OFFICER

"... a sense of national identity ..."
N.S.W. Lancers acting as mounted infantry, covering the retirement of the 9th Lancers at the Battle of Belmont, November 1899.

"... in bush-craft and initiative the future nationalization of the rifle."
the solidarity of Empire. The silken bonds of Greater Britain were as light as gossamer — but as strong as steel. Others pointed with pride to the colonial contingents arriving in South Africa and the calibre of native-born troops. War correspondents saw in the resourceful Australian citizen-soldier all the heroic qualities lacking in the British. Out of this grew, slowly, a sense of national identity. The occasional pause to pay tribute to the equality of Australian sacrifice irrespective of state often seemed to presage the unity that federation promised. Divisive forces proved more potent. Colonial rivalry and jealousy had led each government and each capital to outvie the other in expressions of loyalty writ large in action. Nor were they all content with involvement in South Africa where Roberts and Kitchener had been cast in Homeric mould by the daily press and children's magazines. The South Australian coastal cruiser, the Protector, was despatched to uphold the integrity of Empire in the Boer Rebellion. These enthusiasms — Imperial loyalty, national pride, and national identity — and these excesses — Imperial fervour, national chauvinism, and internal rivalry — the colonies passed on to the Commonwealth.

The defeats of November—December 1899 also assisted those who had initially opposed colonial intervention. Appealing to Parkes' stand on the Soudan campaign, Labour members in each parliament, assisted by radicals like H.B. Higgins of Victoria, had denounced the suppression of Boer independence by a malevolent British government largely interested in upholding the interests of corporations on the Rand, denied the claims for British paramountcy, dismissed Imperial fervour as drunken jingoism, and pronounced the war unnecessary, immoral, and unjust. The golden bonds of Empire were as heavy as chains — and as strong as capitalist influence on Whitehall. The opponents did not lack stirring phrases and passionate argument. They lacked an indigenous set of ideas to make the fervent pause; and they lacked support. Within a week resistance had collapsed, most recanted and claimed that Britain and the Empire might now be in sufficient danger to justify a demonstration of Imperial unity. Like nearly all Labour politicians seeking election in federal parliament, W.M. Hughes followed somewhat this course; almost alone among the Liberals,
H.B. Higgins did not. Others remained reserved; they also remained guarded. Such was the fear of unpopularity and the calumny in the charge of disloyalty that lone figures like Cardinal Moran and Professor Wood were left to protest. They did so increasingly in the terms used by Campbell-Bannerman. Yet even this temperate opposition appealing directly to English Liberal tradition was of little avail. The anti-war league these men had formed distributed a petition: only 1,206 signatures were collected. So it was that among the politicians to enter federal parliament were the lone men who resisted and the few who remained reserved. There they were to review their strength and their stand.

A notable victim of this widespread impulse to war was the Bulletin. Foremost among the opponents of intervention, its circulation figures dropped disastrously. Not even a partial admission that those who thought the cause just had a right to fight restored popularity. Then, when a special appeal was made to bushmen so that units could be raised from the best Australian stock, the Bulletin felt once more on firm ground. No bona fide settler, no stereotype of national virtue would volunteer for service as a "Cohentinger". Confidentially, it predicted:

... the bulk of Australian bushmen, ready enough to fight in the defence of Australia, would know themselves disgraced if they permitted themselves to be exported to shoot Boers or any other race fighting for their own country - their Australia - against syndicates and politicians. 40

But the bushmen came in their thousands, and continued until the declaration of peace to demand the right to serve as soldiers of the Queen. The Bulletin was compelled to conduct a rearguard action declaring that they were city men giving false occupations, that they were economic conscripts seeking bread through service, and that the colonial governments were ready to use Imperial money to employ the unemployed. Finally, it shielded its views behind reprints of English "pro-Boer" propaganda. Thus was the prime nationalist newspaper compelled to re-examine the assumptions of the eighties. Thus did it slowly acknowledge that national sentiment was somehow inextricably interwoven with Imperial fervour - an apparent paradox that Reid and his colleagues thought they had solved in
1897, that Richard Jebb was to explore in his *Colonial Nationalism*, and that Alfred Deakin sought to enrich after 1905.

In all some 16,000 Australians served with the British forces in South Africa. Why did they volunteer? Would they do so again for home defence or Imperial service? What did their response involve for future military policy? Many contemporaries gave short confident answers: Loyalty! Yes! Everything! A few perceptive observers were, however, more reserved.

Three general reasons, they suggested, could be given for this response to the call to arms. Many miners had spoken openly of the need to assist their mates on the Rand; other men talked vaguely of the British cause; more mentioned the excitement in each of the capitals which had led to full-throated celebration at their departure and random accusations of cowardice at those left behind; a few touched on their families' veneration of the Queen. A few officers had examined the causes of the conflict; more spoke of the need to represent Australian federation in the British world; many dwelled upon the potency of colonial rivalry - and made sure they would be attached to British, not other Australian, units. Whatever the term meant, then, "a sentimental feeling of patriotism" was clearly involved. As important was the lure of adventure and the promise of settlement in South Africa - or recognition by colonial governments on return from the wars. The depression and droughts of the nineties had not only kept many men single but led to restless wandering for work and for other opportunities. Colonial borders had been no barrier for this erratic migration, nor had the seas between Australia, New Zealand, South Africa - and even Hong Kong. If some had been "economic conscripts" as the Bulletin had argued, most were in search of far more than bread. The legend of Breaker Morant - which will be presently examined - demonstrated one aspect of this. Conflict on the veldt became for many a romp; for some it did satisfy a sense of adventure; but only a few were allowed to take the land grants Milner had offered. The third general reason offered lay in the need that many felt to escape the boredom and the onerous conditions of the honest labour so many politicians praised. This was
particularly evident in the elder sons of farming families who saw no prospects for themselves and were untouched by the golden myths of the bona fide settler. Equally untouched by the great Australian democratic experiment were thousands of clerks. One military officer who had organized the despatch of eighty groups of men from Melbourne later concluded that such had been the failure of the states to fulfil their vague promises and such had been the effect of the Commonwealth decision to dissuade Australian settlement in South Africa that the response to another Imperial war in 1903 "would have been very different". Nevertheless, even he acknowledged that men would serve in the Australian peacetime citizen forces - if they were well-paid; that thousands would again volunteer for Imperial campaigns - if the conditions of service were clarified; and that most would rush to arms to defend their country - if it was really in danger. 41

The response of 1899 had also led many contemporaries to believe that the problem of military resources for federal defence had been solved. And although no systematic record was kept, many were impressed by the rapidly broadening social base of improvised units organized for the later contingents. Peacetime regiments included between eight and twenty percent skilled or semi-skilled workers depending on locality. In general all were led by citizen officers with careers in the professions, commerce, the land, and the civil service. The first contingents, small in size, had been drawn from these sources and from the permanent forces. Yet within a month of the outbreak of hostilities larger contingents were being organized from unmarried volunteers with no military experience whose only qualifications were a high level of physical fitness and the ability to ride and shoot. In New South Wales, for instance, at least two-thirds of the 6,000 men who served overseas had had no contact with the military forces at the time of their enlistment. The most fragmentary evidence suggests that the composition of this second wave of volunteers may have resembled the following pattern:
Professional ... ... ... ... 8%
Small Business ... ... ... ... 5%
Artisans ... ... ... ... 30%
Clerks ... ... ... ... 15%
Farmers ... ... ... ... 23%
Skilled, Semi-Skilled Workers ... 5%
Labourers ... ... ... ... 5%
Soldiers and Policemen ... ... 9%

Other evidence suggests that of the two major groups, "farmers" were often the first sons, not land holders in their own right, and that the "artisans" were very often craftsmen in the country towns or those who had, within one generation, shifted to the cities. Later contingents, particularly the bushmen units, included a higher proportion of workmen who gave as their occupation: "miner"; "boundary-rider"; "shearer"; or "bushman". The Age was among the first to draw one lesson for the future. It saw in bushcraft and initiative on the veldt the future nationalization of the automatic rifle. A national army could be improvised within a month of the declaration of an emergency:

The Australian levies which went to the war were raw from the plough, the desk, the cattle-run. Yet with instinct, the spirit of individual initiative, and a few weeks of drill they formed a body of soldiers equal to anything that Lord Roberts ever commanded ... 42

Others went further, and began to hope that the national army of the future would include all classes and not be marked by the exclusiveness of the colonial regiments. But the prime military problem was clearly to devise a scheme which would satisfy both the Age and the incipient nationalists without leading to chaos and improvisation in time of war - and which would ensure forces more effective than those sent to South Africa.

For the efficiency of those "Australian levies" had often been obscured from contemporaries by the decorous eulogies of British commanders. It was obscured further by the attachment, division, and capricious regrouping of small colonial units in the huge and often incoherent British military machine. That Australians, both trained and untrained, were able to display considerable potential as fighting troops there was no doubt. The action of the trained men at Diamond Hill and the untrained at Elands River demonstrated that the colonials could fight valiantly under
British direction or from fixed positions. There was more doubt about their ability for independent action in fluid warfare. During the first phases of the war they had played very little part. When Australians claimed Poplar Grove and Paardeburg in their battle honours, they had in fact fought in very small units playing subsidiary roles. Though later contingents were larger, it was the practice to place them on the lines of communication to enforce discipline and improve military efficiency. This was followed by patrol work, usually in quiet areas. And when they were committed to battle, it usually was in pursuit of a retreating enemy. The deduction that Australian troops could do battle on their own, especially against a professionally trained enemy, was not at any time justified.

War, as Clausewitz had observed, is not a continual act of violence. It was this that many Australians found difficult to understand and to tolerate. Combat in the open against an unseen enemy was often an excitingly unreal experience; skirmishes were sudden and shortly over; but the waiting, the incessant drives against Boer commandos, and the trials of guerrilla warfare - nearly always under British direction - revealed weaknesses in colonial fighting material. Australian officers were often deprived of experience in strategy, tactics, regimental administration, and responsibilities for large bodies of troops. Many left Australia inexperienced and returned untested. Like their men, they often smarted under the treatment of British superiors, especially as they were left the menial task of discovering the appropriate means of training and disciplining the inexperienced troops in their care. And this, particularly in the later phases of the war, they found difficult. The number of courts martial rose alarmingly. Insubordination of a serious nature and neglect of duty indicated how inefficient Australians could be as soldiers and how low their morale could become when faced with the varied stresses of war. Riot, looting, and the intimidation of civilians amply justified the myth of the wild colonial boys. Romanticism obscured the immediate problem of how such men could best be trained as efficient and reliable soldiers in the military forces of the new Commonwealth.
As Prime Minister responsible for national policy, Edmund Barton had soon to face the political problems of colonial intervention. As first General Officer Commanding the Commonwealth Military Forces, Major-General Hutton returned to Australia to solve federal military problems in the light of experience in the Boer War.
PART TWO

FEDERALIST DEFENCE POLICY: TRADITIONAL SOLUTIONS

1901 - 1905

This continent has naturally many varied and conflicting interests. Its artificial subdivision has built up many rivalries, local hostilities and petty prejudices that still remain to be overcome. It is a mistake to regard our constitutional partnership as practically operative .... At present it is only a legal contract. We have remitted our problems to Parliament unsolved, and our antipathies unweakened, imposing on the Government and the two Chambers the real task of nation-making.

ALFRED DEAKIN, June 1901.
The conflict between colonialists and nationalists in the federation movement had been observed by John Quick and Robert Garran. They realized that the conflict must continue in the first years of the Commonwealth. The states would strive to preserve their rights and influence; the central government would seek to establish its authority and identity. This interplay of centrifugal and centripetal tendencies had been provided for in the federalist and nationalist features of the constitution. Yet the business of the central government, they implied, was the pursuit of national policies. Any legal and static distinction between federal and national would not last. The constitution was best seen as a living and evolving organism.

For some years the national principles may be weak and dormant – the occasion may not rise to call them into marked activity (they predicted). But the energy will be there, and in the fullness of time, when the opportunity comes, the nation will arise alike a bridegroom coming forth from his chamber ... 1

No conflict with the states need then arise. For the citizens of Australia would throb with new life and yield "to the irresistible pressure of nationhood". 2

Alfred Deakin saw the same future for the Commonwealth. The central government, he stated, was to be no "mere departmental arrangement for the purpose of placing under one control the management of three important (colonial) departments which affect the internal intercourse, inter-communication and the general defence of Australia ... Federation did much more than merely establish a central administrative body". 3 The real task of the Commonwealth was to create a nation, one and undivided. 4

In another sense the Commonwealth had to establish its authority and identity. The states were reluctant to see an end of their status in the Empire. They vainly insisted that their communications with the Colonial Office go direct to London and not through the Governor-General as Joseph Chamberlain, Alfred Deakin, and Edmund Barton wished. As late
as 1906 they claimed the right to send separate representatives to the Imperial Conference. In dealing with such matters Deakin was to claim paramountcy for the Commonwealth and eventually complete authority to deal with every subject of "Imperial or extra-Australian" interest. Not only did the central government have to stand supreme within Australia. The stature of nationhood in the British world had to be secured by the Commonwealth.

When the first parliament met all this lay ahead. The first task was to establish a central administrative body. The second task was to launch those few nationalist policies on which there was agreement. Alfred Deakin saw the challenge clearly: the constitutional partnership wrought by the federationists was merely a legal contract. It had yet to operate.

Defence policy reflected these broad issues. A series of acts were contemplated to change the centre of authority and allow the amalgamation of colonial policies. Settled policies and practice were not to be disturbed. Defence planning was to be federalist in substance. It was to fulfil the promise of the federation movement. It was to be in accord with colonial experience. It was not to upset local loyalties. It was not to deprive the states of their due share of the revenue collected by the Commonwealth.

The foundations of Australian defence for the next decade were laid in the first year of federation when such considerations were uppermost in the minds of policy-makers. Their success in meeting the dictates of federalist policy and the requirements of national security was to be ignored in the following period of innovation.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE FOUNDATIONS OF POLICY: FEDERAL PARLIAMENT IN 1901

There is considerable sensitiveness on the part of the several States of the Commonwealth, and I have no desire to tread on their toes...

EDMUND BARTON, before the Colonial Conference, July 1902.

This Bill is not for today—it is for all time.

SIR JOHN FORREST, on the First Defence Bill, July 1901.

No country can provide against every remote contingency which may be suggested. Reasonable probabilities, rather than possibilities form the ultimate basis of war preparations of every great Power.

COLONIAL DEFENCE COMMITTEE, June 1890.
The first parliament was an august body. Of the seventy-five members of the lower House only seventeen had no previous political experience. Fourteen had attended the federal conventions; twenty-two had been either premiers or ministers of the Crown. The senators of the upper House had been expressly elected to watch over state rights. Undoubtedly such men drew from their colonial experience.

There was also no doubt that the first Protectionist ministry led by Edmund Barton and Alfred Deakin would be sensitive to criticism. Even with the conditional support of the Labour Party under J.C. Watson, the government would not be certain of victory on the crucial issue — the tariff — over George Reid's Free-traders. That the Protectionists drew most of their strength from Victoria while most Free-traders came from New South Wales did much to continue intercolonial rivalry. Defence policy, no less than other legislation, was to bear the mark of the tussle between these two senior colonies. Furthermore, there existed a group of radical-nationalists drawn from all parties who, in the fluid political circumstances and with the full support of Labour, could vote against Barton on Imperial and defence issues. Such was the uncertain balance of power that Deakin informed the Prime Minister, Edmund Barton, who was in London for the Colonial Conference of 1902: "It will be extra-ordinary if we survive this session; but by the time you receive this the cable will have informed you of what we are only speculating about."³

Accordingly, Barton assured the House before his departure that no new policy would be adopted without full parliamentary approval, and in a confidential minute he nearly bound himself to the pursuit of none without prior consultation with parliament. After giving life to the constitution by passing essential legislative machinery, Barton's ministry would concentrate upon domestic reform. Duly, it planned to provide only for "an adequate Defence Force ..."⁹. There was to be no major innovation. With this Watson, the leader of the Labour Party, agreed.¹⁰
The most important step in domestic reform was the tariff. Yet, even when that was settled, Commonwealth expenditure was severely limited; and the states were given ample opportunity to examine the action of the central government. Under Section 87 of the constitution three-fourths of the net revenue from the only taxes the Commonwealth imposed—customs and excise duties—were to be returned to the states until 1911. Furthermore, for the first five years the Commonwealth had to return to the states, month by month, the payments due to them. Because some high-tariff states might receive far less from the lower duties to be imposed by the central government, Sir George Turner, the first Federal Treasurer, felt compelled to return to them more than their constitutional share of the revenue. He also steadfastly opposed government borrowing. Sensitivity to state rights almost to the point of inaction; economy almost to the point of poverty—these, Barton explained to the Colonial Conference at considerable length, were his burdens.11

No aspect of policy could escape such considerations—least of all defence. The limit on federal defences suggested by the conventions was £750,000. This figure seems to have been based on colonial expenditure, not on the need to equip and organize forces for national defence. Even so, from 1898 the expenditure in the colonies had risen from £710,000 to £890,000. Of this, £106,000 a year was paid to the British government for the services of the Australian Auxiliary Squadron. The first Commonwealth estimates of 1901–1902 presented by the Minister for Defence, Sir John Forrest, were about £940,000.12

This prospect was enough to cause a furor in parliament. With the willing support of Free-traders and radicals, Watson successfully moved a resolution directing the Cabinet to reduce expenditure by £200,000. Apart from the naval subsidy, it was agreed, £500,000 to £600,000 was enough for federalist defence.13
## Defence Expenditure 1900–1906

<table>
<thead>
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<th>YEAR</th>
<th>Naval</th>
<th>Military</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under Ordinary Vote (including Naval Agreement)</td>
<td>Works, Weapons, etc.</td>
<td>Total</td>
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<tr>
<td>1900–1901</td>
<td>£ -</td>
<td>£ -</td>
<td>£ -</td>
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<tr>
<td>1901–1902</td>
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<td>1905–1906</td>
<td>259,273</td>
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Anticipating intense and personal opposition, Forrest promised at the outset to reduce the estimates by at least £100,000. Duly, the Defence Department was informed that the reduction was to be £131,000 and to be applied immediately. Military defences were not to exceed £600,000; the cost of the local Australian naval forces was not to exceed £40,000. Later, Forrest was to boast a reduction of £171,000.14

Lack of finance, then and later, was the most important single influence upon defence plans. National aspirations, Imperial predilections, and even the strategic thought of the politicians were affected. The figures opposite show that defence expenditure was gradually to increase. They also indicate the limit imposed by parliament. They do not show the troubles of defence planners, who were not to know from one quarter to the next what sums had been allotted to them. On the one hand they had to produce efficient forces with insufficient money; on the other, they had to be careful lest the reduction or disturbance of existing colonial forces create further political trouble.15

The demand for cheap defence was also the means by which the radicals sought to preserve civilian control over the armed forces. Suspicions of permanent soldiers - but particularly their officers - were compressed into the single term "militarism". By this radicals meant many things. They objected to the officer who lorded it over his fellow man. They protested against the conservative classes in society forming the backbone of some militia units. They were disgusted at an unmanly display of uniform, finery, and manners which seemed to symbolize the power of class, favour, and caste. They conjured up pictures of Prussianism in Australia. They feared that unwarranted expenditure on defence would prevent social reform. Some even described the public enthusiasm for the troops departing for South Africa as militarist.

For many these sentiments were allied with a dislike of war, with a vague kind of pacifism. King O'Malley of the Labour Party was the spokesman for such people. A government could not develop the country,
he protested, while the populace was being taxed to maintain a force of "non-producers, with their luxuries, gold braid, feathers and spurs". The nation should depend upon independent Australian man who, like the Boer under De Wet, would protect the capitals with improvised armies.

The only Labour member with a consistent military policy, W.M. Hughes, saw militarism as a threat to civil government and civil liberty. To rely upon permanent soldiers for the defence of the nation, he insisted, was unmanly, undemocratic, and dangerous. The only solution was to train and arm all citizens; the military caste would then be destroyed. His words must have evoked the feelings of men who remembered the facts — and the myths — of the use of troops during the shearing and maritime strikes. Others, among them H.B. Higgins, identified militarism with wars of reckless aggression, with glorification of bloodshed, or with Imperial expansion. The term "militarism" had wide currency. In a fine statement of Labour's demand for a defence policy of national self-reliance, Watson used the word to mean merely the maintenance of a military establishment of both permanent and citizen soldiers. Its usage reflected reservations about Imperial policy and expressed values essentially hostile to the professional soldier.

In the Australian political imagination the military future belonged to the amateurs. The twentieth century, stated the Age in 1901, would see neither peace nor the brotherhood of man. War in Asia or in Europe involving Great Britain was "at all times possible". This nationalist paper had led the Australian crusade against the Boers with jingoistic and full-blooded vigour. But the disasters of Black Week — and the later casualties among Australian troops — shook its faith in British might. The British military caste, the Age concluded, had proven to the world its tragic inadequacy. In the future Australians must draw, not from British experience, but from their own past, from the American Civil War and from the skill of the Boers. The future belonged to the nation in arms, to individual initiative, to the magazine rifle, to the citizen-soldier! The day of offensive operations was gone! This was the era when a defensive
posture led to impregnability, when amateurs were better than professionals, when citizens were more realistically non-aggressive than soldiers! The amateurs among the politicians agreed. J.W. McCay from the Free-traders, R.A. Crouch from the Protectionists, and W.M. Hughes from the Labour Party — men like these had experienced military service. Variousy they felt competent to voice criticism. They were in a position to affect policy. Variousy they did so. 19

It was often said in parliament that Australians would respond to the military — and every other — challenge in the exalted traditions of the British race which had built an Empire and brought civilization to the world. In restricting the entry of aliens into the nation nearly all politicians considered the preservation and elevation of that race. Immigration policy was the occasion for rejecting America as a model of social development and reasserting membership of the British world. It was also the occasion for restating the national demands for autonomy within the white Empire. Often a speaker would begin by attacking the interference of the Colonial Office and end by reasserting the value of the Imperial connection so long as it was in the form of an alliance which allowed full internal development. 20 The ideal of a White Australia was to prove a powerful agent in nationalist politics. It encouraged the consideration of national character. It helped differentiate Australian from English liberals, international socialists, English Imperialists, and dreamers of Anglo-Saxon unity. It was later to be a basic national interest demanding defence against the colourd nations of the North. 21

Contemplation of invasion was, however, premature. The Australian social and political experiment had to be conducted before it could be defended. In the meantime only a small band of Protectionist back-benchers expressed qualms about Japan and China. A few Free-traders expressly argued against such fears. Edmund Barton and W.M. Hughes saw France and Russia as the probable enemies of the Empire — and therefore the Commonwealth. Most politicians displayed no uneasiness about Australia's security. The federalist era was to see tentative reforms
in military policy, not great plans against a national enemy. The danger was still thought to come from traditional European sources as a result of the Imperial connection on a scale which the Royal Navy would minimize.  

National interests in the South-Western Pacific kept alive a concern about European intentions. South-Eastern New Guinea was to be controlled by the Commonwealth — once parliament voted the necessary money; there Australians confronted the Germans. Cabinet even mooted the possibility of gaining control of West New Guinea from the Dutch. The hope of seeing Australian influence spread to other island groups North and East was sustained by the competition between a politically influential Australian shipping firm and subsidized German and French lines. But the main source of worry lay in the New Hebrides. The leaders of each party as it came to power were to apply themselves to the problem of thwarting the French. In 1900 Henry Labouchere, the English liberal, thought the powers of the Commonwealth should be restricted to domestic affairs lest Australia embroil Britain in war in the Pacific. He need have had no fear. Cabinet was to countenance many measures to increase Australian influence in the New Hebrides but it did not consider the use of force. The Commonwealth lacked the means and the will to act in the sector which worried many politicians — except through courteous, firm, and constant pleading with Great Britain to effect its wishes. Australian policy, said Barton in 1901, would remain peaceful, limited, and inseparable from Imperial policy:

... (There) can be no such thing as a foreign policy of the Commonwealth. Foreign policy belongs to the Empire ... and we cannot affect that policy, as constitutional matters now stand, except by such representations as we can make to the centre of government ...  

Just as immigration restriction led not to centrifugal tendencies, but to reaffirmation of the unity of the British race, concern over the Pacific islands led to a conscious strengthening of Imperial links.
Those same links, parliament decided in 1901, could be utilized to advantage. The creation of a Commonwealth navy was deemed either unnecessary or "utterly beyond the bounds of realization". Australia must therefore not only depend upon the Royal Navy but retain its own section of the shield. The 1887 Naval Agreement was to be renewed. Edmund Barton and Sir John Forrest accepted this almost unanimous direction. Yet few other defence measures were to evoke the same storm of indignation as the resulting Naval Agreement Bill of 1903. Within two years the temper - if not the means - of parliament had changed. No other issue demonstrates so clearly how far defence planning depended upon the settlement of the fiscal issue or how far the Free-traders, in their demand for low tariff and cheap defence, insisted upon the perpetuation of colonial policies. No other shows how nationalist aspirations were gaining currency while federalist policy was being implemented.²⁵

That policy was to be inexpensive, non-militaristic, non-aggressive, non-controversial, founded upon colonial experience - drawing from the legacies of the federation movement, and eschewing innovation. The general dictates of the first parliament were clear. And until legislation was passed two years later its will and whims were to be felt. Within those limits, Sir John Forrest and his advisers were left to formulate cogent schemes. For more specific guidance he could refer to the scattered discussion over defence estimates and the detailed criticisms of his ill-fated Defence Bill of 1901.²⁶

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Forrest was the second of six Ministers for Defence in the federalist era. He held office far longer than any other and influenced policy more profoundly. Yet none served with greater misgiving and discomfort; and perhaps none was less appreciated by his contemporaries.²⁷
... his greatest strength lay in his apparent weakness ...
The basis of military legislation and naval policy for the period was clearly Forrest's responsibility. So low was defence in priority and so rich was the detailed recommendation of the nineties that Cabinet allowed him considerable latitude. With no institutional source of military advice he was able to draw on a wide range of opinion. When uncertain he could consult with Barton and depend upon the experienced assistance of Robert Collins, the Secretary of the Department of Defence, who had for a decade held an equivalent position in Victoria. In the sphere of naval defence - which we will examine closely in Chapter Seven - this arrangement was successful. His first submissions recommending the renewal of the Naval Agreement were lucid and comprehensive arguments drawn from radically conflicting views. There the issues were clear, the principles easily grasped, and the solution consonant with his attitude to Empire. Moreover, he was able to arrive at his conclusions confidentially, free from parliamentary scrutiny - the outcome was not revealed until after the Colonial Conference of 1902.28

The drafting of the first Defence Bill was a more tortuous process. Early in 1901 a committee of military commandants drew up a draft which assimilated the colonial acts and rested upon Queensland legislation, a course recommended by the Colonial Defence Committee, discussed at the Colonial Conference of 1897, and adopted by the Federal Military Conferences. Uneasy about the result, Forrest and Collins referred the matter to prominent citizen-soldiers and Victorian protectionists. At the same time representations were being made to Barton. To the drafts Forrest amended the military committee objected strongly. In all some six attempts were made before the hastily prepared bill was presented to parliament. It seemed to settle many issues.29

The final draft clearly established the supremacy of the Minister for Defence and Cabinet over the forces of the Commonwealth. Two officers responsible to the Minister and answerable to parliament in their annual reports were to be appointed: one to command the military and the other the naval forces of the Commonwealth. At the insistence of
the Victorians, a clause was inserted empowering the Commonwealth to build, acquire, arm, and maintain its own vessels. The military forces were divided into four categories: the active forces, comprising all permanent, militia, and volunteer units; the reserve forces; the rifle clubs; and the cadet corps. The states were converted into military districts each under the authority of a commandant. At Cabinet's insistence it was possible for both Imperial and Australian officers to rise to that position, and, further, the way was left open for militia officers to rise to the same high rank as permanent ones. Though the military committee was distressed at these last two features, its views on discipline were to prevail over the advice Forrest had solicited. All members of the defence forces were to serve under the Army Act in peace and war subject to changes the executive might make by regulation and to the proviso that no man would be liable to corporal punishment. No member could be sentenced to death except for mutiny, desertion, or treason and only then after confirmation by the Executive Council.30

Most Australian males could be subjected to military law. For the Commonwealth possessed the power to expand the active forces in "times of emergency" by the conscription of all men between the ages of eighteen and sixty years. A British subject who resided in Australia for six months was also liable to be called to arms by proclamation. Resistance involved penalties ranging from a fine of twenty pounds and imprisonment for two years. These provisions had caused Sargood and other Victorians who had offered comment considerable misgiving. But Forrest, Cabinet, and the military committee were agreed upon their importance.31

The military committee had also been adamant about the need to organize, in peacetime, units for overseas service. Forrest seems to have wavered on this point in the face of conflicting advice. Barton appears to have been more concerned with finding an acceptable political solution to a reasonable and long-standing military demand. In any event, the bill empowered the Commonwealth to send the permanent forces beyond Australia in times of emergency. Furthermore, the Executive Council could call out
all the active forces and the members of the rifle clubs – but not the cadets – for service "anywhere within the Commonwealth, and also without the Commonwealth for the defence thereof ...". They could be placed under the authority of the British regular forces, as the Australian naval forces could fall under the command of the Royal Navy. Individuals could also volunteer to serve in any special Australian unit raised to augment Imperial forces "or to occupy or to defend any place beyond the limits of the Commonwealth". But members of existing Commonwealth forces could be compelled to serve overseas for the defence of the Commonwealth; they could individually refuse to do so only if the operation was not in some sense a defensive one. Permanent and citizen-soldier units could, then, be trained and organized in peace to serve anywhere Cabinet might see fit. Individuals could avoid service only if the war was officially deemed to be offensive in nature. With the power to expand the active forces by conscription, the Commonwealth government could, by declaring a state of emergency, compel most Australian males to serve overseas.\textsuperscript{32}

On matters of broader principle the final draft of the bill was silent. What was the government's naval policy? How were the military forces, with which the bill was primarily concerned, to be used for defence? What was the government's defence policy? It was clear from Forrest's second reading speech of the 9th of July 1901 that neither he nor the Cabinet had faced these questions.\textsuperscript{33}

Parliamentarians were not impressed with his assertion that the measure would meet all present and future needs. Throughout July and August the second reading was prolonged. Awaiting more important issues to debate, one speaker after another declared defence to be the most important of issues and at leisure, often to a somnolent audience, listed their reservations. The most telling and acute attacks were conducted by the radicals and a handful of Free-traders, in the main Victorians. In all fifty-two amendments were proposed. During Forrest's absence Barton noted suggestions and sentiment. By September the Cabinet was willing to make substantial changes to the bill.\textsuperscript{34}
Many speakers did not share Forrest's guarded enthusiasm for the militia forces. They preferred to see volunteer rather than partially-paid units and the organization of rifle clubs rather than complete dependence upon either. Accordingly, the bill was altered to make the rifle clubs an integral part of the defence force financed by the government and in part controlled by their own representative council. Nor was parliament content with Forrest's assurances that control by the Executive Council was satisfactory. The power of the professional commanding officers and the authority of the Commonwealth to act through them was curtailed. A Council of Defence was to be formed which would consist of the General Officer Commanding the Commonwealth Military Forces, the Naval Officer Commanding, all district commandants, and two officers of the citizen forces. It would be responsible to the Minister who could be challenged in parliament on the basis of its reports. This body, it was suggested, would ensure that an inexperienced Minister could not be reduced to a nonentity by one masterful and tactful soldier, and that no central authority could unduly disturb the forces in each state. Forrest allowed a further amendment restricting the service of units of the citizen forces to the state in which they were raised, except in the event of emergency. While this precaution was consistent with a general territorial principle in raising troops and with the need not to unsettle citizen-soldiers, it betrayed also a suspicion of the national government.  

Objections to service under the Army Act were allowed. In peacetime it was not considered just to discipline Australians under British military law. The bill was amended so that permanent troops and citizen-soldiers on duty would be subject to the Commonwealth Defence Act and regulations. The punishment meted out by courts-martial was restricted to a maximum fine of fifty pounds or a sentence no longer than two years. Military tribunals were encouraged to fine or demote offenders rather than gaol them; the findings of all courts-martial, even at regimental level, had to be confirmed by the Executive Council. The discretionary power of commanding officers was also limited. Once an emergency had been declared these restrictions no longer applied. Then military personnel would be subject to the British Army Act and the King's Regulations. All naval
personnel when on board Royal Naval ships or on active duty fell under the Naval Discipline Act and Admiralty Instructions.\textsuperscript{36}

More distressing to parliament was the power held by the executive. Once a state of emergency had been proclaimed, observed the radical-liberal H.E. Higgins, men could be conscripted, Australians sent overseas against their wills for a cause in which they did not believe, citizens in uniform could be shot for disobeying their superiors, and district commandants could act against rioters and strikers on their own discretion. What, he asked, constituted an emergency? "War — where? It means 'invasion' — of what? It means 'national emergency' — what kind of national emergency?"\textsuperscript{37} Given the theory of military offensive to defend Australia and the extent of imperial commitments, a clash between Britain and Russia on the North-West frontier could result in conscripted expeditionary forces being sent to India. Every man, he said, had the right to volunteer to fight in a war he considered just; but no government should possess the power to compel a man against his conscience. While defended by the Royal Navy, Australia's ideal was peace. To realize this the government had to stay within the limits of the Constitution Act: an emergency must be defined as the actual or apprehended invasion of the Commonwealth. With fiery eloquence Higgins struck at the heart of the bill, revealed the absence of explicit policy, and embarked upon a painful struggle that was to be ultimately victorious. He also clarified the issues for J.C. Watson and gained the support of Labour parliamentarians. Other radicals were to follow suit. As one was to put it: "Essentially Australia is forming a defence force, not an army."\textsuperscript{38}

Could the government distinguish between those emergencies which involved Australia's security and interests and those which resulted from imperial policy and were therefore primarily the concern of the British government? Barton, Deakin, and Forrest had each cautiously indicated that the South-Western Pacific might legitimately be the Commonwealth's sphere of operations. But, as Barton had explained, Australian interests in that area could only be upheld by imperial policy. With the control of foreign policy went the responsibility for the direction of military
forces. Australian action abroad could only result from a decision in Whitehall. What, then, of participation in an Imperial war beyond Australia’s sphere of interests? Had the despatch of colonial forces to the Soudan, to Chinese waters, and to South Africa set a precedent for the Commonwealth? Insofar as Australians believed they belonged to the British nation they might, as in 1899, feel compelled to fight even if the danger was not imminent. Yet it was also clear that a conflict between British and European powers could constitute a clear and present danger to the Commonwealth. The definition of "national emergency" was a problem of policy, politics, and semantics which Cabinet had not yet faced. Soon it would be compelled to do so. Meanwhile, it was moved by the misgivings among its supporters.

For Forrest accepted many of Higgins' proposals. Emergency continued to be defined as "war, invasion, national emergency, or the proclamation of any danger thereof". Nor would Forrest allow deletion of the clauses empowering the Commonwealth to call all men to arms. But when Higgins, followed by Labour members, challenged the right of state commandants and local commanders to act on their own initiative — presumably against both surprise attack and civil disturbances including riots and strikes — Forrest deleted the clause. He also heeded Higgins' demand that the power of parliament over the executive be strengthened and that military operations be limited to Australian soil. The Executive Council was deprived of its wide discretionary powers. When the House was in session it could declare an emergency only after express and prior parliamentary approval. It could send no member of the defence forces — either permanent or citizen-soldier — beyond the limits of the Commonwealth, not even for its own defence, unless he "voluntarily agreed to do so". An emergency might still result from Imperial crises. Individual Australians might serve abroad. But Australian forces were to be for home defence.39

The most general criticism levelled at Forrest was his lack of policy and vision. Where was the complete reorganization of all military and naval forces "on a national basis" in accordance with the experience
of the Boers, the democratic traditions of the Swiss, and the obligation of the Commonwealth to defend the nation against invasion, bombardment, raid, and predatory commerce destroyers? What role would the Commonwealth play in naval protection? What was the function of all Commonwealth forces? With great vituperation W.M. Hughes, interested primarily in compulsory military training for all Australian males, posed these questions. He condemned the bill as "a jumble, a scissors and paste compilation — and a most unhappy one — of the provisions of the existing State Acts.éro Barton explained that the measure was a machinery bill which in no way could — or should — determine policy. Policy was for Cabinet to decide; the task of parliament was to present its views.éro The criticisms were nevertheless valid. Without a clear conception of existing or future policy, Forrest had presented an enabling bill. In response parliament had indicated what it would or would not allow. The whole discussion was without a solid basis. Naval defence Forrest had yet to consider closely; a military adviser had yet to be appointed. The measure was not passed. Even the amendments examined above were not formally debated. The Defence Bill barely reached the committee stage, was put to one side, and later withdrawn. The Commonwealth forces continued to be administered by the Defence Department under state legislation. The effect of discussion was to lay down further limitations and restrictions within which policy-makers could attempt to work. Until legislation was passed, the will of parliament would continue to be important.

The stance of Sir John Forrest ensured that. A member of the first ministry by virtue of his status as premier rather than any firm commitment to Protectionist policy, he accepted the portfolio of defence in the mistaken belief that it would be neither demanding nor controversial. He proved extremely sensitive to the criticism from radicals, who sneered at his love of England and attitude to Empire, and from those Free-traders with whom he had much in common. He repeatedly apologized for controlling such an expensive department. His attempts to placate his critics by reducing the estimates caused confusion. He frankly admitted his inexperience in military affairs, yet he was to make insufficient attempts
to understand the plans of his local naval and military advisers. 42

Yet, in viewing him as a weak, incompetent, and Imperialist Minister, his detractors failed to take measure of the man and his work. His inexperience was no greater than that of the majority of parliamentarians. Unlike them, he was in a position to learn. Not only was he nominally responsible for the Defence and Naval Agreement Acts of 1903 that remained the foundation of Australian defence until 1910. He was—as we shall see—to play an important role in moulding the naval arguments and limiting the military basis on which they rested. Perhaps his greatest strength lay in his apparent weakness, the discomfort he betrayed in the House during the first years. He was a faithful and diligent agent of parliament. It was no fault of his that its mood was gradually changing even as he translated its will into policy. 43

For all that, Forrest was no innovator. Nor was he expected to be. It was generally accepted that the Commonwealth could do little more than provide for garrison troops, field forces, and reserves, maintain the local naval forces it could afford, and purchase Royal Naval protection. Centralized control of the colonial forces and the renewal of the Naval Agreement had become the traditional solution to the problem of security.

It was a solution wholly in line with the traditional strategic advice of the Colonial Defence Committee.

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From the late eighties that body had provided recommendations and comment for the guidance of Australian government. After 1904 its authority, arising in part from the permanent membership of the directors of naval and military intelligence, was enhanced by its absorption into the Committee of Imperial Defence. Then known as the Overseas Defence Committee, it could report direct to the Dominions or to a full meeting of the Committee of Imperial Defence. Outside the province, but not the influence, of these committees were the briefs prepared by the War Office
and the Admiralty for each of the Imperial Conferences and the private
discussion that often followed the official gatherings. And though the
defence of the Commonwealth was peripheral to major concerns of Imperial
defence, the maintenance of British power in the Far East and the naval
provisions of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty inevitably involved the disposition
of the Imperial Squadron based at Sydney. Advice from London was then as
authoritative as it was abundant.44

It was also consistent. Strategic appreciations from Whitehall
repeatedly established that the scale of attack upon the Australian littoral
would be small. The greatest probable threat from the enemies of the Crown
would come from raiders. Before 1890 it had been calculated that the
enemy might despatch, at most, three or four cruisers — two of which could
be armoured and capable of lowering torpedo boats — and a landing party
of 3,000 men. By 1901 this calculation was considered excessive; and by
1905 even more so. In 1906 it was adjusted. Then, the likely attacking
force would, at most, consist of three or four unarmoured cruisers or
armed merchantmen capable of landing a total of 1,000 troops at any one
place. Even in 1913 raids by the same number of vessels, accompanied by
two armed transports capable of landing 2,000 men, was thought the
probable danger.45

Australian policy-makers were familiar with these conclusions.
Some were also familiar with the general principles upon which they were
based. Fewer were aware of the full implications of the changing emphasis
in the methods of naval warfare which assured the security of the
Commonwealth.

The maintenance of British sea supremacy, began the traditional
argument, was basic to all schemes for the defence of the Empire. The
Admiralty undertook to prevent organized invasion and to keep maritime
communications between colonial ports and the rest of the world free from
sustained interruption. Preparations for an expeditionary force would have
to be on so great a scale that the Admiralty would quickly learn of them
and make a corresponding redistribution of its forces. Should local sea
superiority in any sector of the Empire be temporarily lost, no responsible enemy commander would hazard invasion because his lines of communications would be threatened as soon as Royal Naval superiority was regained. Moreover, Australia lay some 4,000 miles from the foreign naval bases capable of fitting out large-scale expeditions and their attendant screens of armoured vessels; improvised bases in the Pacific islands would be inadequate and vulnerable. Invasion was not a danger Australians had to face; stoppage of overseas trade need not be of concern.

Sea supremacy depended, however, upon amassing capital ships to meet those of the enemy. This was implicit in the Admiralty's continued demand for unfettered and undivided strategic control. But it was also realized that weaker naval powers might give first priority to the destruction of floating commerce and to raiding portions of the outlying Empire. Intermittently from the eighties the French and the Russians put great store in this guerre de course and ships were built precisely for this kind of warfare. Close blockade and the masking of enemy ports once served the purpose of hindering the escape of the main fleet and preventing the despatch of commerce raiders. But the advent of steam, the mine, and the torpedo boat raised doubts about the efficacy of close blockade. Raiders, indeed units of the main fleet, it was feared, could slip away eluding their pursuers from the many ports scattered around the globe. Unease and doubts about close blockades were substantiated by the naval manoeuvres of 1901 and were not settled until 1911. How to meet the danger from the enemy's main fleet, his commerce marauders, and his raiders? This was a problem made no easier by advances in naval technology, alterations in the balance of naval power, and changes in tactical thought.46

From the sixties, among other measures, special port and coastal defence vessels were constructed to ensure localized protection. Ironclads of shallow draft and limited operational radius were to deter or destroy the raider. Sir William Jervois had been influenced by such views; the Protector and the Cerberus were the result in the Australian colonies. The increased speed and armament of enemy vessels soon rendered such a scheme ineffective. The answer in Admiral Tryon's day was the maintenance of
close blockade, the division of the main fleet into squadrons on different naval stations throughout the world, and the limiting of light cruiser squadrons to various sectors for coastal defence. The Australian Auxiliary Squadron was conceived in these terms.

During the nineties naval theorists like Sir John Colomb and Captain A.T. Mahan insisted that the issue in any naval war would be decided upon the high seas, far from the coast, in mighty conflicts between concentrated battle fleets. The Royal Navy might be one, as the seas were one, but, they warned, victory could not come to the nation whose strength was dissipated and restricted. Swift, homogeneous battle fleets were the key to security. The concentration of the British naval strength, it was argued, would compel the enemy to concentrate his might. He could not afford to allow his capital ships to be destroyed piecemeal by his more numerous opponents, or let his cruisers stray far from the main fleet. Thus any power which was foolish enough to rely primarily upon guerre de course would have his commerce raiders hunted down and destroyed by a superior enemy; if it did not build battle fleets, it could not wage war.

The construction of heavier, faster, more powerful vessels of all classes and in particular the advent of the armoured cruiser lent substance to the theory that was well understood by the Colonial Defence Committee. Yet there were, in the nineties, official reservations. Moreover, the Royal Navy was not fully organized to conduct such operations if only because the guerre de course nightmare loomed larger than the theorists allowed. Australians were expected to feel secure under the naval shield. Yet the principles of naval strategy were not explained to them. Moreover, they had in the Australian Auxiliary Squadron a reminder of outmoded strategic thought. At the 1897 Colonial Conference the opportunity to introduce the premiers to the new theory was missed. At the Imperial Conference of 1902 the omission was corrected. Then Lord Selborne presented and expounded the doctrine of fleet concentration. Its rigorous application was left to Admiral John Fisher who became First Sea Lord in 1904.47
... swift, homogeneous battlefleets were the key to future security ...
Fisher envisaged a navy composed primarily of the Dreadnought battleship, the armoured cruiser, and the sea-going destroyer. The proliferation of ships with greatly varying capabilities was to cease and the scrapping of the obsolescent to begin. Squadrons outside European waters were depleted, leaving only vessels with the speed for swift concentration and the fire-power for major engagements. No vessel was henceforward to be tied to any one zone. Strength was to be strategically concentrated in the North Sea and the Mediterranean whence enemy fleets or raiders must come. By planning to meet the battle fleets of Germany and Austria, the Admiralty would protect Great Britain, her mercantile marine, and her Empire.\textsuperscript{48}

Naval actions in the Russo-Japanese War seemed to vindicate the doctrine of fleet concentration. Armoured squadrons were kept assembled to meet armoured squadron; the issue was decided by concentrated battle fleets at sea. The significance for the Commonwealth was clear. Previously any escaping marauders - armoured or unarmoured - of weaker naval powers could use their short life before certain destruction to prey upon colonial shipping. Now, explained the report of the Committee of Imperial Defence in 1906, an enemy would be compelled to use his armoured cruisers for major fleet actions, operations against British squadrons, or the protection of his own commerce - in short, in engagements against other warships. Raids on the Australian littoral could be conducted only by small numbers of unarmoured cruisers which left their ports before the outbreak of hostilities or escaped the blockade.\textsuperscript{49}

The Admiralty could not, therefore, guarantee security from small numbers of enemy cruisers which might attack strategically valuable installations, destroy shipping, or create widespread alarm and confusion. But such a threat could be limited. Raids were hazardous operations for the enemy and, at best, of secondary military importance. The commander would know that his movements prior to the outbreak of war would be noted by naval intelligence; once hostilities began, the difficulties of refuelling at sea, either from captured colliers or at rendezvous points
from merchant auxiliaries, were formidable; every attack would betray his movements to the sweeping British cruiser squadrons detailed for commerce protection and deplete his restricted supply of ammunition; every engagement might mean damage to his vessels at great distances from his naval bases; sustained operations would tend to exhaust his crews and seriously impair the efficiency of his ships. The days when a defended port might fear for its safety or be compelled to pay ransom belonged to the past. The enemy commander would not risk his vessels against shore batteries, especially since close bombardment was found to be of little value and a waste of precious ammunition. The bombardment of undefended coastal towns was considered a barbaric and foolish act which could call forth reprisals. If, then, the Commonwealth maintained fixed defences and garrison troops at strategic points to protect harbours, graving-docks, coal-mining machinery, and cable stations, military objectives of value would be denied him. Furthermore, the defence of naval bases, coaling stations, and key harbours would provide the necessary refuge for coastal shipping once the alarm was sounded.  

An enterprising enemy commander could, of course, land his small groups of troops close to the batteries and hope that they could be temporarily disabled. Or he might seek out unprotected or inadequately defended strategic points. But since he would remain in open waters to evade capture as long as possible, clearly his greatest threat would be to floating commerce.

The Admiralty had made some provision for this. The naval forces in Far Eastern waters were strengthened and reorganized after 1902. Sydney was to be one key base, and the Imperial Squadron on the Australian Station was considered one of the units of the Pacific fleet. At times of crisis it was to concentrate with other British squadrons near Singapore under the command of the Admiral on the China Station. His primary task was to compel any large enemy force to engage him. Until the outcome was decided merchant shipping would have to fend for itself. With the aid of the increased speed of modern vessels and wireless telegraphy merchant ships could, it was thought, avoid contact with the enemy by leaving the charted trade routes.
If threatened, they could hasten to harbours of refuge. However, the raiders would be at constant peril from British squadrons once the Admiral was certain that no major engagement had to be fought. He could then use his own initiative. Depending on the strength of the enemy he could either distribute his cruisers along the trade routes or concentrate them in groups to sweep the seas or to act against the raiders once they had revealed themselves. No commerce raider, it was asserted, could for long escape detection and destruction. Until the major engagements were fought, or until the raiders were destroyed, the British mercantile marine could afford a total loss of two to four per cent of its strength. 51

The scale of attack, and the extent of the Commonwealth's responsibilities, were clearly dependent upon the strength and the nature of probable enemies, particularly East of Suez. Until 1904 France and Russia, either singly or in combination, were considered the probable enemies. The French could despatch cruisers from Saigon and the Russians could send cruisers and some of their many armed merchant auxiliaries from Vladivostock. Until 1904 British naval forces were maintained in the Pacific at a strength to meet such contingencies. By 1905 the Entente Cordiale and the defeat of Russian sea power by the Japanese removed both threats and, with them, fears of commerce destruction in the Far East. From 1901 the Admiralty had considered Germany as a likely enemy; from 1906 she became the probable and sole contestant for British sea supremacy. Her naval forces in the Far East were not strengthened until after 1909. At no time was Japan considered a probable, or even a possible, enemy. In the light of European activity in China the navalist press in Britain had, from 1898, demanded an alliance with Japan to maintain Britain's naval strength in the Far East. In 1902 the Anglo-Japanese Treaty was signed and British interests in Asia -- and Australia -- were secured. It was renewed in 1905 and 1911. Apart from an examination of the vulnerability of Hong Kong in 1909 and 1911 by the War Office, Japan was eliminated from strategic thinking from 1902 until the end of the Great War. At no time either was the United States considered an enemy. Indeed, Admiralty plans were explicitly based on the assumption that Great Britain could never maintain its naval power against both the United States and Germany. 52
From 1900 until 1907, then, Australian security was assured by
the outcome of the Russo-Japanese War, the naval programmes of the Admiralty,
and the course of British diplomacy. It was a period of diminishing risk.
British authorities in Whitehall recommended the continuation of the Naval
Agreement, but in a form which fitted the doctrine of fleet concentration
and the conditions of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. They denied that the
creation of an Australian navy was either strategically necessary or
politically wise. They reaffirmed the need for fixed defences and
garrison troops.53

Justifications for the Australian field forces, on the other
hand, were as difficult as they were various. During the nineties the
Colonial Defence Committee had argued that a field army was necessary to
resist landing parties which might occupy undefended portions of the
coast, and conduct mobile operations anywhere within Australia to meet -
or to deter - any larger enemy landing should local sea superiority be
temporarily lost. After 1901 it was also suggested that the organization
of field forces as a trained nucleus for volunteers in times of danger
would demonstrate the warlike spirit of Australians and convince the
prudent enemy that raids of any scale would be extremely hazardous. Yet,
at best, these were uneasy justifications for an army of the size that
would give ample training to the men and sufficient command experience to
the officers. The strategic solution lay in the preparation of Australian
units for offensive operations with the British Army. Two areas of
probable conflict suggested in 1902 were India and China; the first to
meet a Russian threat to British territory and the second to confront the
Russians and help fulfil the military provisions of the Anglo-Japanese
Alliance. In more specific terms, the formation of an Imperial military
reserve was suggested to which the Commonwealth would contribute nine
thousand men ready for active service anywhere in the Empire.54

The political difficulties of inaugurating such schemes were
immense. By 1906 the Colonial Defence Committee was compelled to accept
the fact that Australian forces could not be overtly organized and trained
for overseas service. Federal parliament had made this clear in the Defence Act of 1903. So it was that in the federalist period the field forces were under constant ministerial and parliamentary scrutiny. Why was an Australian army necessary, it was asked. The firm strategic answer was not acceptable.

Yet until 1907 the Commonwealth freely used the facilities of the Colonial Defence Committee, the Committee of Imperial Defence, and the Imperial Conference. Every defence proposal was sent to London for approval – partly to guide Cabinet but primarily to keep check upon local advisers. Every key document was published and discussed – if somewhat cursorily – in parliament. In 1906 Alfred Deakin asked the British authorities to draw up a complete and integrated scheme for the defence of Australia. However, when the Commonwealth proceeded to inaugurate plans for a national citizen army and an Australian navy, it did so largely despite the traditional strategical thought from Whitehall.

For the validity of arguments prepared at the centre of the Empire rested upon a number of assumptions that had to be accepted by the Australians on the periphery. They had to be in no doubt that the numbers, strength, and distribution of British warships would affect the general and local sea superiority of the Royal Navy over all possible enemies. They had to accept and understand the doctrine of fleet concentration. They had to feel certain that all possible was being done to protect the Australian littoral and floating commerce. They had to be convinced that the difficulties facing the commander of an enemy raiding force were as great as the Admiralty believed. They had to realize that total security was impossible and that it was wiser and cheaper to calculate probabilities, not plan on the speculation of possibilities. They had to grasp that probabilities could be calculated only on the basis of what a professionally competent and prudent enemy would do. They had to accept the protection of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. And, above all, they had to feel that their national security was not neglected nor their national aspirations stifled by the policies of Whitehall.
In the federalist era some of these assumptions were accepted on faith; some were left unexamined. In providing for the adequate defence of Australia both Cabinet and parliament were prepared to be guided by advice from London. Traditional strategic thought justified traditional solutions even if it was also to provoke nationalist indignation.

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE COMMONWEALTH AT WAR: POLITICS AND PRECEDENTS

(We) all belong to one nation and to one Empire ... one great aggregated nation ... not only for common honour, but for common safety.

EDMUND BARTON, January 1902.

We have no right to provide for the naval or military defence of Afghanistan or Canada .... We ought not to have any class (of troops) which might be called ... to take part in quarrels of which they may or may not approve ... We do not want our men to join in (another) opium war. We do not want our men dragged into war against their conscience.

H.B. HIGGINS, July 1903.

(In South Africa the) sons of Empire have since stood shoulder to shoulder, fought together, and died together. Their blood ... "has flowed in the same stream, and drenched the same field. When the chill morning dawned, their dead lay cold and stark together; in the same pit their bodies were deposited; the green corn of spring is now breaking from their intermingled dust; the dew falls from heaven upon their union in the grave. This is the true bond of Empire ..."

THE TIMES, 13th January 1900.

Shoot straight you ------! Don't make a mess of it.

BREAKER MORANT before a British Firing Squad, February 1902.
Despite the widespread support in and out of parliament, the decision of the Cabinet to despatch military contingents to South Africa in December 1901 was far from inevitable. Indeed the caution, hesitation and reluctance with which Barton faced the problems of participation in an Imperial conflict reflected the basic assumptions of state policy in this period. Assembling the legislative machinery to give life to the Constitution and domestic reform were of far greater importance than involvement in an Imperial war. To disturb party alignments, to use finance for raising contingents, to be charged with unconstitutional action, were great risks to run. Prudence demanded no hasty move. The campaigns in South Africa could be brought to a conclusion without further Australian assistance. Colonial contingents already in active service would satisfy both national and Imperial sentiment.

Yet from the outset the Cabinet could not ignore the war. A federal election had to be fought - and the first parliament was to sit - in a public atmosphere of intense Anglo-philia. Moreover, public indignation at the plight of Australian troops caught in the machinery of British military justice demanded some comment from the national government. The assumption by the Commonwealth of the powers over defence and external relations inevitably brought a number of relevant issues to the attention of Cabinet. The newspapers from which the Barton ministry sought support became restive. Finally, there remained the doubt of Joseph Chamberlain's attitude. He had manipulated public opinion in Australia against Barton and his colleagues during the passage of the Constitution Bill in London. Would he, despite the assurance of Colonial Office support for the newly-created national authority, act in the same fashion again?

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Did Edmund Barton wish to contribute Australian men and money to the British cause in any Imperial war? Professedly impatient with evasion the Age posed this question during the federal elections in 1901. In general terms Barton gave his answer on this issue so marginal to the campaign. He stressed the unity of the Empire founded upon mutual respect and cooperation. Though Australian forces were for defence and not to be used in wars of "needless aggression" it was essential to defend the "integrity of Empire".¹ So long as Great Britain could be expected to defend Australia in peace and war, the Commonwealth must offer assistance in times of grave crisis. The impregnable alliance for defence— not expansion— was founded upon reciprocal obligations. In private conversation with a prominent pro-Boer, the Rev. Dr. Rentoul, he said:

The purpose of the defence force will be, as far as this Ministry is concerned, the protection of Australia, even if the blow be struck at a distance. ²

These pronouncements offered no assurance about the policy of Barton's ministry on the war in South Africa, though they were later construed as a pledge for involvement.³

George Reid was silent on the matter during the election campaign. His views in involvement in Imperial wars were well-known. Yet they had changed in a significant fashion since 1899. To parliament during 1901 he had declared that Australia would send troops abroad during any grave crisis because "our institutions are guaranteed by the strength and glory of the British Empire".⁴ The distinction between just and unjust wars was no longer prominent. Political experience during the South African War had taken effect. Furthermore, Reid knew that to appeal to Free-traders in Australia was to tap reservoirs of Imperial loyalty.⁵

There was no official Labour policy on defence or Imperial relations in 1901. Nevertheless, it could be calculated that of the sixteen Labour members in the lower House, at least five would vote against any participation by the Commonwealth in South Africa. In any case, Watson summarized the general sentiments of Imperialists in his party during 1901. He believed in the civilizing power of the Empire; but
... a policy of dignified restraint ...
Australia's contribution to defence, he insisted, should be adequate self-defence. The Commonwealth's best interests lay in her own development. Given that the radicals like Higgins, Crouch, and Hume-Cook in the Cabinet's own ranks might resist, as they had threatened, any further involvement in South Africa, the government had obviously to tread warily. For the issue could upset party alliances and success would depend on support from the Free-trade opposition.  

Such were the sentiments expressed in the elections and the temper of the first parliament. Cabinet was not interested in participation; there were larger issues to be settled. Yet so long as Australians were serving in South Africa questions of national honour arose.

When in March 1901 the departments of Defence and External Affairs came under the control of the Commonwealth, Barton found himself the national spokesman for Australian affairs in South Africa. A few months later, he asked the Imperial authorities to strike a service clasp for the action at Elands River. This was one of the very few — perhaps the sole — action in which only Australian troops were involved. They had fought bravely and been commended by both British and Australian writers. More important, they were not members of the colonial forces but hastily trained bushmen, the stuff that goes to form a national stereotype. Lawson found it easy to weave the experience at Elands River into the lore of mateship. Yet the Colonial Office declined to oblige Barton. The Commonwealth would have to be satisfied with the clasps struck for general campaigns, not particular actions. Honours were to be given to Australian troops as soldiers of the Crown and not as those of an emergent nation.  

On two other occasions Barton found himself involved in events more notorious giving rise to nationalist indignation. Both had elements of romance and melodrama. Both concerned the fate of Australian troops at the hands of British military courts-martial. Though neither was directly crucial to the development of defence policy, each exerted an imponderable influence. The first of these was the Wilmansrust affair.
During June 1901 a detachment of some three hundred Victorians — all members of the Fifth Victorian Mounted Rifles — under the command of two British officers were surprised and routed from their camp at Wilmansrust by a Boer commando. The Boers slipped past poorly positioned outposts and charged the ill-prepared and disorganized bivouack at dusk. Within ten minutes of the first shot the British commander had surrendered; fifteen Australians were killed and forty wounded; eighty capitulated. The rest had fled in confusion. At leisure the Boers removed pom-poms, plundered ammunition and stores, and retreated, leaving the prisoners on the veldt. The zeal of the enemy had been as great as the incompetence of the Victorian detachment. The attack had been swift and economical, the prizes great — demoralized Imperial troops, the booty of war, and the capture of those prestige items of the nineteenth century, the guns.

It is in the nature of guerrilla warfare that spirits should respond to any sign of fortune's favour. This incident, it is said, had a profound effect upon Boer morale at the Council of War which met eight days later, particularly upon the Transvaalers. And out of that meeting sprang the conviction to fight on. It is hard to resist the speculation that the peace which federal Cabinet had hoped would come to South Africa during 1901 was postponed by the action of Australian troops at Wilmansrust.

The day following the encounter Brigadier-General Beatson, the British officer to whose column the Victorians were attached, mustered the dazed survivors and in a rage declared that the Victorians were "a fat-arsed, pot-bellied, lazy lot of wasters" and "a white-livered lot of curs". Noting that an Australian officer was scribbling down his words, he added, "You can add 'dogs' too", throwing in the observation that all Australians were the same. A little later the officer in charge of the Victorian Mounted Rifles accepted Beatson's apology through a staff officer. But the damage had been done. Great was the indignation. All the officers felt that gross negligence had been shown by the imperial officers who led them; that lives had been needlessly thrown away; and that Beatson
was unfit to command. The unit was further humiliated by the court-martial of two privates for cowardice. After this some of the men refused to march under Beatson. Three privates were court-martialled and sentenced to death for inciting mutiny. On the 11th of July Kitchener — doubtless aware of the possible political implications of the case — commuted the sentences to ten years' imprisonment in one case and one year in the other two. They were sent to England in August.

Reports of the affair were released in the Australian press towards the end of August 1901. A series of fiery questions were asked by both Labour and radical liberal politicians in parliament. The event was seen as an example of blatant militarism. The authority invested in the gold braid and spurs had been used vindictively and unjustly against Australians. The honour of Victoria and the Commonwealth was said to be at stake. Promptly on the 3rd of October 1901, Barton telegraphed Chamberlain for information; the implied demand for investigation of the case was clear. Eight days later the Judge Advocate-General in London gave a complete pardon to the three privates convicted for inciting mutiny.9

Public indignation did not settle. In private Barton once again asked the Colonial Office to provide accurate information about Beatson's behaviour before the Victorians. In public he assured Australians that honour had been satisfied because Beatson had been superseded in his command. The honour of the Imperial government was also upheld. According to Chamberlain the three privates had been released because "there were legal flaws in (their) convictions, they having been tried under the wrong section of the Army Act".10 Much later he reported that Beatson denied any insult to the Australians. He did admit to talking strongly about the case to his own staff, but not in words to justify Barton's persistent enquiries. The furore ended only after radical members had spoken privately with members of the Cabinet and after Melbourne had received the returning contingent with a great demonstration.11
The second episode involved the execution of Lieutenant Handcock and Lieutenant "Breaker" Morant. Nationalist suspicion of Imperial indifference to an alleged grave miscarriage of justice, hostility to British military authority, the elevation of an act of vengeance into the mystique of mateship and the presentation of the case as the sacrifice of a gifted, reformed, and manly bushman to the dictates of foreign policy gave the story great currency at the time and have kept it alive since.\textsuperscript{12}

In the second quarter of 1901, when British columns were attempting to clear the large Boer commandos from the wild and remote countryside around Pietersburg some 180 miles North of Pretoria, the Bushveldt Carbineers were formed. This was an irregular Imperial force comprising highly-paid South Africans, Cape Dutch, and volunteers from the Yeomanry and colonial troops. The chain of command was obscure. Major R.W. Lenehan of the New South Wales Mounted Infantry and previously of the Field Artillery in that colony was appointed to command the force, but he was often in Pietersburg or trekking between units. Officers tended to view their commands as independent, answerable finally to Lenehan. The detachment at Fort Edward was commanded from June to August by a British officer, Captain Hunt; his friend and companion was an Australian, Lieutenant H.H. Morant. Among the other officers were two other Australians, Lieutenants P.J. Handcock and G.R. Witton.\textsuperscript{13}

Towards the end of October Lenehan, Morant, Handcock, Witton, and some of the non-commissioned officers of the Bushveldt Carbineers were placed under close arrest by British officers. After a preliminary enquiry they were brought before a series of courts-martial which began on the 16th of January 1902. In substance there were four charges against the Australian officers of inciting or commanding their men to "kill and murder" prisoners of war. To each charge the Australians pleaded not guilty. As officer in command of the Bushveldt Carbineers, Major Lenehan was held responsible for the actions of his junior officers and was charged with culpable neglect in not reporting certain Boer deaths. He was found guilty on one charge and sentenced to be reprimanded. The case against Witton, Handcock and Morant was of a different order. Collectively they
were found guilty for the deaths of twelve prisoners. On some counts they were recommended to mercy. The investigation bore most heavily upon Morant. Not only was he the commanding officer of the detachment; he had sworn personal vengeance on the Boers. 14

Morant's life and death had elements of high romance and tragic irony. Born of gentle English parents, the young Morant entered at first upon a naval career. At about the age of eighteen his career was ruined by a disgrace sufficiently serious to bring him to Australia in 1884. For the next decade he drifted through the outback, attempting menial jobs and leaving behind him unpaid bills and dishonoured cheques. But slowly he discovered strengths in himself. As a horse-breaker his reputation spread far and wide. He could break the wildest brumby, hamstring a heifer to avenge the goring of his horse, whip spirited horses to discipline them, and hunt down dingos with cattle dogs to finish them off "with that good old weapon the stirrup-iron". 15 The bush rhythm of work and bust seems to have given stability to his character. He carried poetry in his saddle-bag and was known to be able to extemporize a jingle at a moment's notice. By the mid-nineties he was a regular contributor to the Bulletin offering his poems under the name of "The Breaker".

The South African War came as a God-sent opportunity for the Breaker. Now he might redeem himself and complete the long process of restitution begun in the outback. He enlisted in the South Australian Mounted Rifles. During 1900 he proved a skilful horseman, a reliable despatch-rider for General French, was mentioned in despatches, and, after the expiration of his period of enlistment in October, was commissioned as a lieutenant in the Transvaal Constabulary. On leave in England he became a close and intimate friend of Captain Hunt. Together they entered upon a round of fox-hunting, races, and balls. More important, the Breaker was accepted into the society of his family's friends. They were to see neither Morant nor Hunt again. 16
... War came as a God-sent opportunity ...
Before the courts-martial Morant admitted that the prisoners had been executed. Yet until restrained by his defending counsel, he savagely attacked both the court and the charges. Had there not been provocation? Had not his friend, Hunt, been shot in a melee with the Boers? Had not his body been found stripped and mutilated? Morant's chroniclers claim that he was rankled by the hypocrisy of a British military command: it wanted a special force for irregular warfare but would not admit that such warfare was outside the accepted conventions. Above all, it is said, he felt deeply that the British did not understand his attitude to his fellow-officers and in particular his obligation to Hunt. As one construes Morant's thoughts:

... the treatment during the weeks before court-martial of himself and his mates as though they were felons - mates! What did this court know of the law of mateship in the Australian bush, the creed under which a man in a tough place stood by his mate through thick and thin and avenged any wrong done him ... 17

The stand taken by the court was succinctly summed up by the Judge Advocate:

...War is not a relation man to man, and of itself implies no private hostility between individuals ... 18

Despite conflicting evidence, it is possible that the courts-martial recommended Morant and Handcock to mercy on the grounds of extreme provocation, good previous service, and want of experience, on all counts except the case of the death of eight Boer prisoners. 19

Kitchener reviewed these findings between the 19th and 25th of February 1902. Witton's sentence was commuted to life imprisonment because he was believed to be spellbound by Morant. He was sent to England to serve his term. Lenehan was despatched under guard to Capetown, discharged, and returned to Sydney. It was otherwise for Handcock and Morant. On the 27th of February, both were executed. Before he died, Morant wrote to Lenehan exhorting him to tell the Bulletin of the case.
"Butchered to make a Dutchman's Holiday!" was his comment. On his "crucifixion" the unrepentant Morant advised future generations of Australians:

But we bequeath a parting tip  
For sound advice as such men  
Who come across in transport ship  
To polish off the Dutchmen!

If you encounter any Boers  
You really must not loot 'em,  
And if you wish to leave these shores  
For pity's sake don't shoot 'em!

A few days after the execution Barton told parliament what little he knew of the case. He denied by implication any responsibility for the men since they had been employed by the British Army as individuals. There the matter could not rest. For Barton apparently found public and private misgivings so intense that at the end of March he requested official information. Kitchener replied that the affair was so discreditable that he hoped the case would be given the least possible publicity. Then followed a telegram which falsely attributed to Morant, Handcock, and Witton the cold-blooded murder of twenty Boers. This erroneous summary and a precis of the court-martial were published as a parliamentary paper nine days later.21

Barton was correct. There was not much federal Cabinet could do about the executions. It did, however, press for the release of Witton, asking the King to exercise clemency and forwarding a long petition from Victoria organized by Witton's brother and supported by the Australian Natives Association. When Deakin became Prime Minister, the case was being compared in sections of the Cape and Australian press to the Dreyfus affair. Despatches took on a more insistent tone; but they brought success. After serving a little more than three years of his sentence, Witton was released in August 1904. Immediately Deakin requested compensation for him in a despatch clearly suggesting that the original sentences were improper and unjust. This the War Office steadfastly refused.22
Ministerial interest in the case was further prolonged by the claims of Major Lenehan who sought to be reinstated in the permanent forces of the Commonwealth, and insistently claimed deferred pay from the Imperial government and compensation. On both counts he had the support of the New South Wales government and successive federal ministries. The first count involved Major-General Hutton - General Officer Commanding the Commonwealth forces from 1902 to 1904 - in acrimonious disagreement with his Ministers for Defence. Hutton felt that a dishonoured and discredited Lenehan had no place in the army he was striving to mould. Finally Lenehan was reinstated in September 1904, not long after the release of Witton. However, his claims against the War Office came to nought, despite constant ministerial representation. At the Imperial Conference Deakin personally took the case to Haldane. It was not until 1911 that the Fisher government ruled that all possible efforts had been made.

Thus cabinets and ministers, as they took office, were confronted by various aspects of the Morant and Handcock affair. Doubtless the case was remembered when from 1901 debate raged over the form of military discipline deemed best for Australians, when objections were made to service under the Army Act in peace and war, and when, finally, the Commonwealth decided after 1914 to refuse the imposition of the death penalty in the field against offenders in the Australian Imperial Forces. It helped create public and political support for those Australian officers who felt their units must never again be scattered and lost in the British Army. It added to the national myths making separate identity in the British world seem the clearer.

There is one further aspect of both these affairs. The fate of the Victorians should have posed legitimate doubts about the cult of the citizen-soldier. The death of Morant should have been a warning of the dangers that accompany guerrilla warfare: lawlessness, vengeance and reprisal. In neither instance did the politicians pause from indignation. They clung to an ill-articulated conviction that irregular troops could protect Australia from invasion.
It was fully consistent with the manner in which Barton approached these and other issues relating to South Africa that he should not contemplate direct military involvement until December 1901 — and then only on his own terms.

He was willing to allow the states to send drafts to keep up the strength of their units in South Africa and to allow the despatch of contingents raised or planned before the Commonwealth took control of all defence departments on the 1st of March 1901. And publicly he maintained that responsibility for existing contingents lay with the states. But as soon as the Queensland government appeared to usurp the powers of the Commonwealth and offered a further contingent, Barton rebuked the premier and reminded the Colonial Office that the Commonwealth was supreme in the sphere of defence. Out of this came the assurance from Kitchener that he was "fully satisfied with the mounted troops at his disposal". 24

Sir John Forrest, the Minister for Defence, faced the same problem in a different form. In at least three states there were many men eager to return to war and to enlist at Capetown; there were also roving agents ready to recruit them for various irregular Imperial units. In July, Forrest suggested that the solution lay in raising and offering a Commonwealth contingent of some 2,000 men. Barton disagreed. His reasons became clearer as the year proceeded: there was no emergency in South Africa such as that after Black Week in December of 1899; British forces were now strong enough to complete the war, for the colonial mounted units had filled the gap while British forces were being recruited. Above all, if the British government wanted Commonwealth troops, insisted Barton, they must request them; any federal government would have to consider a measure setting a precedent for military cooperation in Imperial wars very carefully. Though Seddon of New Zealand and Laurier of Canada offered troops later in the year, Barton and his colleagues maintained their stand. 25

What could be justly construed as a policy based on national dignity was caused in part by the hostility of ministerial supporters
like Crouch and Higgins - and the possible opposition of Labour - to
direct military participation. But the main reason was fiscal. Not
only did Cabinet wish to spend far less of the revenue due to it under
the Braddon Clause, the tariff issue had not been decided. Politically
it would have been dangerous to finance new policies until it was
settled. To prevent being overthrown the Cabinet therefore thought it
essential to spend no more on defence than the states had spent.26

Thus Barton's conditions for national participation in South
Africa were clear. The measure had to be publicly justifiable. It must
result from a request from the British government. It must involve no
expenditure by the Commonwealth.

Early in December of 1901, Henniker Heaton, the English Member
of Parliament and Imperialist of penny postage fame, was in Australia.
He was distressed at Barton's inaction especially since loyal support for
the British cause was evident in all capitals. He discussed the matter
with state politicians in Melbourne who offered a Victorian contingent.
Supposing that Forrest would support him, Heaton then informed Chamberlain
of the offer on the 9th of December 1901. On the same day Chamberlain
made overtures to Hopetoun in a secret telegram. Questioned in the
House two days later, Barton stated that the government had definitely not
decided to proffer troops and promised to consult parliament before it
did so. In fact he had already decided to intervene in the South
African War.

Federal parliament rose for the Christmas recess on the 13th of
December. In public Barton said that Chamberlain had requested military
assistance "on or about December 13"but that Cabinet, feeling there was
need neither to be hysterical nor to forget obligations to the Empire,
had decided to await more authentic information. Later in the House, he
hinted that Cabinet had decided to respond to any request from Chamberlain
on or after the 17th of December - that is during the recess when there
was no parliament to consult - and explained that the official request
did not arrive until the 21st of December. What were the facts?

On the 9th of December Chamberlain asked whether the Commonwealth, if appealed to officially, would follow the example of New Zealand and Canada and despatch a contingent at the expense of the Imperial government. The following day Hopetoun informed Barton of the secret telegram. Immediately the Prime Minister committed his government — very possibly after prior discussion with his colleagues. Of this decision Chamberlain was informed on the 11th of December — the day Barton told parliament that he had made no decision. He did have two reservations. The first concerned the timing of an official announcement; the second involved public justification for supporting Chamberlain. It seems likely that Cabinet wanted to receive the official request early in January, just before parliament was to reassemble — and here it is possible to see the restraining hand of Alfred Deakin. However, after Hopetoun had pressed Chamberlain’s case for urgency, Barton, on the 17th of December, proved willing publicly to respond to the British appeal whenever it was made.

The Prime Minister obviously anticipated trouble; for he had previously asked — on the 11th of December — whether the Colonial Office could confirm German reports, appearing in the Australian press, that the Commonwealth by its disinclination to send further troops had demonstrated "that England will find the Colonies to be a broken reed when she looks (to them) for support and that the Colonial military ardour has vanished since it became evident that war was not a nursery game". If this could be established, the telegram continued, our "hands will be much strengthened". Barton hoped to appeal to the sense of national honour which was evident in the furore over the Wilmansrust affair and was seen to be stimulated by the execution of Breaker Morant. On the 14th of December an item was in Australian hands from the Vossische Zeitung, reported in The Times, claiming that the Imperial idea was dead in the colonies. Thus with the decision made and the justification prepared, the official request was received on the 21st of December. It called for a force of 1,000 experienced mounted troops to be paid and equipped
by the Imperial government from the time of enlistment. The Commonwealth had only to provide clerical facilities for its organization and despatch. The Cabinet formally approved the measure on the next day. 30

It had not considered the military importance of its decision. As early as September 1899 the colonial commandants had recommended a fully representative Australian contingent of all arms under the control of an Australian officer and staff. They had warned their governments that smaller colonial units would be "scattered amongst other corps of the regular service or (be) tacked on to some other colonial unit, and thus have (their) identity destroyed". 31 This had indeed come to pass. In December 1901, the attempt was again made to realize their plan. Various officers again stressed the need for contingents composed of battalions with sufficient staff to be distinctively brigaded under an Australian commander. As eight battalions were despatched by the Commonwealth between February and June 1902, it appears that the scheme would have been practicable. But the Commonwealth brigade was not created. Barton imposed the first barrier. He, not Chamberlain, had set the limit on the contingent of 1,000 men. It is also clear from the tenor of despatches that Cabinet would satisfy Kitchener's requirements; he had no wish for a colonial brigade. Thus the contingents of the Australian Commonwealth Horse were sent to South Africa only at battalion strength and were, like their colonial predecessors, attached to other British units. We may safely assume that many Australian military officers had no wish to see a repetition of this in the future.

The decision to intervene in South Africa on even such favourable terms was for Barton political not military. So were his troubles before the House sat on the 14th of January 1902. Influential groups in the states had become frankly disgruntled over his inaction. Following Heaton's contribution to this dissatisfaction, the Victorian government and legislature formally exhorted the Commonwealth to offer, on its own initiative, sufficient troops to bring the war to an end, to demonstrate
Imperial loyalty, and to uphold the honour of the Empire. To put an end to this potential rebellion of the states against federal authority, Barton let all governments know of his decision soon after the 21st of December. He also allowed recruiting to proceed for the volunteers who had begun to appear from the beginning of the month. Significantly, those selected were called on to declare that they would fulfil all the requirements for service "under the Imperial Government" making no claim whatsoever for compensation against the Commonwealth. Apparently this action, cautious though it was, did not satisfy some liberals in Victoria. It is very probable that Alfred Deakin complained of the publicity and the speed of these arrangements when the measure was without parliamentary approval. Barton pleaded that it was impossible to do nothing and once measures were started he could not stop them. Public opinion, he said, was too obviously in favour of participation.

This was true. But it only added to his worries. On the one hand, he had to stress that to compel the Imperial government to request troops from Australia was no humiliation for either party. Many sections of the community showed little appreciation of his previous policy. On the other, he had to avoid being defeated in parliament for agreeing to Chamberlain's plea. Newspapers rumoured the alienation of the government's Labour allies and the possible opportunistic hostility of Reid.

Though it was most unlikely that Reid would court public disfavour, Barton thought it best to ensure his support. On the 13th of January he sent Reid a rough draft of the resolution he was to put to the House the following day. Parliament was invited to express its indignation at the foreign charges against the "honour, the humanity and the valour of the people of the Empire" on the occasion of the despatch of a Commonwealth contingent. As he explained, federal parliament could speak out against the "aspiration cast on the Empire - in which we proudly
assert our partnership" and vindicate "our readiness to act with that Empire in every call of duty." Reid was willing to second the government's resolution but on an important condition. Debate must include, he insisted, refutation of all offensive foreign imputations against individual soldiers and Kitchener's military administration. The government must express unshaken confidence in the chivalry and humanity of all Imperial forces. The resolution was altered to accommodate Reid. So, too, was the emphasis. Barton had stressed Australian honour, which German newspapers questioned. Now the House would be called upon to uphold the honour of Great Britain with which the dignity of Australia upon the world stage was bound. The broader terms of reference, as events proved, allowed the Imperial loyalists to whip themselves into a frenzy, and made opposition more difficult. For it would have been easier for the radicals to argue national interests against national honour than to argue against the need to maintain the honour of the British race.

On the 14th of January 1902, Barton introduced two resolutions in the House of Representatives. The first asked members to vindicate the valour, honour, and humanity of the people and troops of the British Empire; the second called upon them to promise Great Britain all possible assistance to end the war in South Africa. With the support of Reid's followers, the resolutions were passed with an overwhelming majority. Only six members rejected them. In the Senate they were passed without division. But opposition and misgivings about Barton's policy were more intense and widespread, particularly among the Labour members, than voting figures or even rhetoric indicated.

Nineteen of Reid's followers supported twenty-three of Barton's to vote for the resolutions. What of the possible dissidents among these men? J. Hume-Cook, R.A. Crouch, S. Mauger, J. Wilkinson, and A. McLean among the ministerialists had at one time or another opposed Australian involvement in the war, expressed misgivings about its conduct, or shown no readiness on other issues to follow Chamberlain's lead. Among the Free-trade opposition, A.H. Conroy, G.B. Edwards, and J.W. McCay had
shown similar predilections. Presumably they were encouraged to support Barton on this occasion not merely by the public fervour for the British cause in South Africa. It is likely that all their nationalist conditions had been met by the request for aid which Barton had extracted from the Imperial government. Five Labour politicians, W. Fowler, J.C. Watkins, J. Page, W.G. Spence, and W.M. Hughes, also supported the resolutions. Their attitude brings us to the problem of gauging the extent and significance of the opposition. It also brings us to the stand taken by Henry Bourne Higgins. 38

Higgins had opposed colonial involvement in war during 1899 and had remained a prominent critic of British policy in South Africa. He had lost his seat in Geelong in part because of such views, but had been elected to represent Northern Melbourne after publicly reaffirming them. He was a supporter of the "Peace, Humanity, and Arbitration Society" which was soon to present a petition to the Commonwealth demanding the withdrawal of all Australian troops and calling for a negotiated peace "consistent with the National traditions of a brave and gifted foe". 39 He was one of many liberal radical-nationalists in Australia; he was one of the very few pro-Boers. His personal convictions which often compelled him to differ from his fellow protectionists often coincided with views of Labour members. His election had been supported by the Labour Leagues Conference of 1901; he had spoken for Labour in criticising the first defence bill; he was to enter the first Labour ministry. On this occasion he claimed to represent the views of many politicians who had given way to public clamour in 1899 and who now privately opposed Barton's policy. Other indications proved him correct. 40

Higgins maintained that if the war was unnecessary, immoral, and unjust in 1899, then it was more so in 1902. The aim of Great Britain was the subjugation of a noble people. There had been several opportunities to negotiate peace but the sordid struggle was continued to satisfy the lust for wealth of the capitalists and for the military revenge of Majuba. There was no reason why Australians should kill Boers and burn their
HENRY BOURNE HIGGINS

... the war is unnecessary, immoral, and unjust ...
houses - the despatch of a contingent would set a precedent for the
country to be involved in all Imperial conflicts without prior consultation
or negotiation. Australia had no interest in such a conflict, except a
responsibility to restrain the Imperial government.41

If Higgins found his position just, he found its justification
painful. His forthright points occurred in a long, anguished, and
rambling speech. He deplored the conformity imposed upon the public and
politicians by editorial opinion. There was, he suggested, every attempt
to "terrorize members" who wished to criticize.42 Loyalty to the Crown,
he protested, did not exclude loyalty to the ideals of truth and justice.
Indeed, for the just man, he implied, criticism and opposition were
obligatory, and would remain so until there was an extremely grave national
emergency. Then his response could be different. If Great Britain were
in "extreme need - if her existence were in danger and it were a matter of
life and death", he admitted, "we should spend every man and every shilling
in defending the Empire".43

This admission was important. Many of the opponents in 1899
had argued thus, but had given way in the face of public clamour even
before the disasters of Black Week. British reverses then seemed to
justify a change in attitude that was dictated at root by the urge to
political survival. Crudely, this was the stand taken by men who drew
sustenance from the indigenous values of Australian nationalism which lacked
the ideological equipment for criticism of British policy in times of crisis
Apart from moral bravery and an appreciation of Australia's destiny,
Higgins was sustained by something more.

He agreed that the British Empire stood for civilization and
liberty as no other had done in history. He came, he confessed, from
Northern Irish stock more English than the English. Like them, he drew
breath from the England that had welcomed the deeds of Kossuth, Garibaldi,
and the Poles. He recalled the England of John Bright opposing the
Crimean War, and of Gladstone seeking peace during the first Boer War.
Higgins, despite his belief in protection and radical reform, strongly felt that the English liberal tradition should guide him in the affairs of Australia. Unlike the Australian liberals who supported the British cause and the Labour men who could not openly oppose it, Higgins argued passionately about the conduct of Imperial affairs not as an Australian, nor a British-Australian, nor even an independent Australian-Briton, but, like Professor G.A. Wood of Sydney and G.H. Pearson of Melbourne, as an Englishman who called Australia his home. That he alone should play such a role indicates a dimension of Australian colonial nationalism which Richard Jebb did not discern.

In the division that followed Higgins was supported by five Labour politicians - Bamford, McDonald, Thomas, Ronald, and Mahon. Bamford and McDonald came from Queensland - as did Andrew Fisher, the future Prime Minister - where opposition to colonial participation in 1899 had initially been markedly vehement; we may assume that they - along with Thomas of New South Wales - preserved their suspicions that the war had been provoked by capitalist interests. Ronald was a Presbyterian minister with considerable sympathy for the Quaker movement. Mahon was an Irish nationalist who had been Parnell's private secretary and had served a gaol sentence with him. From such men came the fire of the anti-conscriptionists in 1917.44

Those Labour politicians who supported Barton's resolution had equally various motives. Spence had raised no objection to the despatch of contingents in 1899; Watkins had. In both cases - and that of Fowler - we may assume that in 1902 electoral pressure was at least as influential as personal views. Page, on the other hand, had served with British forces in South Africa during the eighties. Very probably he favoured participation. The case of Hughes is more interesting. He had opposed participation in October 1899, on the general ground that the war, unjust in purpose, had been provoked by British financial interests. Furthermore, he argued that an emergency did not exist; so long as Great Britain was in no danger - or did he mean in difficulty? - Australians were under no
obligation to assist. This second argument was probably the public justification for his change in attitude. It is difficult to be certain, for either by happy accident or transparent design, he was absent when the division was taken in the New South Wales legislature and voted in favour of Barton's resolutions by virtue of a pair. Later, however, after the matter had been decided and when the issue could still not be avoided, he was to assert that the Australian troops going to South Africa had the support of the great majority of the public. Doubtless setting his sails to catch the radical breezes Higgins had stirred, he admitted:

I have taken up an attitude in regard to this war different in some respects from that assumed by my colleagues. I did not believe in the war at the start, but since then I have been rather too enthusiastically in favour of the country to which I belong. 45

The ambiguity of the last phrase was a product of the confusion in national identity we have already examined. 46

In a speech rehearsing many of Higgins' arguments but resting ultimately upon Christian, pacifist, and humane objections to the war, Senator McGregor was to remark that each Labour politician followed his own conscience because the question had "no significance in labour politics. Our object in Parliament is of a different character altogether". 47 This was sufficient justification for a McDonald, on the one hand, or a Hughes, on the other. But it could not be so for men like the leader of the party, J.C. Watson, and those like Senator Pearce. They sought to examine the national and Imperial aspects of the issue without doing violence to the views of their colleagues and without drawing the dreaded public charge of pro-Boer as Higgins had done. Their concern seems to have been with the formulation of a Labour policy. 48

Their task was difficult. Direct criticism of Barton's measures was impolitic. Watson - like Andrew Fisher and King O'Malley - indicated his attitude and his misgivings to the House but went from the chamber before a vote was taken; Pearce did not have to face a division. Safer means had to be found for expressing doubts and reservations.
... too much in favour of the country to which he belonged ...

... no jingoistic cries for vengeance ...
Accordingly, Watson later introduced a motion calling on the government to prevent the appearance of troops at a public meeting celebrating the despatch of the first contingent. Reid, hoping to take advantage of this mood to woo Labour support for the approaching tariff debates, followed soon after with a motion respectfully censuring the Governor-General for justifying in public Cabinet's attitude to the war during 1901. Both involved issues of importance as well as the opportunity to express views on South Africa without risk. Speakers on the first stressed the necessity for preventing military coercion and influence in public affairs, and for preserving the right of free and open criticism of the government's policy and the conduct of war in South Africa. Amid the earnest concern about the spread of "militarism" in Australia came support for Higgins. The second motion involved the exclusion of the Governor-General from politics. It was also an opportunity for attacking Barton on the grounds that he had committed the nation to assist Britain without first consulting parliament. In all debates twelve of the sixteen Labour members had taken a stand. Of these, only two were unequivocally in favour of participation. Five were opposed. Five — Watson, O'Malley, Hughes, Batchelor, and Fisher — felt some reservation.49

Thus in a situation fraught with divergent, changing, and cloaked views, Watson gained some measure of support for the middle course he had pursued. This is best seen in the speeches of both Watson and Pearce; for Pearce, in the less tense atmosphere of the Senate, was able to elaborate themes Watson had introduced in other debates.50

Briefly the middle course was this. Though it was necessary for the Commonwealth to appear united before the outside world, discussion of the issue — and open criticism — must be allowed to continue. For the South African War had not, as the government assumed, ceased to be a political question. Various objections could be made against Barton's first motion. There was no need for Australians to be distressed at foreign news reports; they should ignore them with quiet dignity, not respond with jingoistic cries for vengeance. For it was undoubted that
the nation was loyal and valorous and that the war was being fought with the greatest possible humanity. But the best interests of Australia would be served by keeping man-power in the country for internal development. Parliament's first loyalty must always be to Australia. Even so, Great Britain had requested troops. They must therefore be raised for service in South Africa. Political considerations could not, however, stop there. The second resolution—calling on aid from Australia to end the war—was dangerous. Apart from the precedent set, it invited the British government to press for the subjugation of the Boers without mercy. Chamberlain had already indicated that colonial opinion was urging the drastic prosecution of the war. By its very participation at the request of the Imperial government, the Commonwealth bore a responsibility for the nature of the peace. War must not be carried to the extreme. Every effort must be made to keep the possibility of negotiation open on the most lenient terms. Above all, the basic condition of peace must be the certainty of full citizenship rights for the Boers.51

* * *

Both Watson and Barton expressed concern for the kind of peace that would follow victory in South Africa. Yet while Watson desired political discussion to keep the issue alive, Barton wanted parliamentary support for military operations and dependence upon Great Britain for mercy and magnanimity. Only Pearce saw the consequence of Watson's demand. If Australia was ever to decide the issues of peace and war, it must have a voice in the management of the Empire. Yet as Barton had elsewhere explained, the first concern of the Commonwealth was the success of the federal experiment; its role in Imperial affairs in the meantime had to be slight. His view prevailed: parliamentary discussion ceased and the peace was signed without intervention by the Commonwealth.52

Even while Watson was finding prudent means for his followers to express their views, arrangements were being made to organize two more battalions from the great surplus of recruits. The formation of a second
contingent was announced on the 21st of January; there was no comment from the lower House. The last contingent - the eighth - left Australia in June. Once committed on such favourable terms, the only limit to the Commonwealth's military contribution appeared to be the lack of competent and experienced officers. It was a limitation of great importance to those who were to direct defence policy, and it was to recur as a serious problem in 1915.53

In May 1902, Deakin was asked as acting Prime Minister whether Chamberlain had honoured his public promise to consult the colonies before peace was negotiated with the Boers. "The Government", he answered, "has not been consulted." This was misleading. There is no evidence that Cabinet sought to intervene; and the announcement of the cessation of hostilities indicated that the ministry was, by and large, content merely to restate its views in the House. In hasty declarations designed to prevent further discussion, government leaders expressed hopes for the peace, prosperity, and unity of South Africa. By these means and the common patriotism of Boer and Briton, South Africa would soon possess the same free institutions to be found in Australia.54

Yet, despite this brief outburst of genuine goodwill, the Cabinet had not examined its aims in this Imperial war. Barton displayed, then and later, an occasional grasp of realpolitik. Much later Deakin argued indignantly that the importation of Chinese labour to the Rand was a betrayal of the cause for which Australian lives and money had been spent. Later still Richard Jebb implored him to protest against responsible government for the Orange River Colony. This, he warned, prejudiced federation, betrayed Australia's Imperial allies, endangered the status of British settlers - in short Milner's administration sacrificed the aims for which the Commonwealth had fought. In vain Deakin responded. But no such aims had been made clear to the Imperial government or discussed in the House. Only the uncomfortable Watson, and to a lesser extent Senator Pearce, seemed to appreciate in 1902 the necessary relationship between state policy and the organization of armed might.55
In the parliamentary discussion - and the policy which preceded it - the issue had been considered with striking restraint and responsibility. Few politicians were as fervent as editorialists for the daily press. Fewer showed the unbridled emotional attachment to Great Britain that was to be experienced in town halls from Rockhampton to Adelaide, where resolutions were passed giving unequivocal support, not for the Commonwealth, not merely for the British government, but personally for Joseph Chamberlain in whatever course he thought best to pursue. Orators, the like of which Reid had described in 1897, dwelled upon the honour, the prestige, and the dignity of the British Empire and the British race. They did not attempt to see Australia's role clearly, to assess national interests and national responsibilities. That was left to men like Watson and Barton. Watson's task in this respect had been made easier by the stand of Higgins and by the opposition to the government by the Bulletin and the Worker. It was also made necessary by the divisive tendencies in his own party. The more credit, then, must go to Barton. It was he who pursued a policy of dignified restraint, borne of parsimony, throughout 1901.56

A further striking feature of the debate was that nearly all parliamentarians could claim to be Imperialists. Both republicanism and Imperial federation had been abandoned as solutions to problems of peace and war. Yet to recall the spirit of the speeches of Barton, Reid, Fowler, Salmon, Higgins, Watson, and Pearce is to remember what a variety there was in the forms of loyalty to King and country. Among the Free-traders there were Imperial loyalists who so closely identified British security and prestige with those of Australia that they would tend to accept active cooperation as the role for the Commonwealth in Imperial defence in both peace and war. Thence came the strongest support for the renewal of the Naval Agreement of 1887 and the conviction that the despatch of contingents to the Soudan and later to South Africa had set a firm precedent. Thence also came support for the formation of an Australian army capable of acting beyond territorial waters. Their views attracted men in other parliamentary groups. Many of the protectionists would have tended to agree but with important provisos. National interests
had to be served; national honour had to be satisfied; and, above all, national legislation of much higher priority had first to be passed. These could be achieved only if Australia's limited armed forces were controlled by the Commonwealth to mark its separate identity in the British world and organized to enhance its authority in the eyes of its citizens. Such convictions were strengthened by the party's radical adherents who in turn were often supported by members of the Labour Party. For they shared with most Labour politicians a belief in Australian self-reliance. Imperial crises could be accepted as exceptional occasions calling for ad hoc decisions on the nature of military assistance according to the justice of the cause and the gravity of the crisis. Labour politicians who held such views, along with radicals like McCoy in the Free-trade party, and radicals like Crouch and Higgins in the Protectionist party, were to exert a profound effect upon federalist military policy.

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The success of military cooperation by the Commonwealth owed a great deal to Joseph Chamberlain and the War Office. The Imperial government not only undertook to pay, equip, arm, train the national contingents, to pay annuities and pensions, and to replace any Australian equipment used by the men. It paid promptly. By October 1903, some £415,000 had been advanced to the Commonwealth. Both sides kept strictly to the agreement of the 21st of December 1902. This aspect of the federal government's role in the South African War was to be overlooked by enthusiastic Imperialists; for if participation had set a precedent, one condition had been payment for service by the British taxpayer. 57

And what of the contribution of Henniker Heaton? Did he, as some politicians thought, force Barton's hand by stirring discontent in Victoria and then wiring Chamberlain? Did Barton fall or was he pushed? Chamberlain kept those questions alive by asking Hope to thank Heaton publicly for his patriotic spirit. Indignantly Barton informed him that Heaton had interfered in the affairs of the Commonwealth; that neither
he nor Forrest gave him tacit support; that it stirred grave doubts to receive a secret request from the Secretary of State on the same day Heaton had sent McCulloch's unauthorized and unconstitutional offer to the Colonial Office. Some ministers believed Chamberlain's action a direct response to Heaton's agitation; a few seem to have wondered whether Chamberlain had manipulated the whole affair. Cabinet suspected that someone had attempted to push the Prime Minister. Chamberlain denied any such intrigue.58

Barton's suspicions were reasonable. While he and Deakin were in London to watch over the passage of the Constitutional Bill, they had experience of Chamberlain's manipulation of Australian opinion to suit his own purposes. Furthermore, dissatisfaction with the management of the war, talk of a new ministry, a wavering in public support which Milner and Chamberlain feared so much, all marked the British response to the struggle in South Africa during the first months of the winter of 1901. Perhaps Chamberlain felt the need of support from the colonies. if he did so—and if he did commission Heaton's activities or take advantage of them—the Commonwealth government and public bodies in Australia certainly gave him a vote of confidence. But whatever Chamberlain's motives, the tenor of Barton's indignant despatch on the Heaton affair indicated that any future military cooperation would not be easily manipulated from Whitehall. That was another precedent.59

What did contemporaries make of the military contribution from the colonies, and, later, the Commonwealth? L.S. Amery was to suggest that Imperialists everywhere had come to realize that race "instinct or patriotism are as much natural emotions as hunger or self-interest". He was also to declare that the colonies had sent contingents to prove they would not tolerate any secession from the Empire. Lieutenant Modern, an Imperial federationist in Britain who devoted himself later to attacking the concept of local colonial navies, was to declare:

The larger feeling of race patriotism swept away local patriotism ... and well it was for the Empire it was so. 60
Captain A.T. Mahan thought that the war had seen the stirrings of Imperialism and the quickening of national self-consciousness. Lord Brassey, of Naval Annual fame, was of the opinion that participation had finished talk of separation. Richard Jebb, who drew strongly upon the sentiments expressed in the Bulletin over the period to help formulate his ideas of national self-respect and of colonial nationalism, tended to dismiss elements of 'racial sentiment or artificial 'loyalty'" in the Australian response. Yet he wrote:

(The) coincidence that almost the first official action of the Commonwealth Government was to direct the despatch of military contingents to South Africa signifies the fact that in Australia, as in Canada, there is not merely a compatibility but even a causal connection between nationalism and imperialism. 61

It is a pity that this shrewd observer could not carry his analysis further; if he had he may have found himself agreeing with Amery. A leading Australian spokesman of the Royal Colonial Institute, Senator Harney, was to state:

Australia has never been louder in her cry for an independent army and navy and never more clamorous in the assertion of her distinctive nationality than at the very period when patriotic fervour of the South African War was at its hottest. 62

Close examination of the politics of the period reveals that Amery was right but inadequate, Hodorn not completely wrong yet wilfully imperceptive, Mahan too general about a vital point, Brassey unduly surprised and gratified, Jebb convincing for reasons he dismisses, and Harney false to the facts if true to part of the spirit of the times. Each grasped something of importance. Of them all Jebb's analysis was found most fitting and, a just reward, his term "colonial nationalism" gained currency among contemporaries.
The truth of the matter was that in 1902 neither national policies nor the role of the Commonwealth in the Empire had been settled. Conflicting opinions - between a Higgins and a Fowler or a Reid and a Barton - reflected differences held by Australians at large. Each was necessary for the formulation of future defence policy. None was an absolute guide in itself. For the South African conflict was the occasion for a debate about the issues of peace and war which reached back to Gavan Duffy, Parkes, J.D. Lang, and beyond. The perpetuation of the debate was far more important than the war.

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CHAPTER SIX

THE TRIAL OF AN IMPERIALIST: THE MILITARY REFORMS OF

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR EDWARD HUTTON (1901-1905)

It will be readily conceded by all observers of recent events in our history that a mutual, though unwritten, understanding exists between all portions of the Queen's dominions. The ties of sentiment and of self-interest alike render the maintenance of the Empire necessary for the commercial and political development of each and all .... (This) can be best effected by an "offensive-defensive" system of defence.

COLONEL E.T.H. HUTTON, 1898.

If we let him alone he will land us in a queer mess. He will put the collar and chain around the kangaroo all right.

LABOUR PARLIAMENTARIAN,
September 1902.

If (Sir John Forrest) should now fail to guard the rights of the citizen soldier against the claims of professionalism, the Federal Parliament may just as well repeal all existing Defence Acts and Regulations, and proclaim a military dictatorship under Major-General Hutton.

The DAILY HERALD, 18 March 1903.

(The) soldier has been set aside. The civilians have triumphed. The needs of defence have been subordinated to political considerations.

MAJOR-GENERAL HUTTON, November 1903.

I have impressed upon successive Governments the primary importance of having a mobile field force ... capable of the Defence of Australia as well as Australian interests elsewhere if hereafter considered advisable .... Never have I recommended, or implied, any proposal to give the control of Australian troops to other than the Commonwealth.

MAJOR-GENERAL HUTTON, November 1904.
On the 1st of March 1901 the Commonwealth assumed control of the state defence departments. It was, however, in no great haste to appoint a military adviser to command the federal forces.

From the outset Barton acknowledged the need for an Imperial officer: a soldier on the active list of the British Army, enthusiastic enough to undertake arduous duties and travel extensively, and sufficiently experienced to create an army from the disparate colonial units and, with the Minister, to mould military policy; a qualified expert who was at once discreet and tactful, sympathetic to the citizen-soldiery, and fully acquainted with the war in South Africa. For one such man Cabinet was prepared to pay £2,000 a year — so long as he was unconditionally recommended by Lord Roberts.

None of the officers selected by Roberts for Australian approval would accept the post. Some wanted at least double the salary. All required, in accordance with the advice of Imperial authorities, a large staff including four other British officers. In particular, Chamberlain wanted to see the Assistant Quarter-Master-General, responsible for strategic assessments and plans for "offensive and defensive operations", drawn from the British Army. Negotiations were protracted. Indeed the first Defence Bill, naval policy, and intervention in South Africa were discussed before the matter was settled. Finally, Cabinet raised its offer to £2,500 and of its own accord mentioned a candidate whom, after repeated enquiries, Lord Roberts eventually felt "disposed to recommend ...".

On the 29th of January 1902 Major-General Sir Edward Thomas Henry Hutton, K.C.M.G., C.B., arrived in Melbourne and assumed command of the Commonwealth forces. He was well known and well spoken for in New South Wales where he had served as commandant. Not only was he familiar with the Bevan Edwards report of 1889 but had been president of the second Federal Military Conference. Reid was therefore delighted at
the appointment. Hutton was prepared to accept the salary. More important, he assured Chamberlain that he would not require the services of any other Imperial officer. Under him Head-Quarters Staff could be composed of Australians. Barton declared that Australia was indeed fortunate to receive the services of such an experienced officer for so low a sum. The radicals were not so sure.

Before leaving England, Hutton had requested that his term of office be reduced from five to three years. This was granted. He also sought the local rank of Lieutenant-General, in part to place his authority over the state commandants beyond question. The War Office refused. Roberts promised to reconsider promotion if "the military affairs of the Federation have succeeded ...". Close to the age of retirement he had, then, three years in which to weld the forces of the Commonwealth and lay the foundation of military policy. Cabinet, federal parliament, and the War Office would be watching him.

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Hutton was singularly qualified to expound his fixed opinions about the future Australian army. Born in 1848 he had, at the age of nineteen, joined the King's Royal Rifle Corps as an ensign. In fifteen years he had graduated from Staff College, fought in the first Boer War, and campaigned against the Zulus. During the Egyptian and Soudan expeditions he again saw action, was mentioned in despatches, and had his horse shot from under him. Experience in the field was matched by responsibility at command level. He returned to England to take a position on the staff at Aldershot.

These formative years must have been exciting ones for Hutton. Apart from the experience of campaigning he lived through a period of reform which saw the abolition of the purchase of commissions against intense parliamentary opposition and the beginning of the struggle against promotion by seniority alone. Rather than living a comparatively indolent regimental life, he became an enthusiastic professional. Under the aegis
of Wolseley he became, as he later explained, "the humble instrument for establishing the Mounted Infantry" against the scornful opposition of cavalry officers. Service at home had convinced him of the unused potential of citizen-soldiers; service abroad convinced him of the strategic and tactical value of the mounted infantry, not as an ancillary, but as an arm of the service in its own right.

In his own terms, Hutton expounded on the nationalization of the rifle mentioned by the *Age* and even the principles of mateship described by Breaker Morant. The range of modern weapons, he insisted, and the deadly effects of concentrated rifle fire called for rapid mobility. On horseback, the infantryman had great potential offensive power; dismounted, he possessed all the qualities of the marksman and skirmisher plus the facility for fluid manoeuvre. Dispersion under attack, concentration of fire power in defence, rapid flank marches on the offensive, the use of natural cover for advance or retreat, and, in the last resort, the charge, were all possible with mounted infantry. Fluid warfare called for special qualities in officers and men. The pipe-clay and pedantry of the peacetime parade ground had to go. Drill for the troops would have to be simplified; initiative set at a premium; individualism encouraged; efficiency with automatic weapons a necessity. The men would be bound together by common background if enlisted on a territorial system but more so by experience and comradeship. Non-commissioned officers had to be selected with care. Discipline had to be firm but not stifling. The spirit of cooperation between officers and between commanders and the men would be perpetuated, Hutton believed, if the officers, unlike those in France, were drawn from the one class. For efficiency and cohesion in war, to win the respect and obedience of the men, it was essential that all officers be non-political and professionally competent.

While Hutton failed to persuade in England, he sought and found vindication in the outer Empire. He also displayed remarkable versatility. As commandant in New South Wales from 1893 to 1896 he did much to revitalize the militia system, enthuse officers of the permanent artillery, institute
... an enthusiastic professional in search of vindication ...
reserves and service units, hasten the formation of volunteer infantry regiments, reorganize administration, draw up plans for mobilization, and establish the nucleus of a field force, the predominant feature of which was the mounted rifles. More than any other he raised the status of the forces. As a federalist, he emphasized the importance of the field force and played an important role in drawing up the Federal Defence Scheme and the Draft Federal Agreement. Justifiably impressed with his reforms, he returned to England to praise colonial troops, often to sceptical audiences. After observing the German and French manoeuvres of 1897 he was more convinced that colonial experience had confirmed his teachings: citizen-soldiers needed only effective organization and expert officers to form a complete and powerful army of all three arms - infantry, mounted rifles, and artillery - capable of augmenting the regular forces. The alternative, conscription or compulsory military training, he found impressively suitable to Teutonic calculation but antipathetic to Celtic impetuosity. When later confronted directly by the proposal he found it abhorrent, "contrary to the principles of military service among Anglo-Saxon races", an unwarranted danger to free political institutions, and an intrusion on personal liberty.

It was natural for him to declare that soldiers bore the heavy responsibility of cultivating military spirit in Australia - and elsewhere - and of inculcating in the young national character, healthy bodies, patriotism, self-abnegation, devotion to duty, and realization of the sacrifices that sprang from citizenship. But compulsory training was too high a price to pay for those advantages. These remained his views until well after 1908.

From England Hutton set out for Canada where as General Officer Commanding at the turn of the century he had a more difficult time. Relations with the Cabinet were often tense and sometimes acrimonious. Nevertheless, his insistence upon the training of militia officers at the Kingston Military College and the method of inducting reserves and recruits into undermanned units to bring them to wartime establishment brought success during the South African War. He led the Second Battalion of the Royal Canadian Artillery with skill and credit. In mid-1900 he was given permission to form the First Mounted Infantry Division of some 6,000 men
from units of the British Regular Army, the Imperial Yeomanry, and Canadian, New Zealand, and Australian contingents. On his staff were the Victorian, Colonel J.C. Hoad, and the New South Welshman, Colonel W.T. Bridges. Tasmanians, South Australians, and Queenslanders also served under him.

This was almost the vindication he sought. Using railways and road he demonstrated the strategic mobility of his forces - but so did many other commanders. He did command Imperial troops from Great and Greater Britain - but the force so painstakingly collected from many theatres was soon scattered. It may have been as well because intercolonial rivalry and resentment at being subordinated in a larger organization were already causing friction among the Australians. The demonstration had lasted too short a time in a war on too vast a scale to impress official opinion. Nevertheless, Hutton felt he had successfully applied the principles he had long advocated, drawn the correct lessons from the conflict, and knew for certain how correct was his prescription for training mounted infantrymen.  

The first General Officer Commanding was thus a conservative who believed in individuality, a British officer who had sought service under colonial governments, a professional who was as zealous as he could be arrogant, a man of varied but not outstanding experience who was possessed by a vision requiring fulfilment. A sometimes formidable presence on the parade ground, he could be warm and affable to his intimates. He could grasp the essentials of a military problem yet have difficulty in expressing them with clarity and subtlety. He could practice guile - indeed Alfred Deakin was to describe him as "absolutely slim" and yet speak tactlessly. He would extend the arm of patronage to protect officers from public fury and yet call it upon himself by chastising prominent citizen-soldiers. He expected loyalty and was deeply distressed by apparent betrayal or angered by military criticism. He surrounded himself with protégés but was unwilling to delegate responsibility. Despite a truculent manner and a disdain of politicians, he craved private understanding and public recognition. Later he smarted under the attack which, he bitterly
complained, came from "ill-informed members of Parliament who have had neither the training nor possess the military instincts to qualify them as critics" who "credit me with all the prejudices and ideas of a machine-made officer" and remained ignorant "of my character, of my training, and of the almost unique experience which Providence has given me in commanding Colonial troops in all parts of the Empire and under the varied conditions of peace and war". For not only was Hutton seen as the archetypal British officer and military expert whom nationalists and amateurs felt duty bound to criticize, he was also an Imperialist who appeared to give them cause.

His attitude to Empire was set in the eighties and expounded during the following decade. "The more trade, the more war; and the more war, the more trade", he once declared, invoking Seeley's *The Expansion of England*. The fruits and beneficence of Empire followed the sword; trade followed the flag; expeditionary forces protected honour and interests. Without expansion, the stern ordeal of war, and national difficulty, no state could become rich and powerful. The evolving state within the British nation, Australia, was no exception. Aspirations in the Pacific and increasing trade augured greatness in Eastern seas; friction with other commercial powers was inevitable and conflict likely. These were beliefs to chill the blood of Gladstonians, radicals, and Labour members in the New South Wales legislature. Moreover, as a strategist and a soldier Hutton saw the Empire as a unit and the forces of the Crown as one. Though loyal to the colonial governments he served, his allegiance would not be in doubt if the Crown were at war and his superiors hesitated to cooperate. He owed first loyalty to the Queen.

His interest in Imperial military cooperation was sustained by his absorption with the citizen-soldiers in the colonies. With the advent of federation, Hutton was sure, Australian forces could be organized for active Imperial cooperation.* He therefore envisaged the formation of a

* For succinct account of forms which military cooperation could take — and the distinction between a formal and informal Imperial reserve — see Appendix B.
vast militia army under the Crown drawn from the field forces of all the self-governing colonies. Basing his plan on the recommendations of the Federal Military Conferences and projecting the proposed Australian organization on the Empire, he suggested in 1897 that each colony maintain forces under legislation like the British Militia Act. Field forces of each colony could then be used for home - or passive - defence; they could also combine with other colonial forces for expeditionary operations. This was the true offensive-defensive potential of the militia. It had to be organized and trained to fulfil both functions. On the one hand, there was no reason to have Australian forces controlled and paid by the British government; on the other, there were substantial objections to improvising an expeditionary force from hastily trained volunteers. For only by rapid mobilization and concentration was security at home and success in distant spheres of operation assured. The Australian mounted rifles could create chaos by penetrating deep beyond Kandahar in the event of Russian attack upon India. War was ever best fought on foreign soil.  

The use of colonial troops as some kind of Imperial reserve had been discussed since the days of Dalley's gallant offer. The idea evoked increasing interest after Hutton's departure from New South Wales. The War Office had been prepared to countenance active military cooperation primarily because it demonstrated the solidarity of Greater Britain, not because there was military potential to be tapped. Small colonial units might serve as they did in the Soudan; or they might serve abroad to relieve British regulars of garrison duties on distant Royal Naval stations. Despite marginal and fitful interest in the offensive capacities of colonial troops, official assessment of their prowess in London was low.  

The popularity of the mounted rifle contingents attending the Diamond Jubilee foreshadowed a change. Commenting on "Major-General Hutton's pets" the London Daily Mail stated that the officers and men of the parading units were "of course loyalists from plume to spur". The men, it observed, were "peculiarly characteristic" of Australia.
As a type they are the swarthy, lean and lithe warrior, with bone and muscle so hard that you couldn't drive a nail into any part of them. They ride like centaurs, for their saddle has been their cradle, and the horse that could throw one of them has not yet been foaled ...

Drawn from pastoral pursuits in the outback, these examples of sturdy manhood put the Imperial yeomanry to shame. Britain stood in no danger as long as the "dependencies" could produce such soldiers. This eulogy was proudly written into the records of the unit to become the Second Australian Light Horse Regiment. ¹⁵

Plans from Australia involving far more centralized control than Hutton was willing to contemplate were not long in following. During 1897 Lord Brassey, of Naval Annual fame and Governor of Victoria, advocated the formation of a special corps of 5,000 mounted rifles drawn from the Australian colonial forces. In return for an annual retainer of twenty pounds paid by the British government, each citizen-soldier in especially designated units would be liable for service in Imperial wars. This scheme — and its many modifications — contemplated the creation of Australian units as part of a formal Imperial reserve which would automatically fall under British control on the declaration of an emergency. The Colonial Defence Committee was not, however, impressed. Small colonial forces attached to British regiments during expeditionary operations were one thing; to burden the Imperial treasury was another. The return would not warrant the cost. Australians were inexperienced, unevenly trained, variously organized, and hostile to rigid discipline. All experience pointed to the value of regular troops. Moreover, imperial federationists, the Committee implied, overlooked the gravity of political objections, indeed ignored the workings of representative and autonomous government in the colonies. ¹⁶

The South African War and its aftermath slowly changed official opinion. Mounted troops proved indispensable; militia forces were essential to augment the regular units; and colonials had demonstrated
their prowess. By 1902 there seemed widespread approval for the scheme which Hutton, among many others, had advocated. Yet the War Office remained cautious. It was not until 1904 – the final year of Hutton’s term of office under the Commonwealth – that the Elgin Commission into the conduct of the war in South Africa unreservedly declared the use of the military potential of Greater Britain to be a matter of necessity, not permissive condescension. The report stated:

If the war teaches anything it is this, that throughout the Empire, the United Kingdom, its colonies and dependencies, there is a reserve of military strength which for many reasons, we cannot and do not wish to convert into a large standing army, but to which we may be glad to turn again in an hour of need as we did in 1899 … We regret to say that we are not satisfied that enough is being done to place matters on a better footing in the event of another emergency. 17

Again events validated Hutton’s earlier assertions and schemes; again he was denied personal credit. For just as it was difficult for Australian radicals to dissociate Hutton, the soldier, from the stereotype of the British officer, so they distrusted Hutton, the strategist, because he seemed too much the British Imperialist. In fact his devotion to Empire was restrained by his sensitivity to nationalist aspirations and by his commitment to the federal experiment. The organization of a national army owing allegiance to the Commonwealth while drawing sustenance from territorial affiliations was his aim. Whatever the virtues of Imperial control, military cooperation within the Empire, he knew, could be based only upon the will of the various autonomous governments to form an "offensive-defensive alliance" – upon an unwritten agreement to offer mutual assistance as loyalty to Crown and country dictated. Moreover, the glorification of war – after the experience of South Africa – was no longer fashionable or tenable. An even stronger restraint was Hutton's professional ethic. He was trained to advise and obey his civilian superiors. Without betraying his responsibilities to the Crown, sacrificing his concept of Empire, or ignoring his duties to the War Office, he earnestly attempted to serve the Commonwealth as if it already possessed many characteristics of a nation-state. 18
There was one other dimension to Hutton's character which Australian politicians failed to perceive and utilize. As a professional soldier, he not only desired the sympathetic direction of his civilian superiors but demanded a clear defence policy — or at least a cogent list of instructions — approved by Cabinet. This he considered essential to serve the Commonwealth, especially if his organization of colonial forces was to rest on something more substantial than shifting parliamentary opinion. As a professional, he also had a fixed concept of what constituted a defence policy. It rested upon the responsibilities to be assumed by the civil arm of government. 19

What is state policy in external affairs? What specific interests within or outside the nation does the state consider worthy of protection? Who are the probable enemies? What are the probable dangers? How much armed might is therefore necessary to underwrite policy? What resources are available? What organization of men and equipment will best meet these conditions? How can the forces be most effectively used? Taken together and in order the answers to these questions form a defence policy and provide the essential context for more technical consideration. Soldiers may advise or provide answers to some of them. Cabinet must approve the answers to all, including the most tentative. For the professional soldier there is an essential symmetry in defence policy which begins with grand strategy and ends with plans for mobilization. This demand for civil direction assumes that statesmen may quite properly refuse to commit their government irrevocably to certain courses of action in peacetime; yet where they cannot be certain they must deal in probabilities. Room for manipulation, manoeuvre, and diplomacy is essential to political life; fixed plans, down to the formidable problems of logistics and railway timetables, is an unavoidable aspect of military thinking. But defence policy must never be so vague that probable courses of action cannot be postulated for military planning; military planning must never be so rigid that no latitude is left for diplomatic manoeuvre. Even in peacetime when questions are difficult to answer the responsibility of the soldier is clear; so, too, is the obligation of the statesmen. Military planning
in an Imperial situation may involve further complexities. Yet the closer a self-governing community is - or aspires - to dominion status the more relevant the mode of formulating defence policy. Colonial nationalism, as Richard Jebb saw, was often accompanied by a repudiation of the comforts in the Gladstonian doctrine and involved an assessment of national interests and local policy within the Empire. At the very least, if ministers argued that the basic considerations of policy were long the responsibility of the British government, their military advisers could demand that they decide how far it was appropriate to accept guidance from London.

For Hutton and his protege, Colonel W.T. Bridges, who was to be Chief of Intelligence after 1904, this was no academic argument. Whether Australian ministries found such views foreign or irrelevant is not clear. It is certain that no minister and no Cabinet attempted to fulfil its responsibilities until well after 1907, and in a sense failed until the outbreak of the Great War. In the earlier period, under weak, confused, or inexperienced ministers, initiative often fell to parliament where a confusion existed between defence legislation enabling the organization of forces and defence policy dealing with their function. The will of parliament amounted to a jumble of caveats and negative injunctions directed at the schemes Hutton propounded. No military policy was defined by Cabinet; none approved. Colonel Bridges was still trying to extract answers to the questions in 1908. 20

At first Major-General Hutton prospered in his new command precisely because civil direction was lacking and he had ample opportunity to display both his talents and his convictions. For soon after his arrival in Melbourne Sir John Forrest and Edmund Barton requested that he draft a general scheme of defence. The resulting Minute upon the Defence of Australia of April 1902 drew upon his previous knowledge of Australia and contained the distillation of his varied experience. It was to be the basis of all his reforms. In accepted fashion he began with a strategical appreciation and ended with a table of establishments. Hutton, the soldier and the Imperialist, could not but intrude upon policy.
... an Imperialist with a prescription for national defence ...
He filled the gap left by the indecision or indifference of Cabinet. It was a position he was to refuse to vacate.²¹

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The basic considerations of Hutton's policy bore two faces. The first was familiar and serene. Traditional threats from traditional enemies would be adequately met by traditional solutions. As a dependency of the Crown protected by a Royal Navy it should help to maintain, the Commonwealth could face with equanimity the prospect of raids. Commerce protection could be left to Imperial forces. The cities would be safe. For garrison troops would man the fixed defences whose strength would be supplemented by the colonial naval forces under military authority. Once contemplation passed from probabilities to the various possibilities arising "from any warlike complication" the role of the field forces became more important. On mobilization they could "deny access to all cities, towns, and harbours of commercial importance".²² Capable of strategic concentration and mobility they would constitute a grave deterrent to an enemy commander who would realize that even with an expeditionary force of 50,000 men - and all the attendant problems of communications and supply - he could not hope to occupy and permanently hold any sector of the vast continent. Landing would be relatively easy; military success very uncertain. The field forces would thus be Australia's assurance against invasion in the most desperate of circumstances and against collapse of confidence in the City of London. This was conventional wisdom.²³

The second face was at once more apprehensive and martial. Consciously intruding upon policy, Hutton insisted that the Commonwealth possess the sword of state to wage war - to meet Imperial commitments; to benefit from the rivalry between major powers; and to defend specific external interests. As a bastion of Empire in the Pacific the Commonwealth might well choose to use her expeditionary forces in an Imperial war. It might also be compelled to do so. The Commonwealth was in the arena of Old World strife. Its territories now joined those of Germany and Holland
and were close to those of France and Germany in the South-Western Pacific. Russian designs in Northern China no less than those in India and Persia menaced the peace of the Pacific. America had recently established herself as an overseas power. The rise of Japan as a first class power was unprecedented in history "and must prove in the near future of the utmost consequence to the political and commercial prospects of the Commonwealth". The centre of interest might for the moment lie in China where both political and economic rivalry proceeded apace; but the whole area - virtually all interests within a 4,000 mile area from Port Darwin - could be affected. It was not as if Australia had contracted out of this struggle. The development of "national instinct and the increase of commercial prosperity tend to show that Australia in the near future is destined to play a leading part in the Pacific". Legislation, policy, and parliamentary discussion had already anticipated the declaration of paramount interests in the South-West Pacific. The first essential was, therefore, the maintenance of British sea supremacy. The second was the organization of field forces under the control of the Commonwealth. It must possess "a Field Force capable of undertaking military operations in whatever part of the world it may be desired by Australia to employ them".

The military organization Hutton proposed was designed to meet all these contingencies. It rested upon five general principles. First was the priority given to the field forces in general and the mounted infantry in particular. Second was the cadre principle. Nearly all units of the field force would be raised at roughly half-establishment in peacetime but with nearly the full number of officers. Commanders would thus be trained and organization preserved for rapid expansion by the induction of men from the loosely-organized reserve. This was thought at once to suit the fighting temperament of Australians and to be sufficiently cheap. Third was the related necessity of establishing a firm organization with trained staffs and officers capable of absorbing the expansion of units while preserving coherence and clarity in the chain of command. Essential to this was the quality and predominance of Head-Quarters Staff. Firm
organization Hutton considered more important than training. The fourth principle was more often implied than explicit in Hutton's reforms, but nonetheless of importance. Any militia system ultimately depended for its success upon the acceptance and popularity of soldiers in society. It followed that staff officers, permanent troops, and citizen-soldiers should be certain of their status. Pay, allowances, parades, equipment, and social appointments were all in part directed to this end. The fifth principle was to cause the most trouble and eventually to undermine the foundations of the scheme. Military defence was to remain inexpensive. On his arrival Hutton declared that he could effect his reforms within the limits of the federal budget. At the time the Military Estimates of 1901-2 stood at £831,212; shortly after they were reduced to £750,131. The General Officer Commanding accepted this limitation explaining that a further and separate sum of approximately £500,000 would be necessary to equip and arm the Australian forces. Yet within a short time the estimates were reduced to £600,000.27

The hub of a military organization involving the scattered forces in six states and the flexibility for rapid expansion in war, indeed the "essential and paramount condition" for successful reform, was a professionally competent and powerful Head-Quarters Staff whose direction and authority would be felt throughout the army, in permanent and citizen units alike.28 Within a month of his arrival Hutton had made arrangements for a staff of twelve officers. In deference to Cabinet, he chose only eight, each of whom had served under him before and knew well his aims. A Chief of Staff was not appointed because Hutton believed that no Australian had the knowledge and capacity to be able "in all respects to act as the alter ego of the General Officer Commanding".29 Much detailed work and responsibility would therefore be borne personally by Hutton. Initially this may have suited his temperament but the burden became crushing once Cabinet ruled that the two key positions on the staff, when they later became vacant, were not to be filled.30
Head-Quarters was primarily a central directorate over which the General Officer Commanding ruled supreme, his influence via staff officers reaching into the district staffs and the militia units. It was also a professional club bearing the stamp of its first member and capable of dispensing rewards and favours. Yet it was a club with a function. Towards the end of his tour of duty, Hutton became increasingly aware of how much his disciples would have to complete the reforms he had initiated. Indeed the officers on his staff, some attached to the district staffs, and a few from the well-established militia regiments, were later to be known in government circles as "Hutton's men". Two were to rise to high positions in the Commonwealth. They could not have been more diverse in character and ability.  

Colonel J.C. Hoad was distinguished by a gift for seeking political preferment rather than any marked ability as a soldier. Australian born and a citizen-soldier, he had joined the Victorian permanent forces in 1886 and showed considerable interest in the mounted rifles. He was groomed almost from the outset to command as a native-born colonial and had first gained Alfred Deakin's attention as an aspirant in the Australian Natives Association. Under Deakin administrations he later rose to the position of first Chief of Imperial General Staff, Commonwealth Section. In the nineties he came to Hutton's notice, served under him in South Africa, and prospered by his patronage. Valued primarily for his industry and loyalty, Hutton appointed him Chief Staff Officer and Deputy Adjutant-General responsible for enlistment, training, and discipline. More informally he served as a buffer between Head-Quarters and the politicians. His selection by Cabinet as an observer in the Russo-Japanese War instead of the two recommended officers, Hutton took as an insult to his judgement and an injury to his scheme. Only Hoad's disloyalty was worse. Having "signally failed as Chief Staff Officer", wrote Hutton in 1904, Colonel Hoad "has neither claim nor qualification to represent Australian troops with the Japanese Army". As we explore manoeuvres in the corridors of power, it will become clear that Hoad had some value to Australian ministries as a grateful and pliable instrument and as an agent for those who wished to preserve the status of the citizen-soldier. He had neither
the temperament nor the training to be a professional. His rise to fame epitomized the period between 1905 and 1911 when, as Dr. C.E. Bean discreetly and regretfully explains, servility and intrigue were as common "in the Australian military staff as ... in those of the older armies".33

The Assistant Quarter-Master-General, Lieutenant-Colonel William Throsby Bridges, held a lesser but more vital position under Hutton. The duties which the Colonial Defence Committee claimed could be fulfilled only by an Imperial officer fell increasingly to him: military intelligence, tables of organization, peace and war establishments, and later, the drafting of complete schemes of defence for the Commonwealth. As a member of the Federal Military Conferences and an officer under Hutton in the nineties, Bridges was in the position to grasp his superior's design in all its complexity. He was in this sense Hutton's man. Though English born and initially trained in the Canadian Military College, Bridges had joined the permanent forces of New South Wales in 1885. He had lived long enough in Australia to be sharply aware of national aspirations. Yet, unlike Braid, he was neither garrulous nor given to intrigue. Unlike Hutton, he was neither forceful nor politically tactless. Dour, brusque, gauche, and sometimes painfully rude in manner, Bridges possessed an essentially shy nature. Dignified self-effacement hid great strength and wide intelligence. The theory and practice of war fascinated him. At the School of Gunnery in New South Wales before the close of the century, and later as the Commonwealth representative on the Imperial General Staff in 1909 he grasped the opportunity to acquaint himself thoroughly with the many demands of his profession. After Hutton left Australia, Bridges was appointed Chief of Intelligence and was to appear before the Committee of Imperial Defence while it was drawing up a general scheme for Australian defence. Yet the steps from Hutton's staff to higher positions were slow. His very virtue, professional restraint, and the demand for clear civil direction in implementing what remained of Hutton's military policy, annoyed his civilian superiors. Later, he was willing to be shuffled into the position of first Commandant of the Australian Military College whose establishment Hutton had pressed upon successive ministries. On the outbreak of war,
Bridges was appointed to lead the first Australian Imperial Force. This was his just reward, a reward he characteristically thought might best be offered to Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Hutton. 34

Hutton struggled vainly with Cabinet to ensure high status and suitable salary for his staff and other young men. Few officers had private means; there was no system of retirement pensions. It was his aim "to place the professional experience, knowledge, and physical capacity which are demanded from Officers in high and responsible positions, to some extent at least on the same level, as the other professions such as the Bar, the Church, or Commerce" 35 so that the "best educated and most desirable gentlemen" 36 of the highest qualifications would embark upon military careers whose pinnacle would be appointment to Head-Quarters. For Cabinet this was a vexing problem. Not only was the pay of officers in the states disparate; it was variously augmented by allowances for horses, servants, and housing. Pledged to economize, the government had no desire to see substantial or differential salaries. Neither did the radicals in parliament. They would tolerate no favours bestowed on military men. They would find the preference given to staff officers repugnant. So although Sir John Forrest slowly grasped the principles of Hutton's recommendations and belatedly gave them grudging support, Cabinet reduced the proposed scale of salaries. This was to be the first of a series of effective attacks upon Head-Quarters in which economy and egalitarian ideals appeared to march side by side. 37

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In 1901 there were some 29,600 troops of all arms throughout Australia. Their primary function was to protect the fortifications guarding harbours of refuge and thus defend the main coastal cities. Australia under attack could therefore be visualized as a series of isolated garrisons with the sea on one side and a vast land mass on the other. This legacy of the colonial era when fortifications were the core of defence needed only certain modifications to meet the dictates of federalist policy. 38
Hutton's scheme foreshadowed a profound change. Because field forces were to be the primary instrument of national defence the capitals ceased to be semi-isolated garrisons. In strategic terms, they became the bases of extended military operations. They were links in a chain of railway communications which allowed strategic mobility. Fixed artillery defences, "sedentary" garrison troops, and the local naval forces would hold them secure. When not wanted to meet more serious threats, the field forces, Hutton argued, could augment their strength. Fixed defences, except for those at the naval base at Port Jackson, were of minor importance. 39

This would have been far more distressing to parliament if the consequences had been felt. But because Hutton had no wish to see the funds that would finance his scheme used for renewing port defences, he did not recommend the alteration of existing arrangements. It was in his best interests not to stir a hornets' nest and to avoid controversy about the relative merits of each garrison. He therefore accepted that Adelaide, Hobart, Melbourne, Sydney, Newcastle, Brisbane, and Townsville could continue to be protected ports and that Albany and Thursday Island would remain of value as harbours of refuge and potential coaling depots for the Royal Navy. The defences at Port Kembla were allowed to languish. To Sir John Forrest's satisfaction fixed defences were recommended for Fremantle to protect the coaling and docking facilities under construction there. 40

For the same reason, Hutton was cautious in suggesting rearmament. Most of the existing works were designed after 1877 and the alteration in types of guns had not been matched by changes in disposition of the forts. Moreover, the ports were defended by an amazing array of weapons which colonial governments had purchased in haste, often from private armament firms, during the eighties when coastal ordnance in Britain was in a confused state. Hutton was content to shuffle existing armaments from one port to another and tentatively order only a few new guns from Britain. Except for Fremantle and changes in the armament to Fort Glanville in South Australia, little was done. The purchase of quick-firing guns of
new design could await the immediate future. In view of his own aims this advice was prudent. It was also sound. Most of the defended ports, despite the proliferation and age of weapons, were in fact over-defended.\footnote{41}

The defence of Thursday Island in Torres Straits through which so much of the trade between Queensland and the East passed was a more difficult problem. Indeed it was to cause complex technical discussion until 1914 and protracted uncertainty. The fundamental issues were clear in Hutton's day. For with the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, Chambers of Commerce in various towns along the Queensland coast urged the Watson government to provide adequate protection against Russian commerce raiders entering the Barrier Route from the North and devastating the coastal trade. The importance, and the limitations, of the fixed defences on Thursday Island became apparent. Successive Australian ministries seem to have believed that the battery on the island would prevent the passage of enemy cruisers through the straits. This simply was not so. The guns did not cover even the commonly used channels through the reefs. Denying the enemy access to the straits was the role of the Imperial Squadron on the Australian Station. Accordingly, Hutton and his staff recommended strengthening the permanent garrison and the eventual purchase of quick-firing guns. Little was done even at the height of fears of Russian intent in the Far East. The problem of Thursday Island was passed to other governments.\footnote{42}

Not that this disturbed Hutton unduly. Faced with the alternative of strengthening the fixed defences on Thursday Island or maintaining the strength of the Royal Australian Artillery, organized from the permanent artillery of the colonial forces, he would unhesitatingly choose the latter. Again his preference can eventually be traced to the needs of the field force. Just as Head-Quarters Staff was the pinnacle of the military profession, so this unit was the model for the army he hoped to mould. The future efficiency of all forces - and even the competence of leadership - rested on these permanent soldiers who were encouraged to view themselves as a corps d'elite. They had to man the fixed defences
and train militia artillerymen and engineers to meet the demands of port defence.\textsuperscript{43}

In this, the garrison forces were to fulfil traditional and orthodox functions. Drawn from most of the volunteer regiments and some militia units, they were the sedentary troops, without mobility. Because the resisting of flash raids was their business, the cadre principle was not applied to them. Hutton had hoped to see their strength in excess of 15,500 and 30 field guns; but eventually his organization allowed for only 11,752 garrison troops and 26 guns. With existing fixed armaments, the elite Royal Australian Artillery and such garrison forces, the capitals would be safe.\textsuperscript{44}

Yet the duties of the permanent soldiery went beyond this. Men of the Royal Australian Artillery were to form instructional cadres for the training of the field forces. The future efficiency of Australian defence was said to rest with them.

The eighteen regiments of the field force were to have a peace establishment of 13,831 troops and 60 field guns and a war establishment of 27,553 men and 84 field guns. They were to be organized into six Light Horse Brigades - in war some 10,500 mounted rifles - and three Infantry Brigades - in war some 12,000 infantrymen. Each brigade would be equipped with staffs, field artillery, field engineers, transport columns of the Army Service Corps, units of the Army Medical Corps, and other auxiliary services so that it could act independently or in combination. In certain circumstances this might prove difficult. New South Wales could muster enough men to complete three brigades; but to mobilize the third infantry brigade troops would be called together from Tasmania, Queensland, South Australia, and Western Australia. Facilities for transport by rail and coastal shipping were therefore essential. So, too, was the maintenance of regimental organizations in the states ready to undertake local operations and able to combine at brigade strength. The "elastic" and "carefully constructed framework into which the fighting
material of the nation can be fitted when the emergency arises" was therefore to be effected at all levels. Even the smaller tactical units - the squadron of the Light Horse Regiment and the company of the Infantry Regiment - were to be maintained in peace at half strength, though with a nearly full complement of officers. Into these would be inducted men who volunteered for service once danger was imminent, preference being given to those who had military experience.45

Whence were the experienced volunteers to come? European planning of the day usually included machinery for calling to colours reservists who had trained with a particular regiment. Such schemes, apart from often being the product of conscription, called for a stability of the male population and a degree of governmental control unknown in Australia. A surprisingly large, if uncounted, number of men had served but not completed training in militia units. In addition there were most of the 16,000 Australians who fought in South Africa but had neither been drawn from nor returned to existing regiments. It had long been found fruitless and expensive to keep in contact with these men. They were rarely willing, even if they had completed service in militia units, to undertake the yearly musters a reserve system might involve; to organize and pay them would stretch already slender resources. For Hutton the solution lay in making the best of Australian conditions. The few reserves which had been organized were allotted to garrison forces; retired officers were put on the reserve list. Beyond that, he looked to the rifle clubs and their 29,000 members. Members were to be encouraged to look upon shooting as a skill and not a pastime. In New South Wales some clubs had been affiliated with militia units in order to introduce a loose reserve system. It was hoped to impose this system on all states. It was also hoped that many veterans and time-expired militiamen would join rifle associations. From the cadet forces maintained by some schools in Victoria and New South Wales, but soon to come under the control of the Defence Department, Hutton hoped that young men could be inducted into the field force. From the many Australians with military experience - in and outside the system - Hutton believed he could easily find the 14,000 volunteers
needed in time of emergency.

Moreover, there existed the principle of levy _en masse_ discussed at the Federal Military Conferences and soon to be embodied in Commonwealth legislation. Though all men between the ages of eighteen and sixty could be compelled to take arms, a process of selective conscription was envisaged to make good, if necessary, deficiencies in the militia units. The experience of 1899, when men of no military background were hastily organized into units and trained in South Africa initially for garrison duties and guarding lines of communication, indicated that such powers need be exercised only in the most dire emergency. Even the most cautious assessments were not to embrace such contingencies.46

The Colonial Defence Committee remained sceptical. Friction, confusion, and inability for immediate service were the inherent defects of the cadre system without organized and fully trained reserves. The expansion of existing units in war, it argued, was to be deprecated in any army. It would be crippling where militia units, themselves so poorly trained, would be flooded by untrained or slightly trained recruits. The rifle clubs were not worth the subsidies the Commonwealth paid. Moreover, a plan of organization which allowed three of the six brigades to be drawn from two or more military districts "can only be regarded as formations on paper".47 Training and manoeuvres at brigade strength would be difficult, command uncertain, confusion of responsibility likely.48

Against such advice from Whitehall Hutton turned a deaf ear. He doubtless believed that given the working of his scheme in its entirety for five years, the cadres would remain firm and organization coherent. The old hands would help impose the kind of discipline on newcomers drawn from the same locality in the manner he had earlier described. He could have dwelt upon the military potential of mateship; he did not because he well understood the phenomenon in different terms. Moreover, the experience of raising battalions of Australian mounted rifles on a crude territorial system as Commonwealth contingents for South Africa — battalions that would have been capable of combination — served to support his hopes.
He knew that the war had clearly established the fighting qualities of the Australians. Precisely because they had shown their prowess when "attached to larger bodies of troops which were led by carefully selected and experienced officers of the Imperial army" responsible for staff duties "of a larger and more important kind" it was essential not only to preserve organization and purchase the best equipment, but to train "strong and experienced Australian leaders possessing the requisite force of character, military knowledge, and professional experience".

Therein lay an ambiguity which was to disturb radicals in parliament. Hutton declared that "those who lead must be those who instruct". Militia officers were often responsible for the training of units in their regiments. But it was also the duty of permanent soldiers to instruct. Apart from Instructional Staff attached to militia units, the men of the Royal Australian Artillery were to form a number of cadres to instruct the corresponding sections of the field force. Cadres for other arms were to be similarly organized to raise the standard of militia units by instruction and example. Hutton was drawing directly from his Canadian experience. For the further role of the instructional cadres was to provide a "stiffening" in war. Without them Hutton believed that a mobile field army would be "a make believe force which could not be relied on in war". Did this mean that permanent rather than militia officers would be given command positions? The answer was not clear.

The cadres of mounted rifles and infantry, on expansion, could have been commanded by permanent officers; but their primary function was to provide instruction and a number of experienced non-commissioned officers to train the flood of relatively inexperienced volunteers. This was not so of the most technical arm, the cadres of field artillery drawn from the Royal Australian Artillery. They were to form the "nucleus of the Field (Force) Artillery".

Nor was the answer clear from the arrangements for the selection and promotion of officers. In parliament the view had been expressed that citizen officers should lead, should possess roughly the same status
of permanent officers, and should, wherever possible, be drawn from the ranks. It was a stand to be more clearly articulated as the years passed. In Hutton's scheme nearly every regiment of the field force drew upon units in the country districts. As a consequence, the officers were often men of substance. Fragmentary evidence indicates that Hutton continued to believe that cohesion and efficiency depended upon engaging officers of similar social background. Promotion from the ranks, on the other hand, he wrote, "conferred no special qualification" that would not normally be taken into account. Transfer and promotion from the citizen to the permanent forces should be restricted to young men. In all cases, competitive military examination of a high standard was indispensable. Notice might well be taken of background, experience and decorations; but the prime criterion was competence. Although militia officers were not to be excluded from staff duties "of a larger and more important kind" - that is at brigade and perhaps some regimental levels - the way was left open for permanent officers to command the citizen forces. This is what Hutton implied when he declared that "brigades of this new Field Force would be given to militia officers provided they knew their work, as commanders, and were otherwise suitable".

All rankers in the field force were to be members of the militia. Contrary to the spirit of the radicals in parliament but in accord with repeated advice from the Colonial Defence Committee, Hutton hoped to see the conversion of all Australian units to the partially-paid system. In the meantime volunteers were assigned to the garrison forces where their probable failure to assemble numbers and gain efficiency would not upset his scheme. The problem of pay had been carefully considered by the Federal Military Conference of 1896. Invoking its findings, Hutton recommended each private of the militia be paid six shillings a day in return for the equivalent of sixteen days training a year. Whenever possible eight of those days were to be spent in camps of continuous training. In order to encourage troops to pass efficiency tests pay should be given annually with deduction for failure to attend parades. This plan had obvious virtues. Pay throughout the states varied greatly, and his proposals, once implemented, would be a boon to units in Tasmania,
South Australia, and Western Australia. However, the pay for the militia units in the other states was eight shillings a day. It was clear from this that Hutton had other motives. The rate of six shillings a day had been paid to colonial troops in South Africa. He argued that any increase would make the cost of mobilizing the field force exorbitant for the Commonwealth. It would also hinder the ready use of field forces abroad to campaign with the British Army. Each militiaman, trained under Australian conditions but ready to serve under the Army Act, would, Hutton was certain, be ready to go wherever the Commonwealth thought fit. It was, in any case, a matter of small consequence to him whether he was sent somewhere on the Australian continent remote from his home or to "some overseas locality". 56

Only a field force roughly the size Major-General Bevan Edwards had long before suggested, and double that planned by the Federal Military Conferences, would be sufficient to meet the Commonwealth's new responsibilities to nation and Empire. Only a force trained, paid, led, organized and administered in the recommended fashion could defend Australia and its interests. It was no good depending upon the volunteer movement, as J.C. Watson had urged. It would be disastrous to rely upon the guerrilla army King O'Malley envisaged. It would be foolish to depend upon individual volunteers and improvised units for overseas service such as H.B. Higgins was prepared to tolerate. Only the full implementation of the scheme would give the Commonwealth an efficient, national, Imperial, and democratic army. Such was the sum of Hutton's military policy. 57

Its implementation depended to varying degrees upon the stature of the General Officer Commanding, his powers of elucidation, the perception of all the six Ministers for Defence under whom he served, the decisions of five Cabinets and, above all, upon the temper of parliament. For the initiation of reform Hutton depended most upon Sir John Forrest, the Barton ministry, and the first parliament whose attitudes we have already examined. His success was limited. 58
Until the Commonwealth Defence Act became law on the 22nd of October 1903 the forces were administered under six separate acts. Hutton's scheme of organization was not given formal approval until the 24th of July 1903 — and then with serious reservations. Although recommendations had long been presented, published, and elaborated, the affairs of the Defence Department during the first parliament seemed chaotic and directionless. "A responsible Government should have notified the General Officer Commanding of their opinion", declared one radical attempting to reach to the heart of confused debate, and if they had no opinion of their own "they should be prepared to accept the views of Parliament". 59

Parliament had views aplenty. One radical member, commenting on the use of the field forces for the protection of external interests, protested: "If that view is adopted, I say that the Minister ... instead of being called the Minister of Defence, should be designated the Minister of War." 60 Recalling Hutton's speeches of the nineties about the offensive-defensive use of colonial field forces, another declared: "If we let him alone he will land us in a queer mess. He will put the collar and chain around the kangaroo all right." 61 Another critic, while calling on parliament to continue to direct Cabinet, summarized the radical case thus: "(Whatever) is done we shall not settle the question from the point of view of military experts." 62

Parliament, not Cabinet, made policy. None of the first five Ministers for Defence under whom Hutton served bothered to grasp the fundamentals of his scheme. Between the General Officer Commanding and the radicals there were few buffers and no expositors. Insofar as Cabinet members were concerned at all with military policy, they were content with absorbing the views expressed during debate on the first Defence Bill — completed well before Hutton's arrival — and reducing the estimates by £130,000 in accord with their promise to the House. Soon after giving this undertaking to parliament in 1902, Sir John Forrest left for England to attend the Colonial Conference. Sir William Lyne and Sir George Turner
struggled with the problem in his absence. By July 1903 Forrest could proudly point to a reduction of £259,633 on the 1901–1902 estimates, excluding payments under the Naval Agreement the combined naval and military vote stood at £571,579. In short, Hutton had to accept about £100,000 less than the minimum sum needed to finance his scheme. Forrest was generally congratulated. 63

Given this kind of ministerial response, the radicals had merely to keep reminding him of their views. This they did in debates on the Supply Bills. Yet in such a context discussion of military affairs became confused with the case for economy. It was J.W. McCay, seeing the possible excesses his fellow radicals might impose, who gradually became the unappointed Minister for Defence in the lower House. McCay held a commission in the Victorian militia and was later to command the Australian Intelligence Corps; he would claim Monash as a protege and the first Chief of the General Staff as an instrument; and he would serve abroad with the Australian Imperial Forces in 1915. A member of the Australian Natives Association and initially opposed to colonial participation in South Africa, he possessed the experience, intelligence, and standing to criticize in detail the measures the radicals opposed in principle. As H.B. Higgins saw him, McCay appeared to owe "two allegiances, one to Mars and one to Minerva". 64 It was he who grasped the significance of Hutton's proposals for the Australian citizen-soldiery and successfully expounded them. In the process, he was grooming himself to take the position of Minister for Defence under the Reid ministry in August 1904.

McCay began with the assumption that Australian defence depended upon British sea power and, in particular, upon renewal of the Naval Agreement whatever slight to national pride this involved. For military defence the _Minute Upon the Defence of Australia_ was an excellent basic document showing considerable grasp of Australian needs and perception of the Australian militiaman. Even so, McCay made it clear, his support for Hutton's scheme was limited. Like H.B. Higgins, he believed that neither permanent nor militia units should be organized or used for overseas service.
... unappointed Minister for Defence ...
Those who wished to serve the Empire could, after examination of their conscience, volunteer individually. The Field Force would be only for home defence; self-reliance was the doctrine to be followed. Like J.C. Watson, he believed that too much money was spent on staff officers. District commandants and militia officers should have greater freedom. So while he disagreed with the blind faith many Labour members had put in rifle clubs and volunteer units, he supported their demand for economy so long as the total estimates were not reduced beyond that set by the federal conventions, namely £750,000. He was also to support their demand for greater civilian control over the armed forces. Almost inevitably this meant an end to the position of General Officer Commanding and the institution of councils and boards. Like R.A. Crouch, he desired the maximum reliance on citizen-soldiers. He was suspicious of the threat posed by Hutton's instructional cadres. The permanent forces he wished to limit to garrison artillery, engineers, and instructional staff. His support for the cadet system and his opposition to training and wartime service under the Army Act were well known. In short, McCoy accepted Hutton's scheme, omitting those parts which the House would consider militarist, Imperialist, unnecessarily expensive, and provocative. They were also those parts that Hutton thought essential. 

The result was, in the terms of the parliamentarians, a defence policy. For with McCoy in the van, the arguments introduced to modify the first Defence Bill were sharpened and used to cut Hutton's scheme to size. When Forrest laboriously but more confidently prepared drafts of the Defence Bill in 1903 the General Officer Commanding found that he was struggling against the legacy of the earlier debate which had been scrupulously guarded in parliament. On this occasion Cabinet anticipated objections by modifying the bill before presentation. Critics, despite poor attendance in the chamber, had two acute leaders in McCoy and Higgins whose recommendations were well known. Their views prevailed. The Defence Act of 1903 was, in substance, the bill Forrest had been compelled to amend in 1901. The final phrasing of Clause 49 was at once indicative and crucial: "(Members) of the military forces shall not be required,
unless they voluntarily agree to do so, to serve beyond the limits of the Commonwealth and those of any Territory under the authority of the Commonwealth." As the spirit of the debate indicated, men would have to individually volunteer for overseas service in improvised units — after they had, perhaps, examined their consciences. The avenue for organized cooperation in Imperial military defence — discussed in the nineties and hotly debated during the South African War — was effectively sealed. Thus it was that parliament examined a military policy, the strategic and political basis of which it considered repugnant or irrelevant. Hutton's Minute Upon the Defence of Australia never did receive parliamentary approval. His successors were building on shifting sand.

It is possible that Hutton never fully understood why parliament rejected his military policy. It is probable that he later sought to perpetuate his scheme and its intent by guile and intrigue. It is clear that he first attempted to convince his civilian superiors in the correct professional manner.

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Edmund Barton left for the Colonial Conference of 1902 with all the material necessary to appreciate the grand design. Minutes and pamphlets were hastily assembled and scored for clarity. If ever a politician had the opportunity to understand, it was Barton. It is unlikely that he did more than peruse the Minute Upon the Defence of Australia.

For Joseph Chamberlain the aim of the conference was to fulfil the promise of 1897. To ensure the self-sufficiency of the Empire the self-governing colonies might, it was hoped, seek closer political relations, allow preferential tariffs on British goods, and assist Great Britain in the defence of the Empire. Imperial federation was again in the air. The general theme of English spokesmen was reciprocity: in return for the benefits of continued British predominance the colonies were to bestow
favour, share responsibilities, and eventually possess some voice in the making of policy. In this spirit R.J. Seddon, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, called for the inauguration of a formal Imperial military reserve. According to a War Office memorandum prepared for the conference the Commonwealth could contribute to this scheme one infantry brigade and two mounted brigades—in all some 9,000 troops. The units would be combined into an "Imperial Australian Force".

The Secretary of State for War in traversing familiar arguments took up the theme of reciprocity: in return for protection received from the Royal Navy and the obligation of Great Britain to defend its outlying dominions the Commonwealth could provide troops for service in India (against the prime military threat, Russia) or in China (to help maintain the military provisions of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty). If all colonies gave their troops the training they so clearly needed, he continued, then each could contribute in one of two ways. The Imperial reserves could be maintained at colonial expense and used at colonial discretion. But they were to be organized on the explicit understanding that they were part of the army reserve of the Imperial force and so likely to serve overseas under Imperial control once the colonies had decided to cooperate. Alternatively, the less preferable course was for the British government to pay each man in the selected units. In this case control would stem from Whitehall and there would be no colonial discretion.69

To this very one-sided version of reciprocity, Barton replied, in effect, that the Commonwealth would neither earmark special units nor institute a formal reserve. Australian forces were for Australian defence. But since the need for military cooperation was bound to recur, each dominion had better build its own armament factories and equip its forces with weapons of Imperial patterns. "I could wish to have gone further," he declared, "but... we can go no further than public opinion will take us."70

All this was poor consolation for Hutton. Twice during 1902
he sought official acceptance of the scheme. Twice he had been merely
told to proceed with re-organization within the narrowing limits of the
budget. Now Chamberlain's forays into Imperial federation harmed his
cause. Harassed by the press and critics in the House Sir William Lyne,
the Acting Minister for Defence, declared that no approval had been given
for a scheme involving offensive operations. In a minute he wrote: "I
do not agree with any proposal to give control, or implied control, over
Australian troops to any but the Commonwealth authority." Funds could
not "at present" be found for any plan for "such external operations". 71
Hutton was indignant. His minute had not even been read. He had
contemplated neither the selection of special units for Imperial service
nor the organization of a formal reserve. No suggestion, he angrily
retorted, had been made to surrender in any way the authority of the
Commonwealth. 72

By June 1903 Hutton was desperate. Half his term of office had
slipped away; the provisions in the drafts of the Defence Bill he had
examined promised to undermine his project; recruiting had long before
ceased; the morale of existing units was low; yet another reduction in
the estimates was imminent; and still the formation of the field force was
no nearer. Then Sir John Forrest applied himself diligently to the problem.
Apparently for the first time he closely examined Hutton's recommendations
by comparing them with the reports of the Colonial Defence Committee.
He gave provisional approval for the complete reorganization of the
forces – and then posed a question. Was Hutton's proposed field force
not excessive in numbers and strength "for carrying out a policy limited
to local defence"? 73

For the first time Hutton was challenged. How did he meet
Forrest's objections? A few months earlier Hutton realized that the funds
needed to implement his scheme would be further curtailed by the
Estimates of 1903–1904. It was then that he first sounded the notes which
later military innovators were to orchestrate. It would be the height of
foolly, he wrote, "to disregard the possibility of the supremacy of the sea being temporarily or permanently lost. It is impossible to foresee the result of naval warfare in the future, or to anticipate the effect of fleets acting on the part of a combination of great powers hostile to British Imperial interests". The argument continued: Should sea supremacy be lost the "invasion of Australia for the purposes of territorial aggression is ... a military undertaking of no serious difficulty" for the enemy. To meet such a threat the field force was indispensable.

This change in justification came well before the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War and was apparently formulated while Hutton was examining the drafts of the Defence Bill. It is probable that the argument was used with telling effect against Forrest's enquiry. It is also probable that Hutton introduced a phantom to save his military policy. Henceforward, the bogey he introduced was to become more and more credible until the military structure he had struggled to build would be swept away to make room for the compulsorily trained mass army created to exorcise it.

In any event his scheme of reorganization was approved by Cabinet. The minute on which it was based was not formally accepted. Hutton was allowed to proceed under three conditions which were to bedevil his successors and ultimately evoke the criticism that his plan existed only on paper. He was not to convert any existing unit into the militia unless the estimates allowed. He was not to expand the estimates Forrest had so carefully reduced. But most important, he was to ensure that the total number of troops would not exceed the strength existing on the 31st of May 1903.

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The most important single obstacle faced by Hutton in his struggle to vindicate his teachings and realize his dream was the preparation, the reduction, and the review—often at quarterly periods—of the military estimates. The paper work was endless and the work involved
enormous. The time spent with the Minister on the estimates was far greater than on any other issue. Sir John Forrest's reductions have left to posterity bundles of disordered files. Orderlies on Thursday Island, instructors in South Australia, Head-Quarters Staff in Melbourne, the few Schools of Instruction in Melbourne, militia units throughout the continent - all were affected by this crude form of civil control.77

In the eighteen months Hutton had been in Australia the numbers in the military forces had dropped by some 4,700. With the remaining 24,800 Hutton's staff busied itself implementing the reorganization scheme. Complaints from volunteers who had previously been given some allowances and had no wish to go unpaid, from proud volunteer regiments who were disturbed at seeing various companies allotted to the militia field force or who were indignant at conversion to the militia resulting in the loss of their volunteer status, from infantry units who did not wish to convert to the Light Horse, from various small and inefficient units who refused to disband, soon found their way to Head-Quarters and to parliament. The degree of friction was exaggerated by publicity. Finally Cabinet warned the General Officer Commanding to leave the volunteer regiments well alone, to disband no existing unit, and to accommodate complaints. In ministerial circles the feeling grew that Hutton was too ruthless and too insensitive to the troubles of colonial units. Federalist politics demanded restraint.78

A new source of friction arose between Hutton and civilian superiors during 1904. His relations with ministers was never easy, but no minister was to be more hostile to Hutton than Senator Dawson, Minister for Defence under the Watson Labour government in 1904. Dawson had stoutly resisted Queensland's participation in the South African War. His hostility to soldiers and his suspicions of militarists enriched a natural antipathy between the two men which Hutton's indiscretions inflamed.

The major cause of friction was the proposed control of the defence forces by a Council of Defence and Boards of Administration. Whereas Dawson, among many others including J.W. McCay, saw this as a means of ensuring civilian control over the troops and removing forever
the position of General Officer Commanding, Hutton viewed it as a major threat to his scheme. Dawson thought the council the only means of removing the British and Imperial factors from military defence, diminishing the influence of permanent officers, and ensuring that the top positions would be held in the future by Australians. Hutton earnestly believed that without central control the military system would fly apart; that to have a situation where the most senior officer could be questioned by a subordinate would be to subvert discipline; that to introduce citizen officers in the high councils of state would be to invite ill-informed opinion and friction; and that above all, to institute boards and councils was to open the door for military and party politics which would wreck the direction of the armed services. Both sides accumulated evidence. Despite his obvious prejudices, Hutton rightly predicted the unhappy future of the Board and Council system. Dawson was doubtless correct in his insistence that parliament — if not the army — would not tolerate another British General Officer Commanding. It was an impasse to be suffered, but not by Hutton. For the reforms were not introduced by J.W. McCoy until after his departure from Australia. Hutton left in November 1904; McCoy introduced the new system in January 1905.79

Nationalist politics would not tolerate an overbearing, tactless, secretive, Imperial officer who owed an uncertain amount of loyalty to the Army Council in London. During the final eighteen months Hutton was involved in a series of affairs which appeared to lend substance to the suspicions which had obscured his ability and the worth of his recommendations. Press and parliament maintained a furore. Cabinet had to intervene and in each case chastise the General Officer Commanding.

By far the most important of these controversies, the Secret Cypher Affair, must remain in part a mystery. In substance the case was this. Hutton possessed a secret cypher with which he could communicate with the War Office. During Senator Dawson's term of office he discovered that Hutton had sent a secret telegram to London. On being questioned Hutton refused to reveal its contents. In an indignant minute he indicated that he considered himself an Imperial officer; for he had refused "on the
grounds that it would be a lapse of duty for a General serving one
government to communicate official secrets with another." He added
injury to insult by demanding that the Commonwealth government pay for the
secret message. What was in the secret communication? Probably its
contents were harmless. Nevertheless, the ramifications were great.
Hutton was appearing to serve the Commonwealth while owing allegiance to
the Army Council.  

Speculation about Hutton's intrigues were not completely without
some foundation. He did change his strategic appreciations primarily to
save his scheme. He did juggle the estimates. Did he do more? From the
information J.W. McCay solicited from a contact in London during 1905, it
seemed not only that the War Office was furious with Hutton over the
Secret Cypher Affair and some important officials scornful of his ideas,
but that Hutton by using what influence he could muster in the War Office
attempted to stop the Colonial Defence Committee from criticising his work.
He may even have attempted to suppress the Committee's report on its release
by requesting, confidentially, the support of the Governor-General.

It is therefore quite possible that Hutton indulged rather
ineptly in intrigue. The field force lay at the core of his ambition.
It was natural for him to fight tooth and nail to inaugurate and preserve
it. Even so, all these affairs - and the speculation they evoked - did
Hutton, and his scheme, immeasurable damage in the eyes of the very men
from whom he sought support.

In retrospect Forrest acknowledged Hutton's difficulties in
successfully placing the defence forces on a uniform basis. As a minister
he was ruthless in depriving him of the funds to implement his scheme.
One example will suffice.

In Hutton's estimation equipment and armaments for the field
force were not only essential militarily but excellent for morale, status,
and recruiting. At the outset he had forewarned parliament that £500,000
above the normal military vote would be necessary for armament and equipment. In April 1903 he prepared a table whereby the gross amount could be expended over four years. Fixed defences could wait; the field forces could not. In all £125,000 was to be spent in the year 1903–1904 if the field force was to be fully equipped for action by 1907. Forrest decided £50,000 would be sufficient. Moreover, he felt that parliament would not accept an estimate of £50,000 unless five thousand rifles were also ordered "as there is a strong feeling that we are not adequately provided with rifles". Hutton argued — and wisely — that the War Office was about to refit the British Army with a new S.M.L.E. automatic rifle and that it was best for the Commonwealth to wait. Without arms and equipment the field force would be but an army on paper. To no avail. Rifles instead of field guns, samples instead of equipment, were the items provided for. Duly Colonel Bridges had a new list of annual amounts prepared whereby parliament would pay £61,000 a year. Thus the Commonwealth would have a fully equipped field force by 1910. Until then, Hutton's scheme, even if successfully implemented, would involve potential rather than real strength. This action by Forrest, to the military mind capricious, ill-informed, and irresponsible, is easily understood within the broader political context. It also indicates the limitation of Hutton's success on his departure in November 1904.

The basis of the general scheme for the defence of the Commonwealth — that is the strategic assessment and the summary of military policy — was never considered or approved by Cabinet. Sections of the Defence Act ran counter to it. In the professional soldier's sense, there was yet no policy. The hub of the new army — Head-Quarters Staff — had been criticised, ridiculed, reduced in numbers from eight to five officers, and was to be replaced by a Council of Defence and Boards of Administration. Garrison forces had been organized but fixed defences remained substantially as Hutton found them; the government had not yet decided which cities on the coast it wished to defend. Members of the Royal Australian Artillery — the corps d'élite — were reduced to two-thirds of their strength in 1902. The scheme of reorganization for the field force had been
implemented - but only in part. Rifle clubs were no closer to being used as reserves. The instructional cadres had been restricted in use by the Defence Act. The cadre of Field Force Artillery had not been provided for in the estimates. Militia and not permanent officers were soon to command citizen-soldiers even at brigade level. Camps of training for the militia varied from three to eight days a year in different parts of the Commonwealth. Equipment for the field force would not be complete until 1910. The pay approved by Cabinet for the militiaman was not six shillings a day as Hutton insisted but eight shillings a day. Schools of Instruction and Staff Rides had been too few. There was no provision for a military college. No arrangements had been made to provide for self-sufficiency. The institution of government armament, ammunition, and clothing factories remained an aspiration. Military estimates had been reduced during Hutton's term from £812,000 to little more than £500,000. As a result of retrenchment and controversy some units could claim only sixty per cent of their peacetime establishment. Morale and status were low.85

Nevertheless, Hutton left behind him the structure of the field force he had envisaged. By November 1904 the scheme of reorganization was complete on paper. Though never partially mobilized for exercises, the garrison force, the field force, and its ancillaries were allotted sufficient units. The government's proviso that the establishment should remain at the level of May 1903 pointed to the key weakness - lack of men. In order to complete all units of the Australian army to full peacetime establishments it was necessary for future governments to finance, the Defence Department to recruit, and the officers to train a total of 344 officers and 2,782 men. The gulf between establishments and actual strength was to increase - and be misinterpreted by those who wished to sweep away federalist schemes.86

So Hutton bestowed upon the Commonwealth an army which it could command if it had the will to breathe life into his reforms. From his point of view much was to depend upon future ministries grasping the substance of his grand design. As much was to depend upon the attitude and the authority of his proteges from Head-Quarters Staff - men like
A month before his departure an exhausted General Officer Commanding outlined the role he expected his proteges to perform in the future. He knew that they too must struggle with his scheme for the defence of the Commonwealth which must, from the point of view of a professional soldier, begin with a statement of policy and strategy and end with a table for mobilization. He felt certain he had settled their problem, for he believed that parliament, by inverting the priorities demanded by the professional had unconsciously accepted his grand design in its entirety. If Cabinet accepted the scheme of reorganization, he explained, logically it must also have accepted the policy. Inferentially the offensive-defensive use of the field force was still possible. His actual words were:

It will be sufficiently obvious that although the (Minute Upon the Defence of Australia)... has never been officially endorsed by Parliament, its principles have been officially accepted by inference since the recommendations involved by those principles have been carried into effect almost in their entirety. 87

If this argument rested upon future Cabinets' grasp of professional thought, it was ill-founded. If it rested upon guile, the ruse was futile. If it rested upon the hope that his proteges would implement all that he had planned and succeed where he had failed, the expectation was never realized. No amount of sophistry could dismiss the limitations imposed by the federal parliament.

* * *

Some years later in a letter to Alfred Deakin at once proclaiming anew his providential grasp of Australian problems and pathetically begging that the government breathe life into his reforms, Hutton explained that his scheme "was so involved in political, social and military issues that I could not discuss my difficulties with anyone outside a narrow official circle". With a brevity that suggested he still had not grasped all that
had happened, he added: "There were many points in which I was misunderstanding in Australia, and especially by Australian politicians."\(^{38}\)

On his return to England Hutton did not receive the reward he may have anticipated. True, he was promoted to Lieutenant-General. But he spent two more years in the British Army, and then retired, to recall often his pride in Australian troops and to restate as often his faith in his scheme. In 1911 Colonel Bridges, then Commandant of Dunrobin Military College, suggested that Hutton's portrait be painted and hung in the halls of an establishment his Commanding Officer had recommended. Hutton was delighted and in reply wrote:

A great and brilliant future is before the soldiers of Australia, and I shall always feel proud indeed if I have contributed in however small a degree to their success as a great National asset to the Australian people. \(^{89}\)

That contribution to the Australian army of 1914 was less than he thought and far less than he deserved. He had a prescription for national defence; he was underrated because he was an imperialist. Tom Roberts painted his portrait, but Hutton had to pay for it himself.

* * *
NAVAL POLICY: AGREEMENTS AND ASPIRATIONS (1898–1904)

(It) is hard to silence the clamour for a simple local security, which is apparent but not real, because it is founded on a subdivision and dissemination of force essentially contrary to sound military principle .... (Local) safety is not always best found in local precaution. There is a military sense, in which it is true that he who loses his life shall save it.

CAPTAIN A.T. MAHAN, 1902.

(Most authorities) consider that the Empire must have one fleet in the sense it must be administered, controlled, and directed by one central authority, that the formation of local navies is opposed to all sound naval strategy, that the expenditure involved is more than the colonies can afford ... It is, however, more practicable to devise a scheme by which ships locally manned and locally controlled can be associated into some larger scheme of Imperial Maritime Defence than to devise a scheme by which the colonies can pay increasing money contributions to the Imperial Exchequer and have an effective voice in the administration of the fund.

CAPTAIN ROBERT COLLINS, November 1899.
Australian statesmen had long tended to separate five aspects of national security and deem each to be "a line of defence": British supremacy upon the high seas; the unrestricted flow of overseas trade; the protection of coastal shipping; the defence of ports and coastal cities; and the safety of hearths and homes. Traditionally the Royal Navy guaranteed all "lines of defence" primarily by maintaining the first. And in accord with the doctrine of self-reliance, colonial governments had raised military forces and established fixed defences. Some had ventured into local naval defence for the better protection of urban hearth and harbour. Yet, in the course of Australian-Imperial relations, the Admiralty had departed from its traditional role.* For by the maintenance of both the Imperial Squadron and the Australian Auxiliary Squadron, the Royal Navy had clearly been maintaining the first two "lines of defence" and buttressing the others.¹

Thus it was that on the 1st of March 1901, when responsibility for defence passed to the Commonwealth, there were in Australian waters three naval forces each deserving Sir John Forrest's attention.²

Based at Sydney was the Imperial Squadron under the command of Rear-Admiral Sir Lewis Beaumont. Under Admiralty direction it was to protect shipping in Australian waters and on the overseas trade routes, to uphold British prestige in the South-West Pacific, and to reinforce in an emergency the squadron on the China Station. Its capacities were limited. Only the flagship, the Royal Arthur, was of any effective assistance in the Far East. The other light and ageing third-class cruisers and gunboats were used primarily to patrol the Pacific islands and then only in the less stormy seasons. The decision to strengthen the Imperial Squadron rested with Whitehall. There Forrest could act only as suppliant.³

* See above Chapter One.
Also under Beaumont's control was the Australian Auxiliary Squadron provided under the Naval Agreement of 1887. Five third-class cruisers of the Katoomba Class constituted a local squadron organized for coastal defence against commerce marauders and bound to Australian waters in peace and war in return for the annual subsidy of £106,000. These vessels could not be sent to distant waters unless the Commonwealth gave its consent. Here Forrest was confronted by two problems. The specially designed cruisers were suitable for coastal defence in 1891. Ten years later they were found to be not only obsolescent but too light for sustaining duties in the heavy seas around Australia. More important, the Naval Agreement had run its course. Future naval policy had to be decided.  

Under Commonwealth control were the local naval forces of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia. Since the sixties vessels had been purchased, small permanent naval forces enlisted, and naval militia units raised under the Colonial Naval Defence Act of 1865. Of these perhaps the naval militia - the citizen-sailors - were most highly prized by colonial governments. In 1901 some 2,300 men, while continuing to operate under the State Defence Acts, came under Forrest's ministerial control. So, too, did the vessels of greatly varying capabilities. Some had been originally designed for protection of harbours; others were built for port defence. By 1901 all were obsolete. They lacked fighting efficiency and facilities for training Australians at sea. Forrest had to decide their fate.  

His decisions and those of his contemporaries depended on how they faced the three interconnected issues which provide the main themes for this work: the desired relationship between nation and Empire; the quest for security within available resources; and the formation of effective and distinctive Australian forces. Though obscured in the detail of military organization, they leapt to prominence in naval policy.  

For there were two general alternatives: naval policy could continue to involve close cooperation with the Admiralty to serve
Australian interests; naval aspirations could be fulfilled primarily by assuming some of the duties performed by the Royal Navy. Each opened a labyrinth. What degree of naval protection did the Commonwealth require? Should the Imperial Squadron be strengthened? Should the Naval Agreement be renewed and, if so, on what terms? Should Australia depend solely upon the Royal Navy? Should not steps be taken to create an Australian navy? Should that navy assume the duties of the Imperial Squadron, the Australian Auxiliary Squadron, or the local naval forces? Should that Australian navy help defend British interests on the high seas, protect Australian coastal commerce, or aid the military in harbour defence?*

To such questions Forrest addressed himself and entered a debate which was to continue until 1911 when the Royal Australian Navy was established. It was a debate well under way.

*  

"An Australian navy is not a mere sentiment", proclaimed the Melbourne Age in 1901, "It is a policy and a wise policy." With federation accomplished, Australia could not "avoid her destiny as a sea power" in the Southern Pacific. 6 Renew or even revise the Naval Agreement? Never! Tribute, subsidy, cash nexus, insurance policy, call it what you will, the Naval Agreement must go! The bonds of Empire were as light as gossamer and as strong as steel only because unfettered self-government allowed complete self-defence. To secure the nation from the King's European enemies was the fundamental duty of each part of the Empire to the whole. Yet each part was at once different from, and as important as, the core. Just as the Crown Colonies were not part of the self-governing portion of the Empire, so the Commonwealth was splendidly different from

* Though the distinction between the creation of Australian naval forces capable of (a) decisive engagements on the high seas in quasi-alliance with British battle fleets; (b) cruiser warfare and commerce protection on the high seas; (c) coastal defence; and (d) radial port defence will emerge from the narrative, these, and other distinctions, are set out in Appendix B "Australian Naval Defence : The Possibilities".
Argus: Australian naval policy had to be integrated with Imperial policy. 10

Though keenly aware of the need for editorial support from at least some of the navalist press, members of the Barton ministry remained cautious or sceptical. The federalist era was no time for daring and expensive innovation. Only Alfred Deakin seems to have glanced ahead. He was quick to perceive what two world wars had tended to obscure: that weapons of war could inspire a sense of awe, pride, beauty, and patriotism. Australians took joy in the smartly-painted vessels of the late nineties and felt prideful awe at the later and more sinister grey vessels. To watch a naval parade was the Greater Briton's equivalent of the pomp and panoply of a Jubilee celebration. For as every schoolboy knew, just as every missionary and Australian colonist in the New Hebrides awaiting the showing of the flag from far more diminutive vessels could testify, the Royal Navy epitomized British justice, civilization, and power. When all the political and strategic arguments had been heard this fact remained: Australian warships could be symbols of nationhood within the British world.

Yet on these and other issues Deakin remained publicly silent, a potential navalist. The future was the time to work out the context, the programme, and the campaign to persuade, cajole, and educate British and Australians alike. Federalist politics involved expedients. Sir John Forrest, aided by the Prime Minister, was left to find one. 11

Labour was the first political party to espouse the navalist cause. When in September 1902 it had become clear Forrest would seek a revision of the Agreement, a committee of federal caucus passed a resolution demanding the creation of an Australian navy. Most members knew that this was indeed a matter for the future however anxious they were to see "a self-reliant nation, free from interference by, or dependence on, Britain". 12 Nevertheless, they desired to record their objections to any form of naval subsidy. By July 1903 their position had strengthened
ROYAL ARTHUR

... smartly painted vessels of the nineties ...
and Labour members expressed in the House the sentiments long proclaimed by the *Age*. The appeal for an independent force - no less than the mood which equated federation with national defence, nationhood with manhood, and maturity with opposition to Whitehall - suited Labour parliamentarians well. But Labour had no programme. Amidst heated debate, W.M. Hughes - often presented as a defence specialist - declared that he did not know for certain whether an Australian naval force was strictly necessary, nor how it should be formed, nor what it would do, nor how much it would cost. He was certain that the Commonwealth should possess one. The rest he left to the experts.  

This role was played by the officers of colonial naval forces. None was Australian-born. Most had served in colonial navies since the eighties. Like many other sailor settlers, they had either served in the Royal Navy or had other reasons to respect all it stood for. Like Colonel Bridges, they had so placed their roots in the colonies that nationalist aspirations were readily championed. They were British-Australians, not merely *émigrés*. None could hope for a career in the Royal Navy. Their professional future and the fruits of success lay in the creation of a new Australian naval force. They therefore had vested interests in giving direction to navalist aspirations. Yet despite imposing local ranks, few were sufficiently qualified to change policy and anti-navalist opinion. Of the nine officers whose submissions reached ministerial level, three had been commissioned in the Royal Navy and then only to the rank of Lieutenant. The remainder had been drawn from the mercantile marine. They were easily overshadowed by the Admiralty or the Commander-in-Chief on the Australian Station. It was a comment upon the nature of the navalist movement that Forrest deferred to British opinion partly because there was no alternative authority.  

It was not until after 1904 that the navalist officers were formed into a more coherent body with official voice - and by then the voice of only one man was heard. For most of the federalist era they were appointed to separate commands under the different State Defence Acts.
Ever sensitive to criticism and in the interests of discipline, Forrest forbade them to make public statement. But Captain William Rooke Creswell proved irrepressible. Perceiving that spearheads for the campaign had to be forged, he campaigned in the press between 1901 and 1903 under the cloak of anonymity, and sometimes burst openly into print so that he could be quoted in parliament. His star was to continue to rise until he became the Australian authority.15

Born on Gibraltar in 1852, Creswell was educated at Eastman's Naval Academy and, later on his entry into the Royal Navy during 1865, aboard the training vessel, the H.M.S. Britannica. As midshipman he served on the North American Station and later joined Admiral Hornsby's famous Flying Squadron which visited Australia in 1869. After a short time with the Channel Fleet he was promoted to junior sub-lieutenant on the China Station. There he first saw action.

In patrols off the Malayan coasts skirmishes with pirates were frequent. During one encounter near Penang, Creswell was severely wounded. For his conduct he was selected for promotion and as a lieutenant returned to England. Opportunity to develop his professional training at the Royal Naval College was, however, short-lived. For three years he was destined to serve on the East Indies Station, operating mainly from a depot ship at Zanzibar in individual forays against East African slave traders.

But fever took its toll and he was invalided to England in 1878. There naval retrenchment was in full swing and prospects for junior officers were grim indeed. At the age of twenty-seven he retired from the Royal Navy; he had been a lieutenant for six years. With his brother he then emigrated to Australia to try his hand at "pastoral pursuits".

As a pastoralist in Australia he made little progress. He tried journalism, sugarcane farming in Queensland, and droving. Then, during
a stay in Adelaide in 1885, he was offered an appointment as first lieutenant on the newly-arrived special service cruiser, the Protector. He accepted. In South Australia he ceased to be an emigre. He was later given command of the Protector, promoted to captain in the colonial service during 1895, and married the daughter of Mr. Justice Stow of Adelaide. To supplement his meagre income he turned again to journalism and established many contacts with the staffs of the Register, the Bulletin, and later, the Courier. He enjoyed cordial relations with C.C. Kingston and sought and found some degree of intimacy with other federationists, including Edmund Barton.

In April 1900 he became Naval Commandant in Queensland. In August he was selected to command the Protector and ordered to take her to the Gulf of Pe-chi-li in China. This was the main colonial contribution to British forces during the Boxer Rebellion. Manned in part by reservists – by citizen-sailors – the Protector arrived too late to join issue. But Creswell was given the task of surveying unknown coastal waters. To have sailed 16,000 miles in four months, to have aided the Royal Navy abroad, and to have received the usual decorous accolades from the British Commander-in-Chief influenced Creswell deeply. He returned in December 1900 to Queensland on the eve of the federation he supported and just before Sir John Forrest applied himself to the problems of defence legislation.

Creswell's formative years were spent in a navy that was soon to be transformed. The facts of his early life could have provided plots for many a story in Boys' Own Paper. The Royal Navy in which he served did provide the situations. During the slow transition from sail to steam it was steeped in the lore of Trafalgar. Sea battle was envisaged as a glorious melee. Each ship was expected to engage, close, and destroy a single adversary. Young officers each could hope to re-enact the romantic stories of the Napoleonic Wars: close-quarters confusion; cutting out of harbours hapless merchantmen; spiking the guns in protecting fortifications; lying in wait for unsuspecting privateers. It was in expeditions such as these, wherein pluck was valued beyond expertise, that Creswell
fought against slavers and pirates.

He had spent his youth on foreign stations established in the era of sail when voyages were long and communications poor. Within each zone the primary duty in war was to ensure the flow of trade. The importance of commerce protection Creswell was never to forget.

On each foreign station and in each British port there were gunboats and torpedo boats for radial port defence. In Lieutenant Creswell's day localized naval defence—by station, coast, or port—was thought to be one means of deterring marauders which had evaded the fleet. For Captain Creswell of South Australia it was the new orthodoxy, justified by the findings of Sir William Jervois and the initial recommendations of Admiral Tryon. Creswell noted the effect of war scares upon the residents of the coastal cities in the eighties. He had examined the virtues of the torpedo, the reserve-crew system, and the naval militia for localized defence. But the context of his thought was the localized port and coastal defence of Australia.

Changes in British naval policy and practice from 1897 to 1906—outlined in Chapter Four above—made Creswell's assumptions unorthodox and anachronistic. He had neither the professional training nor experience to comprehend battleships and cruisers as they developed at the turn of the century. Nor did he admit that the doctrine of fleet concentration, involving swift, homogeneous, and huge vessels tightly organized under the one commander to decide the issue on the high seas, had rendered local defence and small vessels obsolete and useless. Nor was he willing to conceive operations only on the basis of the actions taken by a prudent enemy responsible for concentrating equally expensive fleets. Rather he understood resource, initiative, daring and the confusion of close conflict in localized naval defence against a correspondingly resourceful and dashing enemy commander.
... in forging the navalist campaign, irrepressible ...
Such was the man who stood on the periphery of Empire challenging openly each assumption of the Colonial Defence Committee.* Fundamentally his brief was quite simple.  

It began with a doubt: could the Admiralty fulfil its promise to limit attacks upon the Australian littoral to raids? Surely, he insinuated, the Royal Navy could not be supreme in all theatres against all possible political combinations for all the time it took to conduct a successful sea war. The number of raiders and their conduct could not be foretold with certainty. Blockades was ineffective. It was impossible to mask every port, hostile and neutral. No amount of firm centralized control by the Admiralty could severely limit, let alone hermetically seal, the avenue open to raiders. Merchant auxiliaries could arm at sea; raiders could sally forth before the declaration of war; both could use the ports of sympathetic neutrals.

And what if the hostile combination also had the resources, vessels, and the will, not merely to dabble in raiding activity but to wage a _guerre de course_? Certainly the safety of the Realm might ultimately depend upon victorious naval battles in the Mediterranean or Atlantic. But was the security of Australian ports and shipping thereby completely assured? Of course, the destruction of commerce marauders might theoretically be seen as a secondary consideration. Perhaps the City of London might watch with equanimity the calculated loss of two to four percent of the mercantile marine while the Royal Navy established superiority and swept the seas for the marauders. But would not a loss of one percent in Australian waters paralyse trade and devastate morale? Naturally, the concentration of armoured strength compelled the enemy to concentrate. But the concentration of battle strength in one theatre involved possible temporary loss of local sea superiority in another. To concentrate fleets and squadrons in home waters was to expose the geo-political rim of the Empire.

* See above Chapter Four.
Now the ground was cleared to deny point by point the case repeatedly presented in Whitehall concerning the intrinsic difficulties of raiding operations.

Hazardous raids might be, countered Creswell, but the prizes were worth the risk. To capture merchantmen, to spread fear, to arrest trade, to undermine morale were undertakings of no mere secondary importance. The Empire depended upon the free flow of commerce; its spirit of Imperial solidarity rested in part upon a sense of invulnerability. Knowing this, both the enemy commander and his naval directors would court the fortunes of war. He would refuel from captured colliers, ports held momentarily at hostage, or auxiliaries awaiting his arrival at pre-selected points. Speed in space offered him immunity. He could anchor at one of many islands in the Pacific— even in sheltered waters along the expansive Australian coasts. There improvised bases could be established to make running repairs or replenish ammunition supplies from caches. Sweeping cruiser squadrons could search for months in vain. Once seen off the coast or near some port he could hinder trade by the suggestion of his continued presence. Even to capture and sink one coaster and to disappear would shake confidence. Or he could bombard cities from beyond the range of shore batteries, particularly at night when that range was severely limited to 2,000 or so yards by the power of searchlights. Cutting-out expeditions at night might not be beyond his means. To provoke panic might be barbarous but it was greatly rewarding. Supported by other raiders his exploits could wreak irreparable harm. In short, to the resourceful and daring went the fortunes of war.

These were the very fears that other navalists played upon. Creswell had presented a formidable case from the Australian stand-point which British official opinion did not appear to be able to demolish. Now he could forcefully contribute to the indignation voiced in the *Age*.17

Should the Commonwealth suffer weekly such threats just because it lay on the extremities of the Empire? Surely this was against all
Australian national self-respect and, worse, founded upon British egoism rather than Imperial policy. The bombardment of Melbourne might appear a mere harassment in London. It would be a tragedy in Australia. The requirements for the defence of Australia were clearly unique. No other part of the Empire was so dependent on naval protection. Coal and wheat were among essential interstate exports. Were these to be stopped? Northern Queensland was not connected to areas south by rail. Was this territory to be held hostage to the raiders? Cargoes bound for Great Britain could be destroyed within sight of the principal ports while the splendidly equipped military watched powerless from behind their fixed defences. Could commonsense accept such events?

Subsidies to the British Treasury were no answer. Complete naval dependence upon Great Britain would not only strain the resources of the Royal Navy. It perpetuated an unmanly and un-British naval impotence. It invited attack but allowed the development of no means to meet it. The defence of harbours, roadsteads, naval bases, coastal towns, capital cities, and coastal commerce was plainly a naval task. It was an Australian responsibility and an Imperial obligation. Local naval forces to replace the old colonial navies and the Australian Auxiliary Squadron were therefore indispensable. The creation of a coastal defence force under Commonwealth control for the security of Australia—this should be national policy. So ended many a Creswellian brief.

Many people found Creswell a compelling advocate. Some also found him a striking man. Erect in stature, jaunty yet correct in manner, suave and charming at social gatherings, he could evoke enthusiasm from younger men, and delight them with his wit. A devotee of physical fitness believing in the development of individual and national character, a man who never forgot the traditions of the Royal Navy, he could frolic with his sons yet be stern and withdrawn in fulfilling his official duties. He had the capacity to be more agreeable than Colonel Bridges and had greater experience of striving to manipulate colonial ministers. Yet he was curiously far less astute. He grasped general ideas quickly but often too quickly to have examined their implications. Facility with pen and
tongue were deceptive. He could perform his role as naval advocate effortlessly, but as a political officer he appeared too proud, too certain, too forceful yet too clearly not the authority or the expert to challenge the Admiralty. In argument with the acute and politically sophisticated he could too easily be out-maneuouvered. Much of his official life became lonely and frustrating.

If Hutton failed because he underestimated the vigour of nationalism within the intricacies of dual loyalty, Creswell's successes were severely limited because he could not see that Australian statesmen wanted special accommodation within the Empire.

Initially Creswell's arguments were not as clear as they appear here. Indeed his first foray into policy contributed to the revision—not the abrogation—of the 1887 Naval Agreement.

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At the Colonial Conference of 1897 the Australasian premiers formally asked for a continuance of the Agreement. The one dissentient was C.C. Kingston who, flourishing a memorandum prepared by Creswell, proposed an end to cash contributions.* Instead, the colonies would raise and pay a Royal Naval Reserve for service in Australian waters and surrounding seas. All squadrons East of Suez and West of the Horn would be rapidly and safely reinforced from Australia. Men instead of money in return for naval protection was the solution. 18

Lord Brassey, then Governor of Victoria, elaborated this scheme at the request of the Australian premiers in February 1899. Already Brassey had suggested the creation of a formal Imperial military reserve in Greater Britain. Now surprised at the potential in Canada and Australia, he wanted a naval reserve along the same lines. The colonies would raise

* See above Chapter Three.
and train the men while the British Treasury paid a retainer. It was he who unequivocally demanded that the Royal Naval vessels held in reserve at Sydney should be made available for sea-going training. In this manner, the navalists won a sympathetic voice in one of the most influential British journals. Until 1906 the Naval Annual warned its readers that the best route to Imperial cooperation lay in encouraging and channelling Australian naval aspirations, not in ignoring or stifling them.¹⁹

It was Captain Robert Collins, then Secretary of the Victorian Defence Department, who perceived where this talk—much approved in the press—of a reserve was leading. The Admiralty was far from delighted with the proposal. It would consider it only if a reserve was formed in addition to the cash subsidy. Moreover, it demanded that reservists train for twenty-eight days a year and serve six months in a man-of-war every five years. Citizen-sailors in Australia, Collins replied, would never be induced into the scheme. A Royal Naval rating received only £2-10-0 a month; prevailing wages in the colonies were £6-0-0 per month. Even if the colonies could afford to make up the difference, men would not leave their calling for six months for the dubious privilege of training on the lower decks. Quite apart from the difficulties of where these men should serve and which government should control them, the whole concept, argued Collins, was misdirected and would lead to frustration. It could well stand in the way of Australian naval defence.

In arriving at a viable alternative Collins drew heavily upon Victorian experience. He felt—as indeed did many of the innovators—that the much neglected Colonial Naval Defence Act of 1865 involved a clear Imperial policy. In passing it the Imperial government had obviously contemplated and approved the creation of colonial naval forces and a naval reserve. A colony could possess and control ships and train men for local operations; in war it could place both at the disposal of the Royal Navy. Therein lay the principles of self-reliance and loyalty, independence and mutual aid, home defence and Imperial cooperation, and localized naval defence within the Royal Naval shield. Moreover, the British government had lent Victoria the Cerberus which was now maintained for
harbour defence. Therein lay the precedent. There was no reason, suggested Collins, why this practice "might not be extended to sea-going ships".20

In fact the Act was less clear than Collins supposed. The implied policy had never been instrumented. Though the Cerberus was earlier thought to have some sea-going capabilities, it had been built and eventually used only for harbour defence like a mobile gun platform. No other colony had followed the lead of Victoria until the eighties, and then under quite different circumstances. The British government had granted £100,000 towards the construction of the Cerberus; the Admiralty had not lent a vessel to the colonies. No precedent had been set. Nevertheless, this opened a possibility.21

In August 1899 Collins convened a conference of naval commandants to counter Brassey's proposals. Success was largely his. The conference admitted and elaborated the Admiralty's misgivings about a formal reserve but only to stress that the existing naval officers, amalgamated into the one force, could better train Australians on ships under Commonwealth control. Like the military they would have permanent staffs, nucleus crews, and a reserve system of citizen-sailors. But what of the most expensive item, ships capable of sea-going training? Conference decided that the Naval Agreement should be terminated and the existing vessels of the colonial navies be scrapped. This would free some £190,000 a year for naval expenditure. With this sum the federal government could arrange for the loan of five second-class cruisers from the Admiralty, stationed in peacetime at each of the capital cities as training ships. Towards the cost of these vessels held in reserve the Commonwealth would pay only for their maintenance.* Men instead of money, the loan of second-class cruisers instead of the Australian Auxiliary Squadron, was now the solution.22

* Second-Class Cruiser (like the Challenger): 5,800 tons; 11 x 6-inch + 9 x 12 pdr.; 21 knots. Approximate initial cost was £450,000. Annual maintenance cost for one such cruiser in commission was £60,000, and in reserve £20,000.
The navalist press was delighted. Even their opponents who recognized the value of Brassey's proposals found virtue in Collins' recommendations. Both acknowledged the need for sea-going training in Australia. The keenest criticism of this, the first plan for an Australian naval force, came from London.23

The Admiralty was silent but its attitude is easy to divine. To dissipate naval strength was always against official policy. Any effort by Australians to perpetuate with Royal Naval matériel five separate "lines of defence" in the era of fleet concentration was anathema. Another aspect was forcefully put by Admiral Sir John Fisher when Deakin asked again for a loan of cruisers:

The Colonies, one and all, grab all they possibly can out of us and give nothing in return. They are all alike ... 24

With grand disdain, The Times expounded the official brief:

The British Empire requires only one Navy, homogeneous, obeying a common law, maintaining the one standard of efficiency, available for service wherever the need is most urgent.

To form a "nondescript force" of "inadequately trained volunteers" aboard five cruisers and hope that they could successfully deter an efficient enemy was the height of folly. "Thus to describe such a scheme is to condemn it." The answer lay in a new naval agreement by which subsidies were paid towards the cost of the Imperial Navy to be used by the Admiralty without condition or restriction.25

The Australian navalists and their seconds accepted the challenge. Editorial fire was hot. The Age and the Register condemned The Times for its return to barbaric indifference to colonial affairs at a time when all were concerned with the "Imperial spirit". Creswell demanded an "Admiralty of the Empire, not merely the Admiralty of the United Kingdom". Collins argued soberly that it was
more practicable to devise a scheme by which ships locally manned and locally maintained can be associated in some larger scheme of Imperial Maritime Defence than to devise a scheme by which colonies can pay increasing money contributions to an Imperial Exchequer and have an effective voice in the administration of the fund. 26

In short, a cash nexus would never weld the Empire. Facilities for autonomous and regional defence would.

The indignant words of the navalists hit home. Yet nothing was to add quite so much respect for their cause as colonial participation in the Boer War. Gradually it was admitted that neither Collins nor Creswell nor any responsible Australian contemplated a division in the spirit, strength, or policy of the Empire. While The Times set about educating the colonials in naval strategy, the Australians reviewed their position. To hope for the loan of vessels was futile. Naval and Imperial objections to localized forces could be countered only be demonstrating the fallacies in official strategy. Yet colonial troops on the veldt—no less than a colonial gunboat in Chinese waters—showed how the principles of self-defence and Imperial cooperation were by no means incompatible and indeed a source of great approval. The navalists had won the right to debate with their mentors. The way was still open to suggest new schemes. 27

This path Creswell took to fame and frustration. Recently returned from Chinese waters in the Protector, he knew he had a solution. National security, he protested to Forrest, lay not in military schemes, but in the creation of an "Australian Naval Defence Force". Ships should be purchased—not borrowed—by the Commonwealth and therefore unquestionably under its control. This new force could replace the Australian Auxiliary Squadron. It would have both local and Imperial functions: to defend "the coasts of Australia, and to cooperate in time of war with ships of the Royal Navy ...". 28

Current talk of battleships or heavy cruisers for Australian service he dismissed. The answer lay in the purchase of cruisers of
THESE TWO COMBINED : THE CRUISER DESTROYER?

The Protector of South Australia ... to China and back ... 

The Wallaroo of the Auxiliary Squadron ... too light for sustained duties.
special design suitable for unique Australian coastal conditions yet capable of offering "our due quota" to Royal Naval strength in Austra-
lasian and even distant seas. On the specific nature of these vessels, which he called - echoing the terminology of Tryon's day - "cruiser-
destroyers", he remained vague.* Even so, he insisted that the Naval Agreement and even the colonial naval forces should be abandoned. Of the estimated £350,000 annually to be spent on defence at least £350,000 could be used for naval purposes. By 1909 the Commonwealth would possess four cruiser-destroyers more capable of dealing with raiders than the Protector yet, like it, able to cooperate with the Royal Navy. Men instead of money, Australian ships instead of hired defence, was now the answer.30

The navalist press welcomed the scheme. Even the Sydney Morning Herald thought it worth consideration. It had been submitted to Cabinet before, but not made public until after November 1901. In the meantime, Forrest had decided future policy.31

* Having presented the first Defence Bill dealing primarily with military affairs to parliament, Sir John Forrest turned to naval defence, and did so, assisted by Edmund Barton, with a diligence acknowledged by neither contemporaries nor later historians.32

The debate on the Defence Bill had revealed that neither the spirit of federalist defence nor the political balance in the House

* It is, however, clear that he envisaged modifications to cruisers of the Katoomba Class to incorporate all that was praiseworthy in the Protector. The resulting vessel was to be of heavy displacement because of the nature of Australian coastal waters; of short operational but longer cruising range since it would usually be acting near base; and of heavier armament than many commerce raiders. It was not to be built to serve anywhere in the world. In all probability, though perhaps unrealizable, the eventual demands were: 3,000 tons; 1 x 8-inch + 4 x 6-inch; 19-25 knots; initial cost £A300,000.
favoured navalist plans. There were, declared Barton, three alternatives: to acquire a proper navy which would be exorbitantly expensive; to abandon the Agreement and rely upon military defence; or to seek a new agreement which would provide modern ships on the Australian Station capable of giving training to Australians as Tryon had promised. The last was undoubtedly most favoured.33

Uncertain of the correct course — a state of mind to which Creswell’s scheme contributed — Forrest and Barton turned to Rear-Admiral Sir Lewis Beaumont. As a recent member of the Colonial Defence Committee, he was well qualified to speak. As a participant in the naval discussions during the 1897 Colonial Conference, he had learnt much about colonial attitudes. As Admiral Commanding on the Australian Station, he was an authority. In all probability he did not act on explicit instructions from the Admiralty, for its later recommendations differed from his. He certainly had no directions from the Colonial Office for he was chastized by Hopetoun. Doubtless he did wish to see the Australian Station changed from a dreary back-water in Imperial seas to a post of some importance. He was no Imperialist agent but an experienced officer giving advice with professional care. The substance of his arguments was to be repeated in different terms by Admiral Sir John Fisher eight years later.34

Creswell’s scheme he examined and dismissed. The "cruiser-destroyer" concept had been presented without postulating an enemy or its capabilities. Threats to commerce ranged from attack by Russian merchant auxiliaries to French corsair cruisers to formidable vessels like the Jeanne d’Arc.* Against the possible combinations and tactics of such vessels the Creswellian scheme had negligent deterrent value. The cost was underestimated; the vessels too light even to patrol Australian waters; the facilities available for modern training extremely limited. The voyage of the Protector had proven neither the efficacy of reserve-crew

* Jeanne d’Arc was in part designed for a guerre de commerce: 11,330 tons; 1 x 7.6-inch + 8 x 5.5-inch; 20+ knots; launched in the late nineties. Russian and French merchant auxiliaries ranged in speed from 12 to 22 knots and were armed with three to seven 5.5-inch guns.
system composed of naval militia nor a means of Imperial cooperation. It merely showed that the officers and crew could navigate the vessel to China and back at economical speed. As a naval programme for local defence it was dubious; for Imperial cooperation it would at best provide token and probably unwanted support. The "due quota" the Commonwealth could give to the Royal Navy inside or beyond Australian waters was extremely limited. This did not, Beaumont went on, deny the validity of the "wishes and aspirations of the Australian people." Indeed these must be met:

Local defence may in time be of use and may supply an outlet for the naval aspirations of the great ports of the several states, but the Commonwealth, I think, should aim at the protection on the high seas which is protection for all — floating trade, territory, and ports great and small.

The only satisfactory solution was an ocean-going navy capable of dealing with all but capital ships.

For the security of Australasia eight modern cruisers on the Australian Station were essential. Two first-class cruisers like the Royal Arthur and six second-class cruisers like the Challenger, advised Beaumont, would constitute an effective and homogeneous squadron.* The capital outlay for ships and depots would be about £3,600,000 involving in addition £1,000,000 annually for maintenance. Such a force was beyond Australian financial resources in the immediate future. It could only be acquired and maintained by arrangement with the Imperial government. In that case, the Commonwealth might profitably cooperate with Britain and New Zealand so that it maintained only four vessels of the new squadron. This would cost £190,000 annually.

* **Examples of Vessels for a Cruiser Squadron:**
(a) **First-Class Cruiser in 1901-1903 (Like the Royal Arthur):** 7,305 tons; 2 x 9.2-inch + 10 x 6-inch; 20.5 knots; completed 1890-1892; approximate initial cost £510,000.
(b) **Second-Class Cruiser in 1901-1903 (Like the Challenger):** 5,880 tons; 11 x 6-inch + 9 x 12 pdr.; 21 knots; laid 1901-1904; approximate initial cost £450,000.
... for the protection of floating trade, territory, and ports ...
Clearly Beaumont was recommending an ocean-going cruiser squadron for Australian naval defence on the basis of strategical, rather than political, requirements. It followed from this that basically he was demanding the replacement of the vessels of the Imperial Squadron which, it had always been acknowledged, would leave the Australian littoral in times of danger. Therein lay the germ of later trouble. Of this Sir John Forrest saw some aspects clearly.

"To form, or even to form within a few years, a well-equipped and highly trained sea-going squadron would not be within our means. For the Commonwealth to successfully establish such a force, it must advance by gradual steps ...". 37 Thus did Forrest perceive that Australia needed a navy, not a local naval force, for the protection of her commerce and ports. But he also saw that even if the ships were constructed, the Commonwealth did not—and would not—possess the trained manpower to use them efficiently and effectively. A related problem was one Alfred Deakin later strove to solve: ships in an isolated naval force became obsolete and officers became "rusty". 38 How to ensure replacement of vessels and prevent the deterioration in staff?

Moreover, Forrest had to think of the naval militia, whose demise would cause public uproar. They were men without ships or without sea-going training. Facilities had to be made available to provide trained officers and men. Clearly Beaumont's scheme was not enough. To follow his suggestions as they stood would be merely to subsidize the Royal Navy and Australians "in twenty years, would be no more self-reliant than we are today". 39 The Commonwealth would be without ships, without trained manpower, without local naval forces, and without a naval militia—all would be sacrificed to the new Imperial Squadron.

Confronted with these problems by Sir John Forrest, Beaumont suggested two possibilities. Forrest could request the Admiralty to present the Commonwealth with the obsolescent vessels of the Auxiliary Squadron as training ships in each of the major ports. If the Admiralty consented, the Commonwealth would have to find a further £94,000. A
complete naval scheme along these lines would cost about £300,000 annually. Alternatively, at greater cost the Commonwealth could develop, within the new arrangement, a system of radial port defences. Torpedo boats and destroyers could be used along with minefields and fixed defences to secure ports for Australian shipping and the Royal Navy. These the Commonwealth would have to purchase. But thereby Imperial and colonial interests would be served. In either case, Australians would be developing skills and perhaps acquiring ships for local port defence while and until the capacities for a national sea-going navy were developed.40

After due consideration Forrest accepted the first. Throughout the discussions it had been suggested that the local naval forces might best be scrapped to free enough from the estimates to pay annually between £200,000 and £300,000 to the British government. At that time, there was no latitude to consider destroyers, particularly with more attractive prospects open for investigation. At last the first step was clear: to seek a new agreement to last ten years for the vessels Beaumont suggested; to ensure that Australians could be given modern training aboard vessels of the Auxiliary Squadron on loan or aboard vessels, against Beaumont's advice, of the new Imperial Squadron. At the end of ten years, the Commonwealth would certainly have the men and officers and, in the meantime, wrote Forrest in October 1901, "we shall have satisfaction of knowing that we were working in the direction which would eventually enable us to provide for and establish an Australian navy".41 The next move was to approach Whitehall.

Substantially these recommendations would seem cautious, prudent, and realistic, well within the directions given by parliament, constituting a sound brief for naval discussions at the Colonial Conference of 1902. Yet, although Forrest emerged from the issues with enhanced status in some quarters as a statesman who saw the needs of the Empire, in others he was seen as an unpatriotic, Imperialistic, proud, foolish man courting British approval, frustrating all navalist hopes, insulting his colleagues and electors by presenting to the "Imperial authorities a cut and dried measure for naval defence on which he united
neither ministerial nor public opinion". While it is untrue that Forrest did not seek ministerial approval, the legend has tended to live on that he, and not Barton or Cabinet, was responsible for the iniquities of the new Naval Agreement of 1903.

The circumstances were partly of Forrest's creation. In what was essentially an appendage to his final submission he explicitly rejected the concept of independent colonial navies. For each part of Greater Britain to possess a few ships, he wrote in terms grand and eloquent, "would seem to be in accord with the actions and sentiments of a number of petty States rather than in accord with the necessities and aspirations of a great free united people". In matters of Imperial defence there were no different interests:

If the British nation is at war, so are we; if it gains victories or suffers defeats, so do we .... There is only one sea to be supreme over, and we want one fleet to be mistress over that sea.

Better, therefore, that each part of Greater Britain contribute to the maintenance of a supreme Royal Navy under undivided control! Better that Greater Britons should be able to serve, both permanently and as a reserve, in that navy! Better that the representation for the contributors should be allowed in the Admiralty until the British Navy became truly the Imperial Navy! Neither The Times nor the Imperial Federation (Defence) League could cavil at this.

Perhaps Forrest was led to his conclusion by the very logic of his submissions and the awful power of strategic thought. Having rejected local naval defence as unsound, and having accepted the need for a sea-going squadron which the Commonwealth could neither afford nor man, it naturally followed that Australia must depend upon the Royal Navy controlled by the Admiralty. Forrest may have been manoeuvred into this position partly because, in obeying parliamentary instructions to reduce defence expenditure, he had anticipated the extinction of the colonial naval forces - the remaining outlet for navalist aspirations. If so, the lessons for navalists - even those like Alfred Deakin who, with
Forrest, were interested in Imperial reorganization—was clear: local naval defence had to be espoused whether strategically justifiable or no. Perhaps Forrest was attempting to woo support from the Free-traders whose views he had carefully noted. If so, he was politically obtuse. Or perhaps Forrest, in summarizing sincerely his own attitude to Empire and defence, felt he had grasped a significant trend in public opinion. If so, there was ample justification. But whatever the reason, Forrest's grandiloquence was clearly directed at a final and distant goal. It did not invalidate his detailed recommendations.

Noble words may be the stuff of politics; rarely the substance of policy. Forrest knew that a new agreement must be a matter of careful haggling at the Conference even while rhetoric flowed on. It is true that he had proclaimed himself an anti-navalist. But he had merely reopened an alternative: renewal of the Agreement could lead to the reconstitution of the Imperial Navy or it could still precede the foundation of an Australian navy. More important, Forrest's venture into Imperial politics seems to have affected neither Barton nor the outcome one whit.

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Barton went to the Colonial Conference of 1902 knowing in detail Forrest's brief. Beaumont had doubtless reported to Whitehall; New Zealand was formally requesting a revision of the existing Agreement to replace old ships with new cruisers. The first step would surely be taken by the Admiralty. 44

It was. Lord Selborne, the First Lord of the Admiralty, expounded lucidly and authoritatively the theory of fleet concentration. Defence was publicly struck from the naval vocabulary. The localization of forces was declared "altogether heretical". Selborne then applied the theory to the guerre de course. The French proposed, he warned, to
create two swift and powerful cruiser squadrons in Far Eastern waters.* British cruisers must be able to concentrate to compel this force to concentrate. Then would follow the hunt and the kill. The doctrine was inescapable.

In times of peace dispositions could be made for political and imperial purposes. In time of war the Admiralty needed complete control to utilize strength wherever the blow could best be struck. The primary object, read an Admiralty memorandum, "is not to defend anything, but to attack the fleets of the enemy, and by defeating them, to afford protection to British Dominions, shipping, and commerce".45

If Australia and New Zealand were prepared to accept the doctrine - which indeed Salborne was more concerned to expound than beg directly for contributions to aid the weary Titan - then the Admiralty had ready a proposal. It was prepared to place five modern second-class cruisers, like the Challenger, on the Australian Station, two of which might be manned by Australasians recruited into the Royal Navy on a permanent basis. For this force the Commonwealth would then have to find £304,515 annually.** There remained the problem of the naval militia. If these were to be trained to the point where they too could join the Squadron in times of emergency, and thus become an effective Royal Naval Reserve, the Commonwealth would have to maintain the five Katoomba Class cruisers of the old Auxiliary Squadron and allow their distribution to each of the major ports as drill vessels. This would increase the annual payment of the Commonwealth to £387,490.46

* The French were to form a force composed of two armoured cruisers, three swift corsair cruisers, and seven lesser protected cruisers to operate from Saigon and Noumea. The plan was never implemented. However, the Americans were to rely on cruiser squadrons in the Pacific and the Admiralty hoped to follow suit. The German government did so after 1910.

** About £50,000 annually might also have had to be found to make up the differences in pay for the colonials whose wages would be higher than the English.
This proposal allowed, where Beaumont did not, Australians to serve and train aboard modern cruisers and even to aspire to commissioned rank. The opening of the Royal Navy to colonials, permanent and militia, was a concession indeed. It did not provide, where Beaumont did, for first-class cruisers under a tripartite financial arrangement. But the Imperial Squadron could be strengthened in time of need to aid this new Australasian squadron. It offered, where Beaumont was uncertain, the use of the old Katoomba Class cruisers for training the citizen-sailors. All the Commonwealth had to do was to accept the fact that battles were fought in distant seas and pay the cost—a third more than Beaumont's highest estimate and more than three times the payment under the previous agreement.

Barton commended the scheme tentatively and soon after informed Alfred Deakin in one of his many telegraphic despatches of the proposal.

After much confusion which not only caused Barton dismay but revealed that neither Deakin nor other ministers had studied Forrest's submissions, federal Cabinet rejected the scheme since it would be far beyond the finances available. It wanted an "alteration in the basis of (the) contribution (to the) Royal Navy". Any increased expenditure in this field necessarily meant further reductions in the military estimates. Any subsidy, Deakin explained, would be unpopular. Both, it seems, Cabinet was prepared to face if the sum spent remained between £100,000 to £200,000 annually and sea-going training was offered. This left Barton a great deal of latitude and little to bargain with.47

His only asset was that Whitehall wanted a regular naval contribution from the Commonwealth comparable with that offered by the Cape, Natal, and Newfoundland, even if this meant satisfying certain Australian conditions. Given the circumstances, the Admiralty appeared to act quite generously in drafting a new tripartite agreement that was to continue for ten years. The conditions differed greatly from those in 1887.
In return for an annual payment of not less than £200,000 from the Commonwealth, the Admiralty undertook to maintain on the Australian Station a modern force of at least eight vessels whose prime ships of war were to be one armoured cruiser and two second-class cruisers.* In addition three older vessels were to be converted into drill ships to train twenty-five officers and seven hundred men for the Royal Naval Reserve. These, and one other, were also to recruit colonials on a more permanent basis. Eight cadetships, tenable in Great Britain, were to be offered annually. In response to Barton's insistent appeals on behalf of local interests, the Admiralty agreed to "recognize the advantages" of buying coal and supplies for all squadrons East of Suez from Australasia.

What had Australians gained for the payment of a little more than a shilling each for the next decade? A relatively modern force with an armoured cruiser as flag-ship and limited potential for specialist naval training—these were assets. Yet in substance, the Admiralty had scrapped the Australian Auxiliary Squadron, primarily because the Commonwealth could not afford to maintain it, and contracted to reinforce, at a fixed strength in peacetime, the Imperial Squadron whose sphere of operations were never limited. The Australian Station became even more than before a convenient administrative division. Under the revised Agreement the new force was, under Admiralty direction, to act "against hostile vessels which threaten the trade or interests of Australia and New Zealand" in "the waters of the Australia, China, and East Indies Stations ...". The doctrine had been incorporated into the Agreement. On the other hand, the Admiralty had expressly guaranteed to protect Australian trade and interests. It was under a strong moral, even a contractual, obligation to secure the Commonwealth against all except flash raids. Protection from the Royal Naval shield was fundamentally different but perhaps no less effective than that provided for in 1887.

* 1903 Agreement: 1 First-Class Armoured Cruiser 2 Second-Class Cruisers 4 Third-Class Cruisers 4 Sloops.
As events proved, the Admiralty considered the force excessive and quietly chafed under the new arrangement. Why, then, did it promise so much for so little? The British government received an annual payment which, with some justification, it could look upon as a naval subsidy. So too could Australians. There was Imperial value in that—and a source of further friction. But, in substance, by refusing the first Admiralty offer of five second-class cruisers and five Katoomba Class cruisers as drill ships, Barton had, doubtless unknowingly, entangled the Commonwealth in international politics. 49

Under the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, signed in January 1902, Great Britain promised to maintain in the Far East "available for concentration" a naval force which, allied with the Japanese, would be greater than that of any third power. Explicitly Selborne had included in this naval force the Imperial Squadron on the Australian Station. It is probable that he had this in mind when he expounded the doctrine before conference. The appearance of the armoured cruiser, the H.M.S. Anson, on the Australian Station during 1904-1905, therefore owed much to the Anglo-Japanese Treaty. So, too, did the arrival of more modern cruisers after January 1905. Australians were paying for protection in far more than a naval sense.

Moreover, in the midst of reorganizing the fleet, Admiral Sir John Fisher contemplated using three powerful cruiser squadrons in the Far East. Singapore was one of the five keys, in his estimation, with which the British could look up the world. To this end he had hoped to reinforce even further the Australian Station with two armoured cruisers and two first-class cruisers so that with the aid of the China and East Indies Squadrons the key could be turned in the event of war. Before him were two clear and insurmountable difficulties. The Admiralty did not have enough ships to implement his plan; the Royal Navy did not possess a cruiser suitable for the task of defending the Pacific.*

* See below Chapter Nine.
Australians were to resent the results of the first; ultimately they were to benefit from the second. For, though no one knew, Selborne had tilled the soil and Fisher planted the seed of the Royal Australian Navy.

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Great and increasing was the furore over the new Naval Agreement. Compared even with 1887, declared the navalists, it was needless, valueless, frustrating, enfeebling, and dishonourable. They carried the debate to the press, to British newspapers and journals, to meetings of Labour caucus, to the Australian Natives Association and the Royal Colonial Institute - and finally to parliament in July 1903 where Barton, unnecessarily exhorted by the Colonial Office and the Governor-General, sought its ratification. 50

Of the forty-five men in the House who spoke on the issue, only eight favoured it without reservation. Six others were relatively non-committal about local naval forces. The remainder expressed grave misgivings and demanded some kind of Australian navy. The Labour Party, more clear about what it rejected than what it desired, steadfastly opposed immediate ratification, and was supported by seven radicals from among the ministerialists. Yet some of the most trenchant criticism came from neither Labour nor the radicals. At the van of the attack Sir John Quick was incredulous and outraged and Senator Matheson indignant and scornful. In support Watson was cautious, Crouch suspicious, Hughes alarmed, Higgins passionate, and Reid astute. Setting the pattern for many of the Free-traders, he repudiated Barton's claim, flirted with Labour, denounced Imperial federation, called for a future navy, and voted for the Agreement. Duly it was ratified.

The navalists in parliament performed well. The new Agreement, they had argued, is neither the business arrangement nor the insurance policy of 1887. What do we get for £200,000? We pay a subsidy to the
Eastern Fleet, to a squadron which the British in any case would maintain to uphold their Far Eastern interests. What is Australian about that? The naval reserve scheme satisfies neither our self-respect nor our demand for security. We are financing a squadron which will disappear from our coastline precisely when it is most needed. The British attempt to mollify us by suggesting that local defence is no longer effective. They can indulge in new theories; their ports are always protected. In times of danger ours will always be exposed. If ever local naval forces under our own control were needed, it is now! To accept the doctrine of fleet concentration in the form of the new Imperial Squadron is not only to obscure this imperative need, it is always to condone the offensive. It would be to entangle us in all Imperial wars resulting from policies we cannot restrain. Better the principles of 1865, or even 1887, than that! Our future lies not on the high seas. Calculated preparation for offensive operations in peace is neither our duty nor our tradition. In any scheme of Imperial defence we must protect ourselves, afford a safe base for British forces, and thus become an asset rather than a liability to British strength. There in times of peace our obligation ends. 51

For many earnest supporters of the Agreement the time seemed no less ripe for an examination of the nature of nation and Empire. Among them was T.T. Ewing. He was a New South Welshman, a staunch federationist, and a Free-trader. Later he was to hold the defence portfolio in Deakin's fourth administration (1907-1908) and to be one of the very few to establish cordial and intimate relations with the Prime Minister. In that post his repeated predictions that war must come with Asia, that Australians might have to face the yellow hordes alone, and that British sea-power could not secure the Commonwealth from invasion, were to prove highly influential.

On this occasion, however, Ewing scrutinized his own people. He was worried by a strong conscious tendency among some navalists that began with an assertion of local patriotism, proceeded to the desire for separate nationality, but might well end in separation from an Empire.
The danger arose, he felt, because the navalists drew sustenance from four classes of Australian colonists, each of whom debunked or devalued the Imperial idea: those who nursed memories of political and religious grievances and carried these seeds of strife to their new land — these were, like as not, ignorant, swayed by flashes of violent prejudice and the victims of demagogues; those of the native born who sought in Australian life, literature, and art, something unique, something expressing a national attitude, something characteristic and distinct from the English — their ambition was explicable and pardonable but it generally carried with it a rejection of Old World traditions and standards which in turn produced a mind distinctly unfavourable to the Imperial connection; those politicians who professed a dread of British and foreign entanglements, assumed that Australia could live in splendid isolation, and were stirred by such phrases as refusing to be drawn "into the vortex of militarism" — these were not numerous but influential; and finally, those pessimists who felt that the Empire would inevitably disintegrate — a few of these were doctrinaire but most felt this must be the fate of any large and great political organization. No one of these groups constituted a threat; joined together in a single cause they might prove formidable. Already Australia was plagued internally with divisive loyalties which stood in the way of a national spirit; already at play were these centrifugal tendencies that had to be channelled or countered.

The alternative, declared Ewing, was to see Greater Britain as an evolving organism, as a complete Anglo-Saxon world developing freedoms with a sense of unity, as societies inspired with mutual trust and ready to offer mutual assistance. Within that exciting context plans for defence must be conceived. A sea-going navy formed by a more prosperous Australia as a cooperative unit of the Royal Navy would meet these demands admirably. Equally fitting was the new Imperial Squadron with its openings for colonials into the Royal Navy.52

This and other soundings of Imperialist thought in Australia reveal much in common: a disinterest in Imperial organization; a desire
for harmonious cooperation in Imperial defence to satisfy mutual interests; a protective and mild interest in the future of navalism against external criticism; belief in the spontaneity of Imperial sentiment in any crisis; the demand for inviolable right to make a free choice; and a profound faith in the supremacy of the Royal Navy and the efficacy of fleet concentration. Cooperation without coercion in an Anglo-Saxon world - thus Ewing summarized the case. All these strands were important, particularly to Alfred Deakin, and were to provoke men to action during the Dreadnought scare of 1909.\textsuperscript{53}

Despite discussion, there was no doubt that the Naval Agreement was a fact. Many Australians welcomed it. The new Imperial Squadron was becoming part of Commonwealth defence. Indeed, the newly-elected second Deakin ministry was so "anxious" to see the new scheme for training Australians perfected that it appointed the arch-navalist, Captain Creswell, as Royal Naval Registrar.* He was asked to "render every possible assistance" to the commander of the Imperial Squadron in his effort to recruit Australians for service either as permanent members of the Royal Navy on the Australian Station or as members of the Royal Naval Reserve. Creswell indignantly replied that he would accept the post only at the express "order of the Commonwealth ...". He received it.\textsuperscript{54}

Yet the navalists in parliament had not struggled in vain. In attacking Forrest and Barton, they had begun to clarify their aims - a naval force limited in operations to the Australian coast to replace the Australian Auxiliary Squadron in which they had recently found much virtue. Therein lay the opportunity for Creswell. The issue was far from dead. It was not only they who kept it alive.

In attempting to determine the fate of the existing naval forces after their return from the Colonial Conference, Sir John Forrest - with

* During 1904 Creswell held three positions concurrently: Naval Commandant in Queensland; Royal Naval Registrar; and Acting Naval Officer Commanding the Commonwealth Naval Forces.
... in war would hazard the lives of all on board ...
duty as drill ships. In war most would hazard the lives of all on board. 56

To Sir John Forrest, the administrator pledged to drastic economies, the solution was self-evident — to accept the advice of the Colonial Defence Committee and disband this polygot navy. Yet, although the permanent naval forces were not held in high esteem, they remained the sole outlet left to the navalists cursing under the shadow of the Agreement. To choke off their funds was one thing, to let them die another. For with their extinction there would be no distinctively Australian force on the Station and no nucleus for a future navy. Not even the Sydney Morning Herald would brook that. For there was an even more grievous aspect of the problem which had been Forrest’s constant concern — the future of the naval militia. 57

Though previously neglected, retrenched, and discouraged, the citizen—sailors were highly valued. Politicians, Admirals, even the Colonial Defence Committee, commended their spirit. In them was found the sign that Australians still belonged to the British race steeped in the glories and traditions of the seas. Of the 2,000 men, half lived in the coastal towns of Queensland. The most coherently organized lived in New South Wales. They had no ships; they played no role in the naval forces; they drilled on land. But they were the Naval Brigades to the Free-traders and even the anti-navalists of Sydney. Prudently Reid, in July 1903, declared to the House:

If I thought (the 1903 Agreement) was to be made use of to interfere in any sense with the vigorous development of our naval brigades, I should vote against it. 58

Yet even before Reid’s declaration, Forrest was considering a solution that anticipated it. To scrap the colonial forces, though an ideal administrative solution with ample justification, was impossible because the militia would go untrained. To see staffs and militia absorbed into the New Agreement was more appealing. Beaumont’s successor, Vice-Admiral A.D. Fanshawe, was at first reluctant and then enthusiastic
about the proposal. Yet this would mean paying off or laying up vessels like the *Protector*, dismissing officers like Clare and Creswell, and disbanding those scattered militia units on the Queensland coast Fanshawe could not train. To maintain, under existing financial arrangements, both the forces and the units was a waste. Could, then, the Commonwealth replace the colonial naval forces even while the new Agreement came into operation? If so, with what vessels?

In April 1903 Forrest took these questions to Fanshawe. He had previously contemplated the use of submarines. Would Whitehall, he now asked—recalling but misinterpreting the previous advice of Beaumont, provide destroyers for Australian defence? Fanshawe pointed out that this would be contrary to the Naval Agreement and would involve great expense for the British Treasury. Destroyers, he said, were unable to operate beyond the local sphere to which they were distributed. Of all vessels, their functions were the most localized. Such a measure the Admiralty would never condone. But, continued Fanshawe, there was a way out.

The Commonwealth could purchase, or ask the Admiralty to help provide as it had done the *Cerberus* under the Colonial Naval Defence Act of 1865, destroyers to replace the old vessels of the local naval forces. These could be maintained and manned by the Commonwealth:

In that way they would be a local Naval Force belonging in Australia, unable to leave Australian waters, and would, moreover, be the recognized and proper weapons for defence of harbour and coasts in their vicinity.

Thus had Forrest, in pursuing an administrative problem to the edges of policy, reopened an avenue for the navalists—radial port defence. ⁵⁹

Thus armed, Barton told the House from the outset of the debate on the Naval Agreement that future development might well lie in port defence. When opportunity arose and funds allowed, he said, it might be advisable to have "torpedo boats or torpedo destroyers at each of the principal ports, as a means of special harbour defence". Nothing in the
Agreement precluded this step; Australians would be upsetting neither the theory nor the practice of fleet concentration; the Commonwealth possessed the power and the precedent to act under the Colonial Naval Defence Act. The Commonwealth Naval Forces would become the nucleus for future growth. Within the Royal Naval shield, Barton predicted, the Commonwealth would tend to its own lines of defence as it grew more prosperous. 60

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Far from the centre of power as naval commandant in Queensland, Creswell examined closely each twist and turn in the public debate. He knew that Forrest's deliberations could well mean the extinction of his career and ambitions. No man more quickly grasped the opportunity afforded by Barton's statement. He was fast approaching the normal age of retirement. 61

A new coastal defence force with Creswell as senior officer was a dream worth fulfilling. Harbour defence might be menial, land-locked, liable to pressure from the military, and far less splendid. But the opportunity had to be quickly exploited. He clutched at a straw. In September 1903, with the hub-bub over the Agreement scarce ended, the Minister had the second of many submissions from Creswell: a torpedo boat service was essential to preserve that long smooth water canal, the Barrier Route, from attack by enterprising Russian commanders.

His suggestion was sent to the Colonial Defence Committee and fulsomely repudiated: the Barrier Route did not cover all the Queensland sea lanes; torpedo boat defence was localized and would involve greater cost against a highly improbable threat than the return was worth; better that the Commonwealth trust the Royal Navy and the Agreement; better that all fixed defences on the coast be modernized. With this advice Cabinet was content. 62
In February 1904 the Russo-Japanese War began. One month later the second Deakin ministry took the first step towards redeeming Barton's pledge. As senior officer, Creswell was appointed Acting Naval Officer Commanding the Commonwealth Naval Forces. He could be responsible for the inspection and efficiency of the force, their command in war, and the formulation of policy. Now he would have a voice in official circles, but little ready access. For he was expected — given an extra £250 a year — to hold his previous post in Queensland, recruit Australians for the Imperial Squadron at Sydney, and to travel to Melbourne for consultations. 63

Within weeks after the appointment, another submission was before Cabinet. He urged a reorganization of the old colonial forces which he was to command in war along lines befitting "federated Australia". These could eventually be incorporated into a scheme of radial port defence. The first step was to make the existing forces effective. Later the Commonwealth could develop them on "a federal basis" for the "defence of ports, harbours, and open roadsteads (including) the waters in their vicinity". 64

He sought a promise and nothing more concrete than a new administration and increased funds for the existing forces. Some money he got. No other decision was made. Again Cabinet wondered whether it could get training ships from the Admiralty under the Australian interpretation of the Colonial Naval Defence Act of 1865. Yet again it was thinking of modifying the existing Agreement. Neither Deakin nor his ministers seemed impressed by Creswell or his appeal. 65

Nor he with them. Unlike Deakin, whose purposes he could not see and whose apparent confusion he could not tolerate, Creswell appeared disinterested in the Imperial ramifications of naval policy. This helped commend him to Labour.

On the formation of the Watson ministry Creswell was again asked to formulate policy. His relations with Senator Dawson, the Minister
for Defence, were cordial, direct, and wholly sympathetic. He was not the ogre Hutton had appeared. Hughes had demanded a national navy and quoted Creswell in the House; the new naval adviser had been presented as a patriot doing battle with Whitehall. The course of the Russo-Japanese War helped his cause by reviving nightmares about Russian raiders. Moreover, the Chambers of Commerce in the towns along the Queensland coast, inspired by notions Creswellian if not directly encouraged by the man, called on Andrew Fisher, then a member of Cabinet, and Senator Dawson to save them from daring enemy commanders. What, he was asked, could be done?  

Labour's initiative caught Creswell momentarily off balance. Yet as he discussed the efficacy of using three destroyers for the defence of Melbourne, new ideas came. Cabinet needed a scheme that was "Australian and national". Destroyer defence was the answer. These vessels, locally manned, maintained, and controlled, could be allotted to each capital for radial port defence. Moreover they could be used at sea. Along the coasts they could patrol and flee to safety and give the warning when the enemy was at hand. And should parliament so desire, they need not always be localized. For organized as a flotilla attached to the Imperial Squadron they would be excellent for scouting, despatch work, and even tactical offensives. All this could grow from small beginnings. Creswell was not, however, clear about whether the vessels were to be borrowed, allotted under the Agreement, or purchased.  

The beginning Dawson approved. The problem was cost. With Watson's approval, he requested assistance from Whitehall. His intention was to ask whether the Admiralty would "construct on loan to the Commonwealth, three or four Torpedo-Boat Destroyers, the Commonwealth to pay interest on the cost, including a percentage for sinking fund over a period of five years, over a period of years". Not only was the wording obscure but Dawson had confused the terms of the Colonial Naval Defence Act, and the old and new Agreements. It was even more difficult to interpret Labour's intent from his elliptical telegram to the Colonial Office. The reply from the Admiralty, strategical and political, was not
therefore surprising: any form of torpedo boat was useless for port
defence unless used at night and in great numbers; the Naval Agreement,
tripartite in nature, could not be easily amended unless two of the parties
agreed to increase their contributions. Unless some modification was
contemplated, the Admiralty would rather have the Agreement as it stood. 68

Dawson was furious. Not only was he scorned by the parliamentary
opposition for so meagre a scheme but he had to justify himself to his
colleagues. The Admiralty was blamed. Yet the misunderstanding was
largely his fault. He had neither grasped all the issues nor clarified
his stand. Nor, it seems, had he discussed the issue with Robert Collins,
the Secretary of the Department of Defence.

Thus it was that although parliamentary navalists met naval
expert, the union was unfruitful. Both were too confused. If Dawson
and his colleagues had been in office longer, had more funds at their
disposal, more experience in the administration of defence, and if Creswell
had a lucid naval programme, had been the expert the navalists expected,
the paternity of the Australian navy would not be debated by historians.
But, then, it would not have been the Royal Australian Navy of 1914.

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PART THREE

NATIONALIST DEFENCE POLICY: THE GARRISON MENTALITY

(1905-1909)

... those provisions are federal which recognize the States as distinct but co-equal societies, uniting them as parts of, but not completely consolidated and absorbed in, the Commonwealth ... Those provisions are national which unite the people of the Commonwealth as individual units, without reference to the States in which they reside; which secure to the residents of all States equality of rights without disability or discrimination .... and above all which provide that the laws of the Commonwealth shall operate directly upon, and demand personal obedience from, the people in their personal and private capacities ...

J. QUICK and R. GARRAN, 1901.
By 1905 the Commonwealth possessed sufficient might - actual, projected, and potential - to defend its territory and interests against all probable threats and to meet Imperial commitments. Within the limits of federalist politics Sir John Forrest, his consultants and successors, had amalgamated colonial policies and forces for Australian defence. Assistance from Great Britain was one of the means; involvement in Imperial defence a consequence; national security the aim. An army was being created. Plans had been laid to mobilize in an emergency sufficient Garrison Forces for all major cities and a separate Field Force of nine brigades. Naval protection was afforded by the Imperial Squadron bound by agreement to train Australians at sea. There was room for the modest accommodation of navalist demands. Most reforms championed by radicals could be achieved within Hutton's scheme. Active participation in Imperial wars could be left largely to ad hoc decisions utilizing perhaps the plans already laid. Despite clear and obvious deficiencies, there was little in federalist defence policy which could not be clarified, strategically justified, or made effective given an astute Minister for Defence, increased finance, continued Cabinet support, and parliamentary acceptance.

This was not to be. Already critics had demanded a Council of Defence to ensure unquestioned national control and coordination of all Australian forces. This was but the first step. The growth of new national interests to protect, the increased status of the central government within Australia and of the Commonwealth within Greater Britain, the desire to refashion the forces in accord with national ideals, and the appearance of a national enemy in the Pacific which appeared to endanger all Australians valued, led radicals and liberals to demand further innovation.

To enthusiasts it seemed increasingly important to create defences permanent rather than makeshift in character, nationalist
rather than federalist in substance, on a scale to deter or counter invasion by the Asian hordes. Alfred Deakin's proclamations of 1906 and 1907 indicated the solutions: a mass Citizen Army raised by a mild system of universal training; an Australian Destroyer Flotilla for coastal defence. Instead of Hutton's scheme there was to be a National Guard of 220,000 men trained compulsorily for a brief time each year and sworn to serve only within Australia. Instead of the Imperial Squadron there was to be a National Naval Force bound by ability and function to territorial waters.

This implied a profound change in the assessment of national responsibilities to the Empire. Hitherto, Australia could be seen as an Imperial base in the Pacific from which the Royal Navy and even Australian expeditionary forces could sally forth. Henceforward, Australia was to be a white garrison-state prepared for the Asian siege, a fortress to be held until relieved by British forces. Self-sufficiency rather than dependence on Great Britain, self-defence rather than Imperial involvement, impregnability rather than security were now the dominant aims of the innovators. These, it was held, could be achieved within the limits of nationalist politics.
Let our Australian spirit expand itself, not in dreams of military adventure in other lands, but in qualifying itself to put around this great continent a rampart of triple steel.

GEORGE REID, 26 July 1901.

(The) traditions of the elder federalists date from the time when "foreign complications" signified entanglement of England in European troubles. To the younger generation .... (the) nationalist nightmare no longer is a European conflagration, spreading to overseas dependencies, but the incursion of Asiatics from their overcrowded homes into the fertile wilderness of tropical Australia. The spectacle of an armed Japan, flushed with victory over a white Power, and the awful potentiality of an armed China, arouse the liveliest apprehensions on the part of those whose nationalism connotes a resolute White Australia.

RICHARD JEBB, 1905.

Australia is an outpost of civilization thrust into the heart of the East, vast oceans intervening between her and the West, to which she now turns. Not since the Turks were swept back from the walls of Vienna has any Christian nation been placed in a position so perilous for the maintenance of white man's supremacy ....

C. de THIERRY, January 1909.

The best first service we can do to the Empire is to make Australia a well armed, well trained garrison ....

The CALL, November 1908.
(Organ of the Australian National Defence League)
It was part of liberal faith that the most effective control over the sword of state in peace — and the most potent evocation of armed might in war — lay in civil rather than professional direction of military affairs. It was part of British constitutional theory that parliament should control the armed forces. It was part of the nationalist creed that the Commonwealth should formulate policy unfettered by Whitehall.

In the agitation of Victorians who had possessed a defence council since the eighties, in the findings of the Federal Military Conferences, in the indignation of the radicals during the debate on the first Defence Bill, in the tentative investigations of Forrest and Chapman into British reforms after the disasters in South Africa, in the demands of Select Committees led by Senator Dawson, and in the cool deliberations of J.W. McCay, these principles were held to be self-evident.

The structure of federalist defence appeared to ignore them. The military apparatus of Major-General Hutton appeared to stand in the way of the citizen-soldiery, Australian command, and parliamentary control. Ministers seemed the confused victims of manipulation, rather than the directors of policy. As Labour was quick to point out, the whole structure deprived the local naval forces of the organization and the voice so necessary for their development. As aggravating were the two British elements entrenched in federalist defence: the Commander-in-Chief on the Australian Station responsible to the Admiralty; and a General Officer Commanding owing mysterious fealty to the War Office.

To eliminate the defects a new scheme of administration was introduced in January 1905 by J.W. McCay, Minister for Defence in the Reid-McLean ministry. Its express purposes were to develop and coordinate national policies subject to constant ministerial direction and parliamentary influence; to ensure continuity of policy and administration; and to free the defence forces from the domination of Head-Quarters.
Decentralization was the means. Responsibilities for policy, administration, inspection, and executive command were carefully separated. They were now to be borne by a Council of Defence; a Military Board and a Naval Board; an Inspector-General and a Director of Naval Forces; and the Commandants and commanders in each of the states. The presence of the Minister, members of the Civil Branch — and other politicians by invitation — on the Council and Boards guaranteed civilian control and direction. The Minister responsible to parliament for policy would have a hand in its making. The citizen-soldiery were expected to exercise their voice upon new committees; Commandants were encouraged to make local administrative arrangements freed from the supervision of Head-Quarters. Gone was the British General Officer Commanding. The other British element — the Imperial Squadron — was ignored.

The previous system of administration rested on the ability and authority of the General Officer Commanding. The new system would clearly depend upon the calibre of the Minister for Defence. Advice from all sections would be referred to him. Given such drastic decentralization, it was essential for the Minister to be aware of his function as coordinator. To learn of the difficulties of each arm his presence on the two boards of administration was essential. More important was the one organ capable of giving coherence to the whole system: the Council of Defence. There statesman would meet defence expert. There policy would be decided after consultation between the Minister for Defence, the Treasurer, the Inspector-General (after 1906, Major-General Hoad), the Chief of Intelligence (Colonel Bridges), and the Director of Naval Forces (Captain Creswell). But if the Council were not used effectively or if the Minister proved reluctant to assume his responsibilities with diligence and acumen, the whole scheme would become inoperative. Rather than the corporate responsibility of a Head-Quarters Staff, influences on policy could be capricious and anonymous.

One further addition was made to the system in July 1909. Due in part to political preferment by the Deakin ministry and in part to the long process of coaching for an Australian command position, Colonel
TABLE B

SKETCH SHOWING DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE 1905-1909

WHITEHALL

Committee of Imperial Defence: Overseas Defence Committee
Army Council
Admiralty
Colonial Office
Colonial Conference

C-in-C on the
AUSTRALIAN STATION

PRIME MINISTER
plus Cabinet;
including
MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE
INDIVIDUAL OFFICERS
Ad Hoc Committees

SECRETARY FOR DEFENCE
LEGISLATURE

GOVERNOR-GENERAL
AUSTRALIA

CIVIL BRANCH

SECRETARY FOR DEFENCE

(Policy-Making)
COUNCIL OF DEFENCE
Naval
Military
Civil

(Administration)

(Executive Command)

(MINISTRY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE)

(Inspection)

MILITARY BOARD
NAVAL BOARD

NAVAL AND MILITARY COMMANDANTS
Plus OIC Regiments

INSPECTOR-GENERAL
NAVAL DIRECTOR

Key:

Lines of Correspondence and/or Responsibility.
Potential Lines of Advice and Consultation.
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TABLE D

SKETCH SHOWING PROBABLE DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE 1909-1912

WHITFORD

Committee of Imperial Defence: Overseas Defence Committee
Army Council
Admiralty
Colonial Office
Colonial Conference
C-in-C on the Australian Station

AUSTRALIA
GOVERNOR-GENERAL
PRIME MINISTER
Plus Cabinet:
Including
MINISTERS OF STATE FOR DEFENCE

LEGISLATURE

Visiting British Experts

SECRETARY FOR DEFENCE

CIVIL BRANCH

IMPERIAL GENERAL STAFF
( Commonwealth Section)
CHIEF of the GENERAL STAFF

MILITARY BOARD
INSPECTOR-GENERAL
COUNCIL OF DEFENCE
NEW NAVAL BOARD

DISTRICT STAFFS

MILITARY COMMANDANTS

NAVAL COMMANDANTS

KEY: Lines of Correspondence and/or Responsibility,
Avenues of Advice and Consultation,
Staff Interchange.
J.C. Hoad had risen in rank from 1906 and three years later, as Major-General, was appointed first Chief of the Imperial General Staff (Commonwealth Section). Among his duties were the drafting of operations for war and collection of relevant intelligence. He was the senior Australian officer and would have been, in theory, a member of the Council of Defence. He superseded the Chief of Intelligence and was far more influential than he. Though by no means as domineering as the Head-Quarters Staff of Hutton's day, the authority of the Chief of the General Staff did promise a cohesion that had hitherto been lacking.  

Contemporaries were aware that in setting up this apparatus for the formulation of policy they envisaged Australia as a nation-state. They appear to have been less aware that policy-making rested upon balanced assessments of external affairs and the collection of special intelligence. Memoranda from the Colonial Defence Committee had previously provided the conclusions of detailed appreciations but there was no Australian source of informed opinion. When, from 1906, there was an increasing tendency by the politicians to disregard advice from Whitehall, defence planners were deprived of even the conclusions.

No man grasped this as quickly as Colonel Bridges, the Chief of Intelligence. In 1907 he explained to the Minister that the collection of data—supposing it to be correct—was but half the problem; that "unorganized facts are of no value"; and that information had to be "sifted, collated and recorded on systematic lines". Yet his tasks were too great to allow time either for collection or arrangement. Consequently, a special Australian Intelligence Corps was established composed almost solely of citizen officers. Such men were amateurs often with no special training in staff work. For the kind of intelligence upon which assessments, policy, or plans of operations could be based there were few sources.* Intelligence diaries of an indifferent kind were presented

* Intelligence duties included — collection of data for the General Staff including resources, roads, etc. of the Commonwealth and Dependencies — field intelligence; topography; communications; interrogation of prisoners — training intelligence officers and guides — preparation of strategical maps and plans including surveys — and collecting of material about foreign countries. Only the first and last are of concern here.
by District Officers in New Guinea but they were of little military value. Bridges attempted to gather information from travelling businessmen and "British residents in other countries within the Australian sphere of action". Information from this source was rare, ill-informed and uncalled. Bridges believed that all relevant information could be culled from printed and official foreign sources; such work was not done. Intelligence Diaries of the kind which could form the basis of operational plans were exchanged from 1906 with New Zealand, India and South Africa, and from the War Office came handbooks on British territories in the Far East. Neither these nor the occasional British handbook on the Japanese army were of great use for appreciations at the policy level. Nor were they used by Australian officers before 1911, and probably not after. Not until 1911 did the Naval Board receive annual Admiralty lists of vessels of all nations in the Pacific; these appear to have been rarely used. There was no direct communication between the Intelligence officers working under the Chief of the General Staff and the Naval Board until 1914. It was no surprise that in 1913 little information had been collected and none systematically presented on the Commonwealth and its Dependencies and none concerning foreign countries, particularly those in the Pacific.

Intelligence about foreign activity within Australia was just as poor before 1911 and improved very slowly thereafter. The only avenue of thorough investigation was provided by the state police forces. On the rare occasions it was used officials of the federal government were not convinced by the reports. One example will suffice. In 1908 newspaper reports spread rumours that Japanese-trained espionage agents were using pearling luggers to make secret soundings of passages through the Great Barrier Reef. Later rumour had it that spies were mapping stock routes and sketching bridges inland. Alarmist letters were sent by a few Queenslanders to the Minister who referred the matter to Bridges. In turn he requested the police departments in the Eastern States to survey all Japanese activities. The police found it was true that a Japanese storekeeper read Carlyle; that a group of Japanese were circulating in the Eastern States; that well-dressed Japanese were
travelling on coastal vessels; and that Japanese pearling luggers did work the Reef by night. They also reported that the storekeeper was a student of English literature; that the group was a travelling troupe of players with cinema equipment, probably linked with a vice ring in Singapore; that the well-dressed Japanese businessmen engaged in legitimate pursuits; and that most of the anti-Japanese agitation on the coast came from white pearl-fishermen who disliked competition.

Bridges accepted the assessment that all this activity was innocent. Attlee Hunt, Secretary to the Prime Minister, and others, did not. Among those were T.T. Ewing, Joseph Cook, and, to suit his own purposes, Captain Creswell. Major-General Hoad later agreed. They saw no reason to discredit rumour since aboard the luggers were probably some who had served in the Japanese navy and that along the coast were some who had served in the Japanese army. The civil servants tended to believe that espionage would be the duty of such men; Creswell argued that destroyers would police some of their activities; Hoad wondered whether special legislation might not be necessary.6

These defects may neither be remarkable nor unexpected in an emergent dominion considering the external world for the first time. But careful consideration is essential for the creation of new instruments of war if the balance between policy, resources, and strategic function is to be observed. From 1906 to 1910, the years of innovation, defence planning, when it was not based on assessments from Whitehall, rested upon the guesses of Australian professional advisers. They used the same sources of opinion as the politicians: local newspapers; periodicals; and British service journals. They were as subject to scares and alarums as anybody.

Militarist some radicals, and later anti-conscriptionists, were to describe pre-war defence policy — an unnecessary precursor to 1917. But no group of Australian military and naval officers frightened statesmen into action by evoking spectres of invasion. The elaborate apparatus for policy-making introduced by J.W. McCay was not effectively used.
The Council of Defence had one full meeting in May 1905. It was not convened again until March 1911 when Senator Pearce asserted the personal control necessary to make the system function. Throughout that time the Military Board met frequently each year; the Naval Board far less often. Sometimes the Minister for Defence would preside; more rarely the consultative members from the citizen forces would be called. The prime concern of the Military Board was to consider administration; the secondary concern to tend the fixed defences. Even so, military and naval affairs in the states continued without sufficient administrative control from the centre. Each Commandant pursued his own policy. Backstairs intrigue became an art at Victoria Barracks. Officers sometimes began by making individual representations to the Minister and in at least two cases proceeded to positions of anonymous influence. 7

But even these two men were the willing agents of the innovators, not their masters. The Deakin ministries consulted neither Board nor Council. T.T. Ewing, Minister for Defence 1907 to 1908, made the position of his colleagues clear when he explained the manner in which Alfred Deakin drafted his proposals of December 1907:

... (The) Government, as I am sure the House does, that the defence of Australia is primarily a question for laymen .... The Government defence policy was formulated by the Ministry, and they accept full responsibility for it. Before the Prime Minister laid his proposals before the country, the officers who aid the Government in the administration of the affairs of the Defence Department were not consulted with regard to the main principles of the scheme, because they can be decided by Parliament alone. 8

The nationalist era was the hey-day of the politician. Statesman not soldier, enthusiast not professional, visionary not sceptic, parliament not committee, produced the Citizen Army and the National Navy. Thus it is to men like Deakin and Ewing, Hughes and Pearce and not a collective group of officers that we must look.
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<th>Foreign Affairs</th>
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<td>64,000</td>
<td>266,000</td>
<td>(200,000) ( - )</td>
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<td>1910/11</td>
<td>105,000</td>
<td>1,370,000</td>
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<td>1911/12</td>
<td>264,000</td>
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<td>633,000</td>
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<td>**1913/14</td>
<td>902,000</td>
<td>1,529,000</td>
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* Sums put aside for the construction of new vessels were not spent in the same year.

** Estimates only for 1913/1914.
From 1905 the process Richard Jebb had termed colonial nationalism developed apace. The future which Alfred Deakin had seen for Australia within the British world in 1901 seemed now attainable. The predictions made by Robert Garran for the Commonwealth were about to be fulfilled.

Despite parliamentary manoeuvre, personal vendettas, and scrambles for power, the general strands of state policy were much clearer for men like T.T. Ewing than for the hapless Forrest. The problems were passed on. But in the nationalist era it became possible to see solutions.

The most formidable problem had been the lack of finance. As Treasurer, Sir John Forrest proved nearly as ruthless as Sir George Turner. Yet gradually in the place of prolonged drought came good seasons; revenue gradually increased between 1905 and 1909 by nearly one-third; the Surplus Revenue Act of 1908 eliminated the extra payments to the states; and the Braden Clause was cancelled after 1909. The nationalist era ended at a time when unprecedented prosperity for the Commonwealth was just beginning.

Compared with the attitudes adopted in the first parliament, each party was more lucid on matters of defence and generally more stable in voting behaviour. The change of the political mood between 1901 and 1903 that had caused Forrest such distress over the Naval Agreement Bill was not likely to recur. The remnants of the old Free-trade group now championed the status quo he had helped to establish. For them federalist defence seemed to suit prevailing attitudes, particularly in New South Wales. They knew that any drastic change would involve greater expense and increased duties, and therefore argued that federalist policy could be made effective. Against the innovators, they formed a party of resistance. Until Deakin could claim an unquestioned majority at the head of the Fusion Government in 1909, Liberal and Labour groups lived in loose alliance.* Yet agreement on new measures

* In this part of the work "Liberal" is used to denote Deakin and his Protectionist followers.
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**Second Parliament 1993 - 1996**

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**Fourth Parliament 1999 - 2002**

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**Sixth Parliament 2005 - 2008**

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**Eighth Parliament 2012 - 2015**

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**Ninth Parliament 2016 - 2019**

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**Tenth Parliament 2020 - 2023**

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**Eleventh Parliament 2024 - 2026**

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for defence was deceptive. At one level, the differences involved means not ends, for after 1908 the leaders of both parties wanted a Citizen Army and a National Naval Force. Before then as much time was spent on converting followers as on hostile criticism. Even so, at another level, there was disagreement about ultimate aims. This the loose Liberal-Labour alliances of the period tended sometimes to obscure.  

The leaders of both parties believed that Australia was moving towards national status within the Empire. In 1911 Senator Pearce summarized this conviction when he requested his legal advisers to list all the prerequisites "to give the Naval Forces of the Commonwealth the international status of warships of a Sovereign state".

Such a tendency was already clear in June 1905. By then each successive ministry had grappled with the problem of waning British-Australian interests in the New Hebrides. They had instructed Whitehall to thwart the French so that Australian influence in the South-West Pacific could continue to develop. None was more trenchant and flexible in later argument than Deakin; none so testy as Hughes. Separately each expounded the Australian brief in London during 1907. Deakin envisaged a change in the whole Imperial structure to ensure that Australian aims would be realized. This he carried to the Imperial Conference. Before a rather incredulous Lloyd George at the Navigation Conference, Hughes predicted that the South-West Pacific would in essence become an Australian lake from which all European trading activity, particularly German, would be extirpated. What Barton had been prepared to request from Whitehall with persistence and deference, these men claimed as a right. Yet it is significant that while Hughes in public expounded the ideals of Australian nationalism, on these and other issues, Deakin was always at pains to explore a more subtle argument about the nature of dual loyalty. For him Australian nationalism, and loyalty to an Empire so organized to accommodate it, were interdependent.

Deakin's position was a better reflection than Hughes' of the Australian puzzle about Empire and nation. George Reid and his successor,
for defence was deceptive. At one level, the differences involved means not ends, for after 1908 the leaders of both parties wanted a Citizen Army and a National Naval Force. Before then as much time was spent on converting followers as on hostile criticism. Even so, at another level, there was disagreement about ultimate aims. This the loose Liberal-Labour alliances of the period tended sometimes to obscure.9

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Deakin's position was a better reflection than Hughes' of the Australian puzzle about Empire and nation. George Reid and his successor,
attempted to rectify it. Writing of his naval proposals to Richard Jebb in 1908, Deakin explained:

We have our little Australians who think nothing of a (destroyer) flotilla unless it is cut off from the Royal Navy which to me appears to be a fatal mistake — I can only balance them by leaning a little to the other side. 17

Just as Deakin felt Labour could be led to an understanding of the Commonwealth's role in the Empire, so he believed it would accept the function and status of the central government in Australia. Indeed, Hughes' ebullient performance in London during 1907, no less than Deakin's forthright demands, was a reflection of general agreement on the changes to be wrought within Australian society.

A year earlier at a meeting of the Royal Colonial Institute Deakin and Hughes found themselves, to their mutual surprise, in agreement with a speaker who was attempting to formulate Australian aspirations. The Australia envisaged would owe much to the power, authority, and wisdom of the central government. To defend the country without militarism and with the capacity to make an independent assessment of Imperial commitments; to develop peacefully the nation's resources, without strife, without poverty, without unemployment, without depression, without need; to create a community with a sense of unity and purpose, yet with equality of opportunity for all; to preserve the fabric of a white society from the infiltration of undesirable aliens — all these were the responsibilities of the Commonwealth. This, Deakin observed, was the nationalist creed. 18

Between 1905 and 1909 the overall purpose of the Liberal-Labour alliance was to see these aspirations embodied in legislation. Deakin and his intimates sensed in those years that the citizens of Australia would come to look upon the central government with enhanced respect, above the claims of the states, local loyalties, and petty jealousies. The stature of the Commonwealth, both as an institution and an idea, would grow as new benefits and new cohesion were experienced by all. Hughes
and his followers were to differ, sometimes crucially, in specific programmes and political method, but they were to share the vision. 19

Accordingly, the innovators in both parties contemplated systems of defence consonant with the assertion of national status within the Empire. They planned military and naval forces to give life to national spirit within Australia. They believed that the benefits to be experienced by a changed society would engender new values and aspirations all might have to defend. And to many it seemed that a national enemy intent on destroying their society - vision, experiment, and all - lurked on the horizon.

Most politicians agreed by 1905 that the preservation of a white society was the precondition of all reform. Many radicals had gone further and, not only argued that this was basic to all programmes, but summed up national aspirations with the term "White Australia". The threat they most feared was the unification of Asian hordes intent on southward expansion; the power they postulated was Japan. Even a mild revolution needs its centralist tendencies, its holistic programmes, and its potential enemies. 20

* * *

The destruction of the Russian Baltic Fleet by the Japanese in the Battle of Tsushima during May 1905 completely transformed the balance of power in the Pacific. Japan emerged as the dominant and sole naval power. Among those Australians concerned with security and those radicals fearful for the safety of White Australia the emergence of Japan stirred profound and increasing fears. 21

Newspapers previously sympathetic to Japan grew uneasy. In September 1905 the Sydney Morning Herald declared:

The yellow man has taught the white races a lesson that Australians can neglect only at their peril. 22
Labour was quick to perceive the new peril. The Worker, torn by a desire for defence retrenchment, an interest in peace through arbitration, and projects to meet the new threat, decided:

Militarism is a curse of the greatest but it is less a curse than the armed occupation of your country by invaders - possibly invaders of an inferior race.

Increasingly during the next three years elements in the Labour movement accepted both the threat and the measures.

In August 1905 the Australian National Defence League was established. Its express aim: to compel Australians to realize that effective and adequate national defence was the duty of all. Its programme: to introduce universal compulsory training for all the boys and men of Australia. From the outset, the organization and modern power of Japan at the spearhead of a Mongol incursion was the League's prime justification. Russia was given scant attention and France less; Germany was not considered until after 1908 and even then not as the main danger.

In 1906 the journal of the League summarized the danger thus:

The position that has to be faced by Australians is this: (the Commonwealth) is subject to the possibility of attack by a raiding army sent by some European nation or combination of nations at war with Great Britain. She is subject also to the far more serious danger of invasion by a colonizing army, vast in numbers, from Asia, since China is now arousing herself to warlike organization and Japan is the possible, if not probable, enemy of the future.

Hitherto the Commonwealth had, like the colonies before it, prepared to meet European enemies of the British Crown and to withstand attack resulting from British policy limited in scale by British sea superiority. Now the Commonwealth faced its own specific, alien and menacing enemy. To tear at the roots of federalist measures, to reform drastically the whole system, to evoke the latent strength and fiery patriotism of Australians, to make defence national - these were the ways to meet the threat of invasion.
TO YOUNG AUSTRALIA.

Wake up! Wake up! and play the game
On sterner fields, in Duty's name,
Then never shall a victor claim
The 'ashes' of Australia!

"Will Australia face the test with that inadequate bat, or will it prepare now to properly guard its wicket?"
This "shiver of anxiety" that "ran through the country" giving rise to new defence schemes has been noted by historians concerned with national attitudes. Their explanations have the virtues of brevity and symmetry. The reality was more complicated.

From the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in August 1905 Australia was shielded by diplomatic agreement. This Alliance was to terminate in — or be renewed before — 1915. Moreover, the Naval Agreement, which afforded guarantees of naval protection, was to end formally in 1913. British sea power, though concentrated in European waters and challenged by German rivalry, was held to be supreme at least until 1909. From 1905, then, the future to many Australians seemed secure.

It is true that from 1905 leaders of the Labour Party, in particular Watson, Hughes and Pearce, agitated for new defence measures to meet the new dangers. By 1906 all three were advocates of universal service. A year later Pearce and Hughes spoke of Japan as the probable enemy and the prime justification in world affairs for the new scheme. Yet it is also true that attempts to write into the platform of the Labour Party a military policy of universal service were frustrated until 1908, and then only after Deakin had forthrightly championed the measure. Despite fairly prevalent fears of the Asian hordes, men opposed the scheme on anti-militarist and pacifist grounds and often argued that neither the expense nor the disruption of society was warranted. Danger was not acknowledged unequivocally until towards the end of the period.

In Liberal ranks Alfred Deakin had in June 1905 sketched the dangers to which Australia was subject as a consequence of Japanese victory. But then and later he spoke mildly of Japan as one of many sources of danger, of invasion as a distant possibility. This restraint may have resulted from propriety as well as doubt. His stand on immigration and the Japanese in 1901 had been the essence of discretion. Later, as Prime Minister, he may have found it proper to provoke no enmity and indignation, especially with a nation which had agreed of
its own accord to limit the number of emigrants it could legitimately send to Australia. Nevertheless, he reported to the press that Australians were increasingly aware of the "strategically perilous position South of the awakening Asiatic peoples". In private he may well have discussed this issue with T.T. Ewing. Ewing was under no restraint. In 1907 and 1908 he expressed grave concern about the future of a white Australia. By 1908 Deakin, in private, agreed that Australians distrusted "the Yellow races in the North Pacific"; that was why they welcomed an "entente cordiale spreading among all white races who realize the Yellow Peril to Caucasian civilization, creeds, and politics." From 1905 to 1907 the daily press was not greatly concerned but during the next two years misgivings were more commonly aired. The sudden reversals possible in gigantic naval battles - the end result of fleet concentration - was solemnly noted. There was speculation about whether the advent of a new Liberal government in England would mean the end of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. The withdrawal of the Royal Naval battleships from the China Station in 1904-1905 seemed the greater cause of anxiety in view of other considerations. There was unease about Britain's capacity to maintain a two-power naval standard over Germany and other probable enemies. The riots and racial disturbances in California and British Columbia provoked comment about possible Japanese breaches of the Australian Immigration Act. Reports of friction and espionage in the Philippines and Hawaii and of Japanese infiltration into the South-West Pacific grew apace after 1908. A spate of new books, predicting the end of the white nations at the hands of the yellow, appeared and were read in high places. Some journalists dwelled on alleged Japanese atrocities in Korea. The arrival of the United States Great White Fleet in August 1908 was the occasion for expressions of Anglo-Saxon solidarity against the Yellow Peril. But it was not until mid-1909 - and well after - that invasion scares in novels, plays, periodicals, and sections in the daily press became widespread. And this was not the consequence of Japanese activity but the direct result of the sudden discovery that the monopoly of British sea-power had been lost. The Dreadnought scare of 1909 revealed a German challenge - taken with grave import - which could
denude the geo-political rim of the Empire of naval protection. 29

No assessment was made of Japanese intent. It was assumed, even by the daily press, that economic and population growth would result in a southward movement or in the demand for a relaxation of the Immigration Act. To the fearful it was enough that a tourist could report that the map of Australia was to be seen in Japanese schools; or that members of the Diet had spoken of expansion into the Pacific. Consideration of financial difficulties after the Russo-Japanese War were apparently given less attention than the postponement of later naval programmes. Such attitudes seemed to have been shared by the innovators. Government officials, from whom more care could be expected, may have had no avenue of determining policy because they had no access to embassies. Conversely, no request from Whitehall for an assessment nor any consideration of published facts are to be found on record. 30

Nothing quite so clearly demonstrates the air of unreality as response to the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. It might be supposed that Australians would welcome its renewal in 1905 and hope for its continuance. Indeed this was so of Reid and his followers. By the innovators it was accepted as a shield under which Australian defences could be remoulded; partly in this spirit Deakin welcomed its renewal in 1911. To some, however, including readers of the Bulletin and some members of the Labour Party — prominent among them W.M. Hughes — the Alliance was dishonourable and a danger. They argued that it was degrading for the nation — and the Empire — to depend for their security on an alien power. They also argued that treaties of any kind were unreliable and that this one in particular was unstable. Yet the demand to have the Alliance rescinded came from those very quarters where unease was most deeply felt. For it was believed that the Japanese would demand as a price of further renewal the right of free emigration to all parts of the Empire including
Australia;* and that the British government, in order to protect its commercial interests in the Far East, would allow such a condition. In part, the demand for an end to the Alliance arose from the desire to keep Australia white; to this end, it was essential that the nation be made impregnable. Even here, however, the alarm was not sounded loudly until after mid-1909. 31

In August 1909 Joseph Cook delivered the clearest ministerial statement of the era. Australian vulnerability was as great as its riches, he said. The nation's security depended upon the goodwill of Japan and its readiness to honour the Anglo-Japanese Alliance "so long as it continues". On this, he declared:

> No nation depends entirely for its security upon treaties, and that is our position at this moment. 32

By then, however, he was as concerned with "fuller Imperial partnership" in defence as with invulnerability. The clear and present danger was acknowledged only very late in this period.

It is generally true, then, that Japan emerged as the potential enemy in the minds of many Australians after 1905. Radicals, like Watson, concerned with reform; defence enthusiasts, like Hughes, recommending panaceas for security; alarmists, like Ewing, remembering stands taken on Asian scares in the nineties, were first to be convinced of the threat. Their followers and opponents had to be convinced by argument and the interpretation of events. It was a slow process. Innovation was begun in June 1905, announced as government policy in 1906 and 1907,

* In part these alarms arose from a commercial treaty signed between Great Britain and Japan in 1894. To this treaty there was a Protocol allowing reciprocal rights of immigration and residency in the usual terms of the most favoured nation treaties. Of the Australian colonies only Queensland had signed this. On federation, then, the Japanese by treaty had access to Australia through Queensland and it was by private agreement that such immigration was restricted. Alfred Deakin had argued, before 1903, that the act of federation had automatically negated the Queensland agreement. The Law officers of the Crown did not agree and the issue was left in the air. To the alarmists this was a crack in the front door.
and complete measures offered for parliamentary approval in August 1909. Not until 1908 did alarm touch more than radical groups; and it was not of widespread concern until 1909 and after. Did the desire for innovation at parliamentary and governmental levels precede the acknowledgement of a national enemy? Why did new defence schemes arise before "the shiver of anxiety" that "ran through the country"?

There are two general, but not mutually exclusive, answers to these questions. The innovators like Hughes and Deakin could have been planning for an uncertain future after 1913 in which Japan loomed large. There is random evidence that this may have been in their minds, but little to indicate that the thought was clear and urgent. Yet in converting public opinion the coloured ogre was often invoked. It is probable therefore that fears of Japan before 1909 were at least as much a product of defence discussions as a cause. It is also likely that fears accumulated as discussion grew more intense. Moreover, the drive towards national self-sufficiency in defence rested upon premises far more important in the foreseeable future than any Asian horde. The nationalist impulse which we have already observed was considered by many a compelling reason in itself for innovation. In either case there was an appeal to the preservation of society against alien incursion and an appeal to the creation of forces suitable to the new society being moulded by the central government. Their order of importance was indicated in the rhetoric of the day. By far the greater time was spent in explaining how a mass army and a national navy would enhance the national dignity and the national character of the new Commonwealth. If, however, a power had to be postulated in passing, it was Japan; if threats had to be considered it was defence against all "possible enemies"; if a danger had to be evoked, it was the Yellow Peril.33.

Insofar as men like Hughes and Deakin, Pearce and Ewing, responded to the Asian threat they did so in different manners. To Pearce and Hughes the question was one of security and the preservation of the Australian race, its society and its values. Separately they were also concerned with invigorating the moral and physical tone of all
Australians by universal service and a distinctive Australian navy. Deakin and Ewing saw the same problem in a larger context. C.H. Pearson's 
National Life and Character provided their terms of reference. They visualized the Australian dilemma as part of a clash between Mongol and Caucasian civilizations. For them Australian defence not only concerned the nation but was always seen as part of Imperial defence. To men such as Hughes, concerned as he was for national survival, this integration into a larger context came later in time and lower in the scale of priorities. To consider Japan, then, was not necessary to put security beyond all else. It could be a means of exciting attention towards two of the questions with which this work is concerned: What was the desired nature of the Australian nation? What relation should it claim in the Empire? The utterances of people other than leaders of parliament may be interpreted in this context: despite the rich racial ingredient, the dominant tone of press and parliament — the Bulletin excluded — involved little racial hostility towards the Japanese.34

Nor did intermittent and gradually increasing anxiety about Japan exclude concern at possible European dangers. Though this was an era of diminishing risk to Australia, statesmen were aware of the changing European context and their own interests in it. The Anglo-French Entente of 1904 was welcomed, except for those features which seemed to endanger Australian interests in the New Hebrides; so, too, was the Anglo-Russian rapprochement of 1907. Consideration of German activity and rivalry at official levels arose from several sources. The daily press examined each European crisis as it arose. Many an editorial was to find its way to official files. More influential were the contacts Australians had in London. Both Hughes and Deakin in 1907 had their awareness of European diplomacy sharpened by formal and informal discussion; for Fisher, in 1911, the discussion led by Lord Grey in a secret meeting of the Committee of Imperial Defence, was decisive. Perhaps the most important source of information arose from government concern for Australian influence and trading activity in the areas to the East and North where British maritime enterprises had lost the monopoly of trade and influence to
European firms with government subsidies. Here at least the dangers were specific and assessable. Though Australian military operations in the area were not considered, European intent was.\textsuperscript{35}

Partly for his own purposes and partly out of genuine alarm, Alfred Deakin argued from 1904 that the French could easily fortify bases on the New Hebrides. During 1906, after the Entente, he received reports that German agents had made secret arrangements to set up coaling bases on one of the islands. These reports he believed. Among the innovators, however, Deakin may have been exceptional. Always he was aware of European complications in a general and broad context as well as in the South-West Pacific. He seemed at least as concerned with them as with any Japanese threat.\textsuperscript{36}

* * *

With that emphasis — if not the intensity of fear — Whitehall consistently agreed. Formal and informal advice from 1905 held that "all idea of the invasion of Australia can be dismissed."\textsuperscript{37} Even the prospect of raids on the littoral — now that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was renewed and Russia defeated — seemed remote.\textsuperscript{38}

It was not until June 1909 that the British considered Japan. Then the Committee of Imperial Defence examined the security of Hong Kong and other British interests in the Far East in the light of the German naval challenge. It was frankly admitted that British influence rested on the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Should it end in 1915 or be suddenly terminated before then, British forces in the Far East would have to be rapidly reinforced. Hong Kong would have to be prepared to face a siege of one month until fleet redistributions were complete. This, however, was an examination of possibilities in which there was no sense of urgency. The First Lord of the Admiralty, Reginald McKenna, observed that a rupture of the Alliance was not "a reasonably probable contingency"
to be faced before 1915.\textsuperscript{39} The issue was left until January 1911 when the safety of Hong Kong became a source of passing conflict between the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and the Admiralty in which the First Sea Lord insisted that the loss of local sea supremacy in Chinese Waters need not be feared. After listening to their service chiefs, Grey of the Foreign Office, Haldane of the War Office, and Crewe, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, stated that the solution lay not in the redistribution of naval strength but in renewing the Alliance in 1912 or before. Due in part to the intensification of German naval construction, this was accomplished in June 1911.\textsuperscript{40}

From late 1909 urgent appeals had come from the Commonwealth for reassessment of the scale of attack previously laid down by the Committee of Imperial Defence. This Whitehall was reluctant to give immediately since it involved a reappraisal of all Imperial defences.

However, the Overseas Defence Committee, an ancillary of the Committee of Imperial Defence, independently and tentatively suggested in December 1909 that fixed defences for the naval base at Sydney be supplemented by modern 9.2-inch guns to deter attack by armoured vessels. Whether this resulted from anticipation of German cruiser warfare or the one month needed to reinforce the Far Eastern fleet is obscure. There is fragmentary and inconclusive evidence to suggest that Japanese armoured cruisers were considered possible raiders in July 1910 even though the rearmament of Sydney was not urged on the Commonwealth until the following year. For it was in February and May 1911— even while Grey was investigating Japanese and American attitudes to the Alliance— that memoranda from the Overseas Defence Committee included the following proviso: "Should the Anglo-Japanese Alliance be terminated, changes in the strategic situation would ensue which might have far reaching effects upon the position of Australia and (then) necessitate a reconsideration of the scale of attack."\textsuperscript{41} In the meantime, flash raids remained the most probable danger.
Within a month of the last guarded warning, the consideration of Japan in the Pacific, which had begun in a tentative fashion and lasted so brief a time, ended in security by diplomacy. With Dominion support the Alliance was renewed. Japan was to worry the British committees no more until 1914.42

It might be thought that in the uncertainty of Whitehall after June 1909 lay vindication for alarmists in Australia. Existing evidence does not support this. At no time does the invasion of Australia appear to have been considered a probable or even likely danger. Furthermore, assessments made by the Committee of Imperial Defence took no account of Australia's ability to defend itself. It was interested only in the protection of British interests in the Far East. On these, from the British viewpoint and indeed in any rational calculation, the security of Australia ultimately depended. So long as British power, influence and prestige — real and potential — was upheld, the Commonwealth was safe.

How, then, did Australian advisers probe the mysteries of invasion and calculate the probable scale of attack in the years 1905–1910?

In order to preserve the Field Force from destruction, Major-General Hutton had suggested in 1903 that invasion would by no means be an impossible course for a determined enemy.* For somewhat the same reasons a Committee of Officers under Brigadier-General Hoad, especially convened to pronounce judgement on the Committee of Imperial Defence report of 1906, agreed. Tsushima had demonstrated how dangerous it was to anticipate the results of naval warfare, this special committee insinuated. It was therefore reasonable to expect, once local sea superiority was lost, attacks in force by a highly trained and large enemy unit and not merely raids by landing parties from fugitive cruisers.43

* See above Chapter Six.
Apparently this case was not overlooked by Senator Playford, the Minister for Defence. It found a champion in T.T. Ewing, the spokesman in the House on defence matters for the third Deakin ministry. For late in 1906 these two men prepared a joint submission for Cabinet in which it was argued that the most perfect form of security— but the most unattainable in view of existing conditions—lay in a "system of Conscription". The suggestion was deemed clearly premature and, as far as can be ascertained, resulted from no formal military advice whatsoever. At most, it rested on deductions hastily drawn from the special Committee of Officers.

It was left to Colonel Bridges, the Chief of Intelligence, to point out that neither the Minister nor Hoad's Committee had given reasons—military or political—for expectation of more than fugitive raids. Nor did they appear to have any. Accordingly, between 1906 and 1909, when innovations were being discussed in parliament, Schools of Instruction for military officers were conducted by Bridges on the assumption that at worst the military forces would have to meet landing parties. The problems of fuel supply, radius of action, landing troops, covering them with ships' guns, and directing them from the coast were balanced against the mobility of Australian garrison troops, the difficulties of using railways, and the time taken to gather intelligence. Competent, thorough and prudent assessments revealed the limitations placed on enterprising enemy commanders.

The desire to organize celebrations in time for the arrival of the United States Fleet late in 1908 caused alarm in official political circles when for days at a time no news was to be had of its movements. Was this a defect in Australian preparations of which a cunning and formidable enemy could take advantage? In order to test the Australian warning system, Bridges posited an attack by an enemy force far larger than any before contemplated: three cruisers, three colliers, one transport, and a destroyer screen. A raid in force upon Newcastle was to be imagined during which the enemy might attempt to capture Port Stephens as a base of future operations. It was also to be imagined that
... probabilities not possibilities ...

T.T. EWING

... prophecy is one of the lost arts ...
the Imperial Squadron would steam to meet the attackers and that the Australian forces would be mobilized to dislodge them. The test demonstrated that warnings from lighthouse keepers, port officials, pilots, coastal vessels, and members of the Australian Intelligence Corps - all alerted for war - could be despatched from all over the continent within the average time of thirty-five minutes after the movements of imaginary raiders had been sighted. This exercise indicated that at staff level the Yellow Peril was of no great concern. The fears expressed about sudden invasion and the grave doubts about military preparedness to meet raiders were exaggerated.  

The gap between political concern and professional assessment bedevilled relations between T.T. Ewing, as Minister for Defence, and Colonel Bridges. On officially assuming office in January 1907 Ewing was distressed at the lack of clear mobilization plans; in return Bridges insisted that no detailed arrangements could be made until the government had formally pronounced the degree of danger it thought the Commonwealth faced. Bridges wished to proceed on the assumption that raids were the main danger; Ewing insisted that prophecy was one of the lost arts. Bridges thought in terms of reasonable probabilities - arguing that prolonged raids or permanent occupation of Australian territory could occur only when "all British ships that might at any time be in a position to interrupt communications" had been destroyed; Ewing thought in terms of all possible contingencies - retorting that a defence scheme "in keeping with the wealth of the Commonwealth and the magnitude of its resources" was needed against unlimited attack. Statesman and soldier agreed eventually that planning should proceed on the basis of the assessments of Whitehall so long as these were considered neither immutable nor the permanent basis for preparation.  

Between Tsushima and renewal of the Japanese Alliance various Imperialists had posited an Asian invading force in order to convince Australians of the great benefits of the Naval Agreement. On behalf of the navalists, Creswell had claimed his coastal forces would deter an
expeditionary armada. Essentially, these were academic discussions, the impact of which was nullified by the Treaty of Portsmouth. 50

Then, just prior to Deakin's departure to the Imperial Conference in 1907, Creswell prepared a new submission to justify the creation of destroyer flotillas. The second part was entitled "Probable Future Conditions". It was a remarkable document. His was a vision of states impelled to expansion for economic progress and for Lebensraum.

Germany was selected as Britain's prime naval rival. From this point Creswell predicted that Pan-Germanism in Austria and German influence in Morocco and Turkey, would eventually cut communications between Australia and Great Britain through the Mediterranean. But worse was foreseen. He believed that Holland and her colonies would pass to the Germans before or during any major conflict. Thus Australia would be confronted to the North by an unbroken line of German possessions stretching from Sumatra to the Bismarck Archipelago. There the Germans would not stay. For they were a Northern race in need of a white man's country. The Japanese need for an outlet Creswell considered "as great as Germany's - perhaps greater. The Eastern shores of the Pacific have just been denied them ... Our 'White Australia' law she feels to be wounding and unjust. There is the possibility that Japan will furnish China with the organizing leaven, and act in sympathy with her in acquiring lands to relieve the high tension of population that both peoples feel today". Singly or in alliance Germany, Japan, and China might carve colonies "out of the North and West of Australia. There they would feel less inconvenience from each other's proximity than the European Colonies in West Africa today". 51

By outstripping the alarmists, Creswell seemed to add compelling arguments to his battery of reasons for sea-going coastal defence forces. But the dangers he could describe could not, as his detractors were quick to point out, be met by destroyers. A few torpedo craft might sally forth but their effect on eighty troop-laden transports would be negligible. By definition, and in fact, large scale operations could
not be undertaken until enemy sea superiority was assured. In these circumstances, the armada would be effectively screened by destroyers supported by cruiser squadrons. More trenchant critics demonstrated that Creswell's arguments invariably took no account of diplomacy and little of the real and potential disposition of British naval might. Not only did his alarm bear little relation to the defence measures he championed; it did not seem concerned with the real world.⁵²

There is no evidence to suggest that Creswell's predictions made in 1907 affected statesmen directly or immediately. Deakin and Playford were to be variously influenced by Creswell's other arguments; Ewing may have arrived at the same conclusions independently. The Creswell scheme and presumably its justification was accepted by Pearce and Hughes in February 1909; but Labour had promised the electorate a national navy since 1903. The spectre of invasion, then, provided the diligent and ubiquitous navalist with a supplementary - and somewhat treacherous - justification for a principle endorsed by most nationalists before 1905.⁵³

It was not until October 1909 that a prominent military officer was to display the same fears as Creswell. In July 1909 - well after the Dreadnought scare - Brigadier-General Hoad, Chief of the General Staff, felt concerned about the strength of fixed defences. He wanted specific advice from Whitehall. Since 1906, when the Committee of Imperial Defence made its last assessment, he wrote:

the international situation has, in my opinion, changed .... Should Great Britain become engaged in a war with Germany it is not improbable that most of the British Battleships and cruisers would be concentrated in the North Sea and that in such a contingency some other power may seize the opportunity to make an attack on Australia. In such an event the attacking fleet might easily include battleships and armoured cruisers, and, in order to deal effectively with these, our forts would require heavier guns. ⁵⁴

It is clear that the "other power" he was considering was Japan, for it alone had in the Pacific battleships and armoured cruisers. Even so,
there was no possibility that Hoad seemed ready to exclude. When asked in October about the probabilities of invasion, he informed the Minister for Defence, Joseph Cook, that raids could be conducted upon the Australian littoral by France, Germany, the United States and Japan. He continued:

(The) only nation capable of invading Australia is Japan, as it is unlikely that the United States would spare an army for this purpose until she had conquered Canada, and disposed of the British Fleet. The French and German troops in Eastern waters are too few to attempt invasion.

He went on to suggest that the Japanese would require sixty to eighty transports to launch an invasion with 30,000 troops. It would take some time to collect such an armada and to provide it with escorts of armoured vessels. Given that local British sea superiority was lost, Australia might have about a month's warning before having to meet a Japanese expeditionary force.

The criticism that Bridges had levelled at the Committee of Officers in 1906 could well be made against this assessment. No account was taken of Japanese potential to launch an invasion; none of its intent to do so. The almost insurmountable difficulties of launching an overseas operation three to four thousand miles from well-established bases were overlooked. The use of troops to deny the enemy the bases needed within the acknowledged Australian sphere of interests was not contemplated. Hoad presupposed French enmity despite the Anglo-French Entente, and hostilities with the United States despite the fact that British diplomacy and naval dispositions since 1901 had rested on amity if not cooperation with America. It is a further mark of the lack of defence coordination that the Chief of the General Staff should be considering the French as a possible enemy and another committee appointed by Cabinet to examine wireless telegraphy in the South-Western Pacific should be considering them allies.

Without pondering such inconsistencies and before calling upon Hoad to testify, the Fusion government had in August 1909 presented its
programme – the culmination of four years' discussion and a close approxi-
mation to defence measures in their final form: a system of universal
military service to yield by 1917 some 200,000 trained citizen-soldiers;
and the fleet unit recommended by McKenna and Fisher in July 1909 to be
organized about a battle-cruiser.

It was not until much later that the first unequivocal reference
to Germany as a probable and sole Australian foe was made by service chiefs.
In August 1912 the defences on Thursday Island were unfavourably compared
with the capabilities of the cruisers in the German China Squadron. Then
also the Argus again suggested that to the British nation the German naval
menace was paramount. At this Creswell, now with his navalist dreams
surpassed, referred darkly to the Japanese menace once more:

(The Argus) sees only one danger (to Australia) –
Germany and only one way to meet it – money contributions;
whereas there is more than one danger – There are more
effective ways of meeting it. 58

This was among the first of many occasions when the Yellow Peril was to be
invoked to justify what had already been accomplished. In naval affairs
particularly, neither ministers nor service chiefs wanted a departure from settled policy. Nor did they want the Commonwealth to lose control over its new vessels at the hands of Churchill and a new First Sea Lord in the
Admiralty. 59

Now, as earlier, fears of Japan were to quieten criticism at home and prevent British interference from afar. It may even be proper to wonder how far this was so in the earlier years. 60

In September 1909 the creation of a Citizen Army and the National Navy were about to be formally approved by the legislature. Yet there was no strategic appreciation, no formal assessment, no overall policy –
either presented to or accepted by Cabinet – which justified these forces.
What if the Yellow Peril was not to be? What if Japan showed restraint?
Would each force be necessary? What would then be their function? What
was their military justification? How could the cost be explained?
The new forces had been created apparently for home defence; those not needed to meet "reasonably probable" dangers to the Australian littoral could well be used for Imperial defence. What kind of wars would they be called upon to fight? Where? In whose interests?

Deakin, Cook, and Hoad grew a little uneasy even while the Fusion's programme was being drafted. As innovators, the statesmen wanted political justification for the schemes they were launching. As Chief of the General Staff responsible to them, Hoad wanted sound military reasons — after the event. In particular he wanted specific assessments about the "probable form of attack"; about the minimum period before those attacks might be launched; and about the size of fixed defences. These were to be made within the context of the strength of forces "of the nations in Eastern waters since 1906"; and in the spirit of the "development of the 'Imperial Idea' ... (which involved) the assimilation of military organization (of the whole Empire)". 61 These questions and his own submissions he took to Port Darwin in December 1909, there to discuss matters with Lord Kitchener. For it was to Kitchener that both politician and soldier looked. He was to settle the unresolved problems of the military advisers — and to justify measures already launched by the politicians. This he did.

On receiving Kitchener's report and recommendations, Deakin was to claim that Australians, having appealed to Caesar, must accept his word. Yet neither Caesar nor Kitchener was experienced in sea warfare. Australian naval policy after 1910 continued to develop independently of military policy.

*       *       *

As was clear from the outset of the period, coordination, advice, discussion, clarification, and the formulation of defence policy were essential. The Council of Defence had been created for this purpose. It had not been used. Yet its first and only meeting had indicated its potential.
On the 12th of May 1905 - some fourteen days before Tsushima - the first meeting of the Council of Defence was convened by J.W. McCay. He and Sir George Turner represented the Reid-McLean ministry. McCay was the dominating figure. As part architect of the new administrative system, he well understood the burdens to be borne by a minister for Defence. To guide discussion he had prepared a succinct statement of policy. Previously he had won the respect of men more radical than he in the House for informed criticisms of government legislation. Now he was - all too briefly - in a position to give them effect. He had gained a reputation for exposing Forrest's legislation. Curiously, he now offered the most persuasive case for federalist defence for the traditional reasons.*

After carefully distinguishing five "lines of defence" McCay recommended the full implementation of Hutton's military scheme - but shorn of all Imperial features. It was best, he said, to build on the policies of the old colonial forces. Economy and political expediency still dictated this course. For Australia to aspire to be a naval power was foolish in the extreme. The Naval Agreement was an established fact. If the navalists were to be satisfied Barton's pledge to form radial port defence forces might, in the future, be redeemed.

With considerable reason Colonel Bridges and the other military representative were silent. They were also reassured. But since this meeting had been convened to decide future policy - and in particular the role of naval defence - Captain Creswell had much to say. Having retraced each step in previous controversy he discovered an article by Captain A.T. Mahan. This was the text he expounded in the hope of fulfilling his ambitions and of appealing to the Imperialists in the Free-trade ministry.

Australian security, Creswell declared on this occasion, was not a thing in itself. There were no "lines of defence". Safety lay in

* The document can be seen in Appendix D.
British sea superiority. It was therefore necessary to create a national navy - eventually with a strength of twelve first and second-class cruisers and thirty torpedo craft - capable of active cooperation with the Royal Navy as "an integral portion of the sea-power of the Empire" to ensure that supremacy. The Commonwealth would then have its own fleet in its own waters under Australian control to demonstrate its maritime spirit. Yet in war those ships could concentrate with British units anywhere in the Pacific. Thus every distinctively Australian "increment" to British sea power would ensure national "defence and security in a manner more direct than can be achieved by any other form of contribution". The requirements of local defence and fleet concentration, national pride and Imperial responsibilities, would be satisfied by aggressive and orthodox naval preparation.

The proposal was new, the project grandiose, the argument a recantation, the general idea very like that which led to the formation of the Royal Australian Navy but far from being attracted by Creswell's new proposal, Turner was aghast and McCoy incredulous.

"You", charged Turner, "are simply proposing to add to the Imperial Navy!" Was not the suggestion to move Australian vessels thousands of miles away instead of being left to protect ports? In explanation, Creswell found himself in the strange position of expounding and justifying fleet concentration. The irony was complete when McCoy used an old Creswellian device. Fleet concentration, he said, would always involve "ultimate Imperial welfare by total local sacrifices". The scheme looked like Australian defence but was really Imperial defence! Unable to withstand sharp questions from McCoy and explosions from Turner, Creswell groped through what little he knew of Mahan and clutched at invasion. There was a reason for having a strong Australian-Imperial fleet! The ensuing exchange was intense:

Creswell: (Without an Australian navy) what use would all our people be against, say, Japan which ... put an army of 600,000 on Manchuria?
McCay: Then no nation should arm unless she can protect herself against the world! That is the _reductio ad absurdum_!

Turner: That is the reason for abandoning all the Naval and Military. That is why I say you are wasting money. I would rather save the money and take the risk!

Neither minister was willing to be drawn by the Yellow Peril despite Japanese successes in the Northern Pacific. 67

Temper frayed; discussion became confused. Creswell's answers varied; the force he projected changed, but never so capriciously as the assessment of cost. He finally fixed upon destroyer flotillas as the first step towards his projected navy. These, he claimed, could be financed by cutting the military budget by half - by sacrificing the Field Force. To the minister's dismay, Turner suddenly found this answer attractive. The federalist military system appeared in jeopardy. It was McCay's turn to justify a scheme he had criticized - in this case Hutton's. Attempting to clinch his point with Turner, Creswell declared that the crucial issue was to establish the principle of naval defence. Angrily McCay retorted: "The thing is to do what we can!" 68 That was, indeed, the fundamental, if short-term, problem.

Bridges then supported McCay's case with precision. He wanted Creswell to answer certain specific questions: Given £300,000 a year for defence expenditure, how was it to be allotted to the two services? What was to be, in definite terms, the Imperial and national functions of the projected navy? Who was to control it in peace and war? To these Turner added a demand for a scheme showing size, the minimum initial force, and the cost. 69

None of these problems had Creswell resolved. He left the meeting to lick his wounds, to take advantage of the openings Turner gave him, and to prepare written answers. Yet there was more involved in this meeting than another lost navalist idea. The defence adviser had raised fundamental issues about national defence; and the statesmen had spoken.
Unpredictable Turner's responses had been. Yet he had made it clear that, apart from cost, any naval forces had to be efficient. It was "no use having toys". About the kind of craft he was open to suggestion. Not so when it came to function. Firmly he had stated:

There is no earthly hope of carrying through Parliament a proposal for a navy which is to leave our shores. It must be a navy which will remain here.

Although this was the prediction of a wily politician, it was tantamount to a direction.

For McCay this could be seen in larger terms. The demand for local security implied Australian responsibility for inner lines of defence. It involved no further disruption of the military forces. Conversely, it repudiated any responsibility for Imperial defence: the protection of overseas commerce, the maintenance of British supremacy, and planning for active cooperation in Imperial wars. Commonwealth control was essential; so too was the perception of Australian interests in the Imperial maze. On overseas operations, he ruled:

The only justification for an Australian fighting force going abroad is that their doing so would be the best defence for Australia; and the only excuse for the Australian Navy going to Eastern Seas is that it would thereby be defending Australia.

Few had been so lucid and certain in parliament as McCay had become in Council. Soon after the exchange over the Yellow Peril, he clarified further the national role in Imperial defence:

... (There) is no hope of getting Australia to take a more generous view of Imperial defence than she takes at the present time .... Our business, at any rate, is to make Australia secure and be able to say - "Here is a fortress which no enemy can take, and one to which you can always come in an emergency". For Australia is an outpost of the Empire; and it has to be fortified and made secure. That is where I think we can best assist in Imperial Defence.

There, in the justification for the old system of defence, was precedent for the new.
The potential of the Council of Defence had been proven. For the first time statesmen and expert were compelled to match the dictates of politics with defence programmes. Other meetings would have forced both to be reasonable and clear in their assessments. One wonders whether the future would have been any different if this Council had met regularly before 1911 – before defence innovations passed into legislation.

The first and only discussion at this level was no less important. It marked the high-tide of navalist ambition; thereafter Creswell sought approval for more modest projects, more menial beginnings, and greater accord with state policy. It exposed the conflict between soldier and sailor; henceforward, Colonel Bridges was believed to be insufficiently sympathetic to nationalist programmes. It anticipated the transition from federalist to nationalist defence. In the future, the fortress was to become a garrison.

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This was the era of debate and advocacy. In a period of increasing danger, so the critics of federalist defence argued, the Naval Agreement had failed to secure its aims as dismally as Hutton's military scheme. Where were both security and honour to be found? Creswell and Hughes had long advocated simple and independent solutions: a coastal defence force and a compulsorily trained citizen army. These were the issues now discussed in press and parliament, in party organizations and meetings of the Defence Leagues — and elsewhere. Future policy, it seemed, would be determined in sharp and open encounter.

The public debate was important. So, too, were the motives of Alfred Deakin. For it was the Prime Minister, not the public advocates, who gathered all the strands of policy which he allowed — and indeed encouraged — others to spin. His actions were to pervade defence discussions throughout the period. His role has been too often obscured or misinterpreted.

It is not sufficient to see Creswell as the sole "leader, organizer, propagandist, and press agent for the so-called Australian Navy Party"¹ or Hughes as the national leader who "brimming with fire" and supported by the masses did more than any other to create a new citizen army.² Such judgements pay too little attention to deliberations within the government and to the direction of policy set by Deakin even while public discussion continued. Nor was Deakin, as the nationalist who "bore the heat of battle" with the Admiralty, to win for the emergent Dominions the right to form their own naval forces.³ For the oft-vowed aim of self-reliance which won for Deakin favour and support in Australia could have been achieved without great concern for the opinion of Whitehall. Again, it is not enough merely to suggest that Deakin awaited Admiralty cooperation for Australian naval proposals, or that he always saw each aspect of local defence "as an imperial problem".⁴ The battle "within the Empire he bore ... alone"⁵ for the reformation of Australian defence
... nor was Deakin accepted as a national leader ...

The Daily Telegraph (22 September 1908) on the Liberal–Labour Alliance.
was of a peculiar kind calling for devious procedures to fulfil more complex ends.

* * *

From the outset Deakin considered federalist defence an unsatisfactory makeshift. He took little interest in the naval discussions conducted by Forrest and Barton. In private he accepted hostility towards any principle of naval subsidy as axiomatic. He made no comment on the tortuous process of drafting defence legislation. In informal discussion with Sir George Sydenham Clarke - then Governor of Victoria and soon to be Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence - he deplored the emphasis in military affairs upon organization and control to the neglect of form and efficiency. On the formation of his second ministry in July 1905, amid a flow of domestic legislation and protests to Whitehall on the New Hebrides issue and the Naval Agreement, he began the search for a "consistent national scheme" for the defence of Australia. At the highest and most confidential level innovation was begun.6

Though dependent upon fine distinctions and giving rise to considerable vacillation, Deakin's general purpose was clear. It bore three aspects: the modification of the Naval Agreement; the creation of a local naval force; and the introduction of universal military training.*

* Hereafter the term "universal training" is used to denote any of the many suggested systems of compulsory military training whereby all the male youths and/or adults of the Commonwealth could be obliged or compelled to present themselves for a certain number of days annually at parades and at camps of continuous training.

"Universal service" like "national service" would be misleading as both expressions now imply a greater period of training - calculated in many months. Few contemporaries were as thorough as this.

"Conscription" would be inappropriate for this involved recruits in a term of service lasting a year or more during which time they lost civilian status and were trained as a reserve for a regular army. Contemporaries were at pains to remove any suggestion of barrack-room life for trainees. The aim was to preserve the status of the citizen-soldier and extend it to all Australians.
He assumed that Australians should share in the general defence of the Empire and could not, as McCay and Hughes would have him do, turn away from Imperial problems. Equally, he saw that the demands of local security and "national self-respect" compelled Australians to give primacy to their own defence. Just as he had earlier asserted that Imperial and colonial interests were co-terminous, so he deemed Imperial and local responsibilities for defence inseparable, interdependent, and reciprocal. Each had to be distinguished so that neither was obscured and both enriched. But the principle of a naval subsidy endangered the balance of these elements. Local interests appeared to be neglected in London and Imperial responsibilities spurned in Australia. He therefore sought amendment—but not the abrogation—of the Naval Agreement. Future naval cooperation had to ensure local protection and yet be part of the whole, to be "visibly and concretely Australian in origin but Imperial in end and value," to arouse both Australian patriotism and Imperial sentiment, to evoke the same quality of enthusiasm as that "accorded in all States to the despatch of military contingents to South Africa." The problem was to find a suitable basis for revision. Deakin realized full well that a new mode of naval cooperation depended upon concessions extracted from Whitehall.

Moreover, for Deakin, naval cooperation was intimately connected with the desire for Imperial reorganization. He had deplored centralist tendencies and British predominance in Imperial affairs; he was equally anxious lest undirected colonial nationalism lead to divisions in Greater Britain and loss of Australian influence over Imperial policy. The remedy seemed to lie in the formation of a consultative Imperial Council founded upon the precedent set by the Colonial Conferences. A "system of common defence, devised and eventually controlled by representatives from all parts of the Empire" might well be one result. These changes, he thought, might accompany—if not precede—revision of the Naval Agreement. For once the Commonwealth was allowed to share the burdens of Imperial defence on its own terms, it could manfully enter the citadels of power and share also "in the direction of foreign affairs" which had hitherto been the sole prerogative of the British government. The fulfilment of this vision also depended upon concessions from Whitehall.
The creation of a local naval force held for Deakin an Imperial dimension. From June 1905 he was willing to entertain the purchase of any kind of craft so long as the cost would remain between £100,000 and £200,000 a year: floating gun platforms, torpedo boats, submarines, or destroyers. From small seeds, he said, great fruits would grow, perhaps even a sea-going navy to assist the battle fleets of the Empire. Since he was thinking essentially in terms of extremely localized defence during this period, the first steps could have been taken under the Colonial Naval Defence Act as Barton had promised. But he was fearful that once the navalist aspirations expounded by Creswell and the Labour Party were satisfied consideration of Imperial commitments would end. Such centrifugal tendencies had to be tempered. Any project, in his view, had to be "backed by the (Admiralty) if possible, and affiliated with the Royal Navy" even while being under Commonwealth control. Moreover, it was not clear how far that Act would guarantee complete Commonwealth control over its own forces. Again, in December 1905, he sought the blessings of Whitehall.

Military defence was traditionally more local than Imperial in character and initially Deakin considered it an Australian problem. The distinctive army he envisaged was to spring from a nation in arms. Hutton's scheme involved too few citizens "isolated" from the rest of the community and separated from each other by regimental traditions, state loyalties, local interests, and social background. This Deakin hoped eventually to overcome by universal training which he had accepted in principle some time before June 1905. In a confidential letter to Sir George Clarke a few months later, he foresaw the use of trainees as the reserve Hutton had been unable to create. On this occasion he was concerned with the efficiency of the existing system:

Nothing less than the adoption of the Swiss system of universal service will provide the necessary support for the better drilled force around which it can be rallied in time of war.

This was fully in accord with the current precepts of the Defence League and the current teachings of W.M. Hughes. Yet Deakin was personally uncertain about the ultimate role the trainees would play in a coherent
scheme of defence, disturbed at the possible cost, and uneasy about the appropriate justification for an innovation that was bound to arouse intense opposition. Unlike Hughes, his public statements were therefore guarded, ambiguous, and sometimes apparently confused. The problem was how and when to introduce the new measure. Again he looked to Whitehall - and those in London whom he could influence - for clarification and authoritative support. Slowly this issue too developed its Imperial aspect until Deakin was again invoking the spirit of 1899. In May 1907 he proclaimed:

If it only served to rivet the attention of (Australians) upon the obligations involved in national defence, of the obligations of Empire to the civilized world, the time spent on compulsory training would be well spent. 18

Such then were the general ideas the Prime Minister discreetly referred to a number of authorities for comment: Sir George Clarke, Richard Jebb, L.S. Amery, the Admiralty, the Committee of Imperial Defence, the Admiral on the Australian Station, Captain Creswell, Major-General Hoad, the two divisions of the National Defence League, various ad hoc committees, and the Imperial Conference. Meanwhile he watched closely the public campaign of both the navalists and advocates of universal training and contributed to it through various agents.

In December 1907, Deakin presented to parliament a new defence programme. No longer, he then declared, could "the course of expediency" be pursued. No longer should security lie with "little more than the collective forces" originally created by the colonies and maintained by the states. Now Australian defence was to be founded upon "a basis as wide as the Commonwealth, without distinction of States". Just as parliament had dealt with industrial conditions for the whole society, it must now "deal nationally with defence". It must now approve revision of the Agreement, the formation of a naval force for radial port defence, and introduction of universal training.

It was wholly in character for Deakin to have paused so long
... devious procedures to fulfil complex ends ...
between intent and announcement. Delay was also intrinsic to his political manner. For Forrest policy-making developed from systematic administration involving great labour. For Barton the blunt appraisal of first principles was sufficient. For Deakin it was a subtle art.

While the virtues of future policies were discussed in public, Deakin would state, usually in private, his general aims and purposes. It was then the task of many advisers, acting independently, to present detailed suggestions and complete schemes. It was hoped that British authorities, under pressure, would accommodate Australian demands. Meanwhile the Prime Minister, often in confidence, would attempt to influence advisers and opinion in one direction or another. At the appropriate moment when the briefs had been completed and the concessions made, the threads would be gathered together. Thence followed a period of public and parliamentary education — and perhaps a repetition of the whole process. The art lay in the dexterity with which each phase was handled, in the amalgamation, and in the final presentation. Delay was an essential ingredient; compromise an inevitable result; inaction and confusion risks to be run. Those who did not understand the process could express scorn. For those involved in it came frustration and a sense of betrayal — often with reason. Those who perceived the grand design had to be patient and trusting. For the ultimate consequence depended upon the skill of the manipulator and his powers of persuasion; the Council of Defence was replaced by Alfred Deakin.

*      *      *

Deakin appealed first to Whitehall. Existing problems and future hopes he passed unresolved to the Committee of Imperial Defence late in 1905. Officially he requested a complete and general scheme of Australian defence based upon a proper assessment of probable attack "in the light of present and future naval developments" and including clear recommendations on the selection of harbours to be defended, the standard
of protective armament, the best form of Australian naval defence "for each port", and an appropriate reorganization of military forces. This scheme, which Deakin wished to present to parliament soon after June 1906, was to constitute an "harmonious whole". 20

If the Prime Minister expected the British to make the policy decisions the Commonwealth had previously evaded, he also hoped to gain some measure of authoritative support for those issues on which he was as yet reluctant to take a firm public stand. To this end, he had stated his general aims to Sir George Clarke and sought through him favourable comment on the revision of the Agreement, a local naval force, and an army to replace Hutton's Field Force raised through universal training. In the light of judgements previously presented by the Army Council and the Admiralty through memoranda from the Colonial Defence Committee on federalist defence, Deakin was perhaps being too optimistic. Yet his arrangements allowed him to disown the results if they proved unsatisfactory. He explained the procedure to Senator Playford, the Minister for Defence, in these terms:

What we want from the Imperial Defence Committee is the judgement of an independent body of ablest British experts, free from bias of any kind or any suspicion of influence on this government. 21

Once the British experts had spoken, local committees led by Bridges and Creswell could examine and, if necessary, criticize their findings. The outer provinces had appealed to home; they were not to be bound by its judicious assessments.

Previously, J.W. McCay, then Minister for Defence in the Reid ministry, had decided that Colonel Bridges should visit Great Britain, Germany, and Switzerland in order to learn of the latest trends in strategic thought and to note the methods used in each of the countries to ensure a rapid mobilization. The Deakin ministry accredited him to appear before the Committee of Imperial Defence to furnish all the information it required; but on no account was he to offer an opinion on future policy. As Deakin privately explained to Clarke, Bridges was
an upright, honest, candid, and gentlemanly officer but his views on
defence were neither those of the Prime Minister nor his colleagues.
Referring clearly both to universal training and local naval defence,
he wrote:

You will find him imperfectly in sympathy with some of
our aims. He was closely associated with Sir E. Hutton
in preparing our present military organization and is
naturally biassed in respect to it or anything affecting
a scheme for which he receives full credit in the force. 22

Nor did the Prime Minister have full confidence in Captain
Creswell. After his painful experience in the Council of Defence, Creswell
had stubbornly adhered to his conviction that a coastal defence force
should be composed of a heterogeneous collection of cruiser-destroyers,
destroyers, and torpedo boats. He found in Senator Playford a sympathetic
supporter, at whose insistence arrangements were made for Creswell to
visit England during 1906 and glean technical information about the
capabilities of torpedo craft. But Deakin would allow no more. Neither
the navalist nor Hutton's protege could affect the outcome. Moreover,
Creswell would in all probability leap into print and embarrass the
government. On no account must the Naval Director appear before the
Committee in Whitehall. Playford strongly dissented from Deakin's ruling
and pleaded that only Creswell could present the Australian case with
sufficient force and clarity. Deakin's view prevailed. Bridges was given
the task of informing the Committee

that strong opinion has been expressed both in Parliament
and in certain sections of the Press, of the necessity
for the Commonwealth making some provision for vessels
of its own, to aid in either harbour or coastal defence;
and the Government, in view of this, desires consideration
to be given to the question of providing vessels capable
of defensive operations under the Commonwealth, and to be
advised as to the type of vessel or vessels most suitable. 23

On this Playford insisted. Duly Bridges took with him the latest
Creswellian submission. 24

A few months later Creswell left for England ignorant of the
decisions made at ministerial level. He was barred from appearing before
the Committee, was not allowed to see its report, felt himself rejected by British officialdom, and rankled under Deakin's cavalier treatment—especially as Bridges was given a sympathetic hearing by both the War Office and the Committee.25

On the 25th of May 1906 the Committee of Imperial Defence was convened in London. There, for the first time in a decade, a Liberal government was in power. In place of the vigilance and exhortations of Chamberlain was slowly to come a more permissive and persuasive approach to Imperial problems. Previously appointed by the Conservatives, Sir George Clarke held his position uneasily and was soon to clash openly with Fisher on the Dreadnought programme, and resign. The findings of the Committee indicated that neither the previous assumptions of Imperial defence nor the Chamberlain era had yet passed, and that as Deakin's agent, Clarke had been only mildly effective.26

In a lucid summary of familiar arguments—outlined above in Chapter Four—the Committee concluded that the gravest foreseeable danger to Australia was fugitive attack by at most three or four unarmoured cruisers or merchant auxiliaries capable of landing 1,000 men. Confidentially Clarke informed Deakin that naval developments and diplomatic arrangements precluded invasion. For the next decade it would not be possible to produce sound strategic arguments for innovation on any large scale in Australia. Other reasons, he suggested, would have to be stressed for Deakin's campaign.27

Although Clarke and other British officials led the Deakin ministry to believe there were gross inadequacies in Hutton's scheme, the Committee in effect decided that with certain revisions the existing organization could be made effective. Apart from supporting much of the detailed case later put by Australian militia officers, it recommended a reduction in the number of brigades in the Field Force from nine to six. It accepted that the cadre principle might suit well Australian conditions despite its inherent military weaknesses. But, as it became possible, the Commonwealth had to raise peace establishments until they were closer to
Clarke's misuse of Deakin's terminology resulted from the Committee's rejection of Australian naval hopes. Its argument was that of Beaumont; its justification that of Selborne; its sentiments those of The Times. If the maritime spirit of the Commonwealth needed accommodation there was ample room in the Imperial Squadron. Creswell's latest scheme was analyzed and dismissed. No mention was made of revision of the Naval Agreement.

Instead, the Committee in traditional fashion insisted that fixed defences at selected ports would afford ample protection for the urban population and harbours of refuge for coastal commerce.* It recommended the complete modernization of armament at all existing fortifications – with the exception of those at Albany, Wollongong, Botany Bay, and Townsville – and stressed the necessity of maintaining garrison troops at the general strength Hutton had planned.

With some modifications to federalist defence then, the Committee believed, the capitals and the Commonwealth would be safe from all probable dangers.

These findings – particularly the naval recommendations – did not satisfy Deakin. In September 1906, three committees were convened to deal separately with the questions the Prime Minister had referred to Whitehall: one led by Major-General Hoad was to consider military organization; another was presided over by Brigadier-General Gordon to review fixed defences; the third, consisting of Creswell and his supporters, surveyed port and coastal defence.31

Playford gave each a week to produce its findings. Their terms of reference invited them to differ from the Committee of Imperial Defence. However, Playford appeared personally before the military committees and warned them that should their recommendations involve any

* For strategic explanation, see Chapter Four above.
substantial increase in expenditure the Field Force would be the first to suffer. No restriction was placed on the naval committee. Creswell was thus able to be forthright in his demands while the military committees were deferential and timorous. They were also incompetent. The three reports were internally contradictory and mutually conflicting. No agreement was reached on the proportion of garrison troops required, nor on which ports needed protection. One committee allotted to Sydney two companies of infantry raised in Newcastle and to Newcastle companies raised in Sydney. And while Hoad's committee dutifully insisted that citizen officers should command garrison forces, it appointed an infantry officer to command artillery in two ports 1,400 miles apart. These examples could be extended. On his return from overseas Bridges did so, insisting that discussion by ad hoc committees was no substitute for government decision.

A few decisions were made. Playford refused to increase peace establishments, convert volunteer units to the militia system, and extend the period of training as both the local and the British committee desired. It was also decided not to select the ports needing fixed defences; not to state whether both garrison forces and field forces were to be maintained; not to decide whether the Commonwealth should prepare to meet raiders or graver dangers. At Deakin's insistence, Playford was, however, ready to encourage the growth of cadet units. And funds were to be cleared for the gradual renewal of fixed defences, a process not complete three years later.

While the military suffered, Creswell seemed to prosper. His committee demanded the creation of a destroyer force based on concepts which will be presently examined. He was invited to proceed with his plans and encouraged by both Playford and Deakin. Within six months the Prime Minister had reversed even that decision.32

Thus it was that in September 1906 parliament was confronted with four reports, and ministerial statements foreshadowing changes in federalist defence. As a means of provoking discussion, the procedure Deakin had
adopted was doubtless successful; as a means of determining national policy as an "harmonious whole" it was thus far an unmitigated failure. Whatever the ultimate purpose or the manner and difficulties of politicians, Bridges had continually argued, the government would have to make up its mind — if it wanted effective defence forces.

Meanwhile, the report of the Committee of Imperial Defence hindered the innovators. The success of Deakin's covert operations, no less than the campaigns of Creswell and Hughes, depended upon convincing others that federalist defence was untenable. It was now the more urgent that the Naval Agreement should be constantly examined not merely to restate familiar navalist arguments but to reveal any dissatisfaction in Australia and bad faith on the part of the Admiralty. For its revision could result only from the general admission of failure. The condition of the military forces had also to be closely scrutinized and the short-comings so interpreted that complete reform rather than piecemeal modification would appear necessary. These tasks were not easy. Those who resisted change, for whom George Reid became a forceful spokesman, welcomed the Committee's report which demonstrated that existing schemes afforded security with honour. They were as reluctant as the Admiralty and the citizen officers of well-established Australian regiments to admit failure.

*     *     *     *

In an official — and often confidential — campaign extending from June 1905 to December 1907, Deakin had already moved zealously to prove that the Naval Agreement needed revision. He received some assistance from the radical changes in naval dispositions East of Suez. Increasing was the alarm over the lack of Royal Naval protection. Nevertheless, arrangements were made by the British to meet this obligation under the Agreement.

With the defeat of Russia and the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, the Admiralty was able to remove all battleships and obsolete
vessels from the China Station. This was part of the reorganization policy of Sir John Fisher who, from October 1904, had envisaged the creation of cruiser squadrons on the American pattern to uphold British interests in the Far East while battle strength was concentrated in home waters. Accordingly, in January 1905 — before the renewal of the Alliance — the Admiralty had proposed to strengthen the Imperial Squadron with fighting vessels of sufficient speed, fire-power, and range for modern cruiser warfare. Without demur or legislation, the Reid ministry accepted the new scheme:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1903 Agreement</th>
<th>1905 Scheme</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 Armoured Cruiser</td>
<td>1 Armoured Cruiser</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Second-Class Cruisers</td>
<td>3 Second-Class Cruisers</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Third-Class Cruisers</td>
<td>5 Third-Class Cruisers</td>
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<td>4 Sloops</td>
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(in both cases: three Third-Class Cruisers to be used as drill ships.)

As a result, nearly half the cruisers capable of effective commerce protection in the Far East were stationed in Australian waters.* No increase in contribution was formally requested. The British continued to pay a sum more than double that provided by Australia and New Zealand. The Admiralty had thus far more than fulfilled its part of the bargain. There was no issue in this for Deakin — yet.33

Imperial authorities had urged the abolition of existing Australian naval forces, and Beaumont's successor had repeatedly striven to incorporate the men and materiel under his command. Might not this be a source of friction between the Admiralty and the Commonwealth? Deakin hastened to reaffirm the stand taken by Forrest and Barton: the local naval forces were to be preserved pending their complete reformation. By September 1906 — even while the scornful tones of the report of the Committee of Imperial defence were being discussed in Australia — the Admiralty had intimated that however unwise the development of local naval forces might seem to professional strategists and Imperial statesmen, it would offer every assistance if

* On the ramifications of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, see above Chapter Seven.
requested. It soon became clear that the Agreement did not stand in the way of navalist aspirations and nationalist demands.34

The treatment of Australians aboard vessels of the Imperial Squadron was thought to be another matter. Would they be flogged? On being questioned in the House Deakin demanded reply. He was informed that it was no longer the practice to use the cat on His Majesty's men-of-war though youths under the age of eighteen could be caned for offences which in older men would have entailed imprisonment with hard labour. Moreover, all officers in the Squadron had been expressly instructed to bear in mind ... the different ideas as to discipline naturally ingrained in the minds of men born in the Colonies and grown to man's estate in civil life from those of men trained in the Royal Navy from boyhood, and whilst enforcing discipline and order to make due allowance for this difference. 35

There was to be no repetition of the affairs in South Africa which marred Imperial cooperation.36

Deakin was more sensitive to the suggestion that vessels allotted to the Squadron were neither visiting all Australian ports nor remaining within the precincts of the Australian Station. Quarterly returns of fleet movements were requested and granted. The documents revealed that the number of vessels in Australian waters was always in excess of that agreed and their extensive duties precluded formal visits to each of the capital cities. Battle could not be joined on this issue. However, one vessel, the second-class cruiser Cambrian, though part of the agreed strength of the Squadron had been despatched to American waters to show the flag. The Admiralty was quick to apologize for not first consulting the Commonwealth. It was clear from the despatch - which recounted the effect of fleet concentration and fleet reorganization on all foreign stations - that the resources of the Admiralty in the Pacific were being stretched. Even so, there was no repetition of the transgression.37
The training provisions of the Agreement were under constant scrutiny and the findings generally kept from public gaze. Creswell had strongly condemned the principle of cadetships applicable in England. Was higher training to be given only to the sons of wealthy families who could send their lads Home for a long period? Deakin saw nothing wrong with the principle so long as opportunities were open to all. Yet it was apparent from the low number of cadetships taken by Australians that the scheme was failing to attract officer material. A partial remedy was sought by Rear-Admiral Fawkes, the commander on the Australian Station, who had been given considerable discretion by Whitehall to placate Deakin and accommodate Australian objections. If he could not train officers, he could ensure the efficiency and prospects of the lower ranks. He introduced a system of deferred pay to remove the friction among his men caused by the higher wage given to colonials. He increased the number of places open to Australians who wished to serve as permanent members of the Squadron and suggested that the ratings be sent to England for higher training - at British expense. The Australian government, however, complained that the employment of additional ratings in the Squadron without first manning the three drill ships to full complement with colonials was a technical breach of the Agreement. Patiently Fawkes explained that until the men were trained no vessel could be completely manned by them and they could only benefit from tours of duty on modern vessels with the latest equipment. How else was the Commonwealth to gain trained manpower for the new local naval defence force when it was created? Finally, at Creswell's insistence, the Commonwealth relented. 38

Yet the venture was not a great success. True, the numbers of men in the Royal Naval Reserve - despite increasingly stringent regulations for their training - increased steadily from 1906. But in the permanent naval force under Fawkes' command the turnover and wastage in personnel was considerable. The general causes are not hard to find. Wages for seamen in civil employ were much higher than for those in the navy. Moreover, when compared with the conditions of service either in the local naval forces or the naval militia it trained, the duties on board vessels of the Imperial Squadron were onerous. It was not merely that the lure of
a distinctive Australian navy was absent. When the Royal Australian Navy was being fitted out in February 1913, the Commonwealth did manage to raise more ratings than it thought possible, though it did rely heavily upon the Royal Navy for officers. Yet even with home training under Australian conditions – and the appeal of patriotism – indiscipline and desertions from the Australian cruisers were more endemic than the Commonwealth would admit. 39

Deakin was more deeply impressed than he was prepared to admit publicly with this aspect of Imperial cooperation. Likewise, he noted for later use objections raised in the House that the Admiralty could well afford to lend the Commonwealth light cruisers now that so many were being paid off during Fisher's reorganization scheme. Creswell put the matter forcefully: ten such vessels, manned with nucleus crews could be used for Australian and Imperial defence.

That an offer of these ships was not made to Australia is the strongest prima facie evidence that Imperial policy is directly opposed to any Australian Naval development. No other interpretation is possible to the preference of breaking up good ships or selling them for a few pounds. 40

Thus far the Australian case owed much to the accumulation of evidence and the Prime Minister's tactics much to irritation. Throughout Deakin expostulated that neither Imperial sentiment nor Australian patriotism had been evoked by the working of the Agreement. The validity of this assertion rested uneasily on the views of but one section of the press – as Deakin's phrasing sometimes indicated. It was a proposition that could not be verified and one that was unlikely to sway My Lords of the Admiralty, particularly when the Sydney press, its counterparts in other states, and the followers of George Reid declared – after the Prime Minister's official protests had been revealed – that Deakin spoke only for agitating groups in Victoria, not for the nation. But no substantial and unequivocal piece of evidence had yet been found to demonstrate the failure of the Agreement. Then, in late 1905, the H.M.S. Powerful steamed into Port Jackson.
Consonant with the terms of the Agreement, the H.M.S. 
Euryalus, an armoured cruiser of the Cressey Class, had replaced the Royal Arthur on the Australian Station during 1904. This was the leading vessel of the Squadron. It was also part of the fighting force "available for concentration" under the terms of the first Anglo-Japanese Alliance.* When that Alliance was renewed in 1905 all specific navy and military stipulations were omitted. The Admiralty could withdraw the Euryalus for concentration in home waters as it had done battleships on the China Station. As a replacement it chose the H.M.S. Powerful.

Officially the Powerful was listed as a first-class protected cruiser. The Admiralty had long claimed that protected cruisers with thick deck armour and casemated batteries could sustain punishment like any armoured cruiser and should be classified as such, especially when armoured cruisers themselves differed so greatly in fire-power, speed, age, and armour. Until more effective cruisers were constructed for destruction of commerce destroyers, ships like the Powerful were deemed sufficient for all foreign stations. They possessed slightly heavier armament and a greater radius of operation than armoured cruisers like the Euryalus. The choice of H.M.S. Powerful seems, all in all, to have been made in good faith. Nevertheless, to the Australians the issue was clear. They had paid for an armoured cruiser. They had not got it. The letter and spirit of the Agreement had been broken. 41

Questions in the House spurred Deakin to action. Creswell prepared a long and indignant brief which appeared to demonstrate the breach in contract. This was passed on to Whitehall. The Admiralty replied with a skilful mixture of factual explanation, ingenious argument, and condescension. If the Commonwealth insisted on an armoured cruiser, the despatch continued, the H.M.S. Monmouth could be sent to Australia as a replacement. This offer exposed weakness in Creswell's case: the Monmouth was classified as an armoured cruiser but in displacement, armour, and fire-power - if not modernity and speed - it was a lesser vessel than either the Euryalus or the Powerful. It was his turn to be exasperated. To Deakin he wrote:

* See above Chapter Seven.
It was scarcely to be expected that the Admiralty would plead guilty to a breach of the spirit as well as the letter of the Agreement, and, in the light of their very courteous reply, I would not wish to press home what is after all hardly even arguable. 42

There the matter did not rest. The correspondence was given to the Age. Though Deakin, Playford, and Creswell admitted no responsibility it was the Admiralty's turn to protest indignantly at a gross breach of faith.

In April 1906 Deakin summarized his objections to the Naval Agreement. Not only was the arrival of these vessels tardy, he wrote, but they often broke down, were used without regard to Australian opinion, and did not meet the terms of the scheme. While Australians were bound by the letter of the Agreement and had left nothing "delayed, or undone" in fulfilling their obligations, the Admiralty felt free to supply whatever vessels it thought fit. 43

The Admiralty's patience - but not courtesy - was well nigh exhausted. It forthrightly deplored the impression given in the Commonwealth that it had been in any way indifferent either to the Agreement or to Australian susceptibilities. It rebutted Deakin's charges in detail. Previously the strategic and Imperial features of the Agreement had been stressed in Whitehall with stirring tones. Now the Admiralty acknowledged that as a symbol of the unity of British sea power "and also on account of other more purely political considerations with which the Admiralty Board is not immediately concerned" it was prepared loyally to meet the obligations its "predecessors" had incurred and would continue as far as possible to accommodate the demands of the Commonwealth and New Zealand. Nevertheless, none of these views "of themselves justify the retention in Australasian waters of a squadron of the present size ...". If it had but the freedom to determine fleet dispositions - as it had in every other quarter of the globe - the size of the Imperial Squadron would be reduced on strategic grounds alone. 44

The desired pitch of exasperation had been reached. This was the admission that Deakin was seeking. The Admiralty had clearly expressed
dissatisfaction with the Agreement. If now he could extract a similar admission from the British government on those political considerations with which the Admiralty was not immediately concerned, the scheme could be revised to satisfy Australian demands and Deakin's desires. Already the portents were favourable. Despite the wording of the report from the Colonial Defence Committee, Lord Tweedmouth, the First Lord of the Admiralty in the new Liberal ministry, publicly anticipated during 1906 the changes which the Admiralty had indicated it desired: the British government would be quite prepared to give Royal Naval protection to the Empire as a free gift and allow each part of Greater Britain to decide its own future local defence projects. The Prime Minister left the next full-scale attack until the Imperial Conference of 1907.45

*     *     *

While the Prime Minister was manoeuvring to have the Naval Agreement revised, the military forces at his government's disposal were in a sad condition. How sad, was discovered by T.T. Ewing when he became Minister for Defence in January 1907 and began a careful examination of their readiness for war.

There were no defence schemes, mobilization tables, military surveys and maps, or plans of operation; fixed defences were in a parlous state; there was a serious deficiency in officers and many who remained were badly trained or incompetent; all units were well below peace establishment; there was still no organized reserve; and morale both in the permanent and citizen forces was at a low ebb. Confusion and inefficiency was greater than when Hutton left Australia! What protection could these forces afford against the attack postulated by members of the Australian National Defence League: invasion or large scale raid by 70,000 alien troops? Within six months Ewing was convinced that security lay only in universal training. "The whole military system", he wrote in September 1907, "will require the most drastic treatment. To expand
the forces on present lines is a financial impossibility". 46

Undoubtedly Ewing's conclusion was coloured by his previous hopes and fears. He was a member of the Defence League in New South Wales and his appointment had aroused great expectations in that quarter. Moreover, he had discussed the issue with Deakin who, from late 1905, had been seeking to justify a new citizen army raised by universal training to replace Hutton's Field Force. As Minister for Defence, therefore, Ewing was able to elaborate views he and Deakin had long held. His findings were broadly true and he was legitimately anxious at the inefficiency revealed to him. But he failed to see that Hutton's scheme could have been made effective given sufficient money and enthusiastic ministerial direction.

Many charges were levelled at the military system by the innovators. The failure of the volunteer units, it was often implied by Hughes and others, demonstrated the failure of any system of voluntary recruitment and thus the bankruptcy of federalist defence. Much was made by Deakin and Ewing of the cost of a system which thereby imposed its own limitations on expansion yet which showed in return - according to their misleading statistics - a fourteen percent deficiency in officers and a ten percent deficiency in men. It was also argued that the concept of a mobile field force was untenable as provision merely against raiders. Had the Council of Defence been utilized, these charges would doubtless have been considered on their merits. As it was, decentralized administration with ultimate decision and expenditure tightly controlled by the Defence Department contributed greatly to general paralysis. Members of the overworked military staff, like Colonel Bridges, felt it improper to present forcefully military issues as Hutton had done. Others were indifferent and awaited ministerial lead.

Bridges was quick to point out that much of the trouble lay with the indecision of Cabinet. No defence scheme could be drawn up until Cabinet had clarified its policy and set financial limits in accord with it.
To proceed from budget to budget without deciding either the scale of attack to which Australia might be subject or precisely what the Common-wealth wished to defend had led to inaction and confusion. Yet since he foresaw far graver danger than most soldiers admitted and hoped for sweeping change, Ewing was not willing to accept such arguments. He wanted efficiency without ministerial commitment. 47

Reports from commanders in the Field Force, the state commandants, and the Inspector-General neither requested nor anticipated the drastic reform Ewing had in mind. In South Australia and Western Australia — where Hutton's reforms had been least effective — most of his pessimistic judgements were confirmed. In Queensland, too, grave failings were evident. Yet the commandant of that state was even more adamant than his colleagues that the solution lay in piecemeal reform along the lines Hutton had suggested for the future: modernization of fixed defences and equipment; a clear and stable recruiting policy implemented by local committees; the appointment of permanent adjutants and other staff to each militia regiment so that citizen officers would be relieved of much paper work and the training of recruits; ministerial and parliamentary support to elevate the status of the forces in the community; and the extension of camps of military training so that they would be uniform throughout Australia. This last demand had been made by military committees at all levels since 1901 and was supported by a surprising number of all ranks, particularly in the more technical arms of the service. Under the decentralized administration, camps were conducted from four to six days a year according to the custom of the state; militia officers and men wanted at least eight to ten days of combined annual training. Commanders desired it to ensure efficiency, experience, and enthusiasm; officers wanted it to put into practice the theory they had been obliged to absorb; the men agreed because they would be paid. As one commandant pointed out, many in the militia — the assessments ranged according to district from ten percent to fifty percent — were manual workers who not only enjoyed soldiering but supplemented their income by service.

It was because the volunteer regiments lacked the inducements
given the militia that they had failed so miserably even in the more populous states. These were unpaid regiments often raised by English, Scottish, and Irish minorities which Sutton had consigned to the garrison force. They made up about one quarter of the citizen-soldiery. Careful analysis in 1907 of performance - numbers, efficiency, and attendance at camps of training - revealed that in general, while the volunteer forces waned, the capacities of militia units stood firm. Most officers therefore urged conversion of all regiments to militia status. They believed that the volunteer system, but not the principle of voluntary recruitment, had failed. As for the marginal deficiencies in the numbers of the militia, one officer summed up the case for his colleagues thus: "If we pay the men, we will get the numbers; if we extend the training period and the allowances, we will get the officers."48

The advocates of universal training argued, however, that they had now been vindicated. Deakin continually complained that the existing scheme was isolated; that only 1 Australian male in every 112 was receiving military training; and that too few citizens were fulfilling their obligations to the country. Yet if that garrison was increased the cost would be exorbitant. As the training of a militiaman involved about £15 a year, an army of 100,000 men raised on the militia system would cost between £1,500,000 and £2,000,000 annually. It was a far better course to use less money and introduce universal service. In vain, many militia officers protested that the assessment of overall cost by innovators was Utopian if they too wanted an efficient citizen force. For a force in excess of its requirements, the Commonwealth would pay more than it could afford. Those officers were to be proved right - almost too late.49

In the final analysis the efficacy of the Field Force lay in its mobility. On this problem insufficient staff work was done. More than 50,000 horses were required to give all units tactical mobility. No arrangements were made to purchase, hire, and commandeer them. The transport and service corps were neglected. No survey of overland stock routes was undertaken until after 1909 and then only by zealous officers on their own initiative. Experiments with petrol and steam driven vehicles
were begun, but they impressed neither staff nor ministers. The main barrier to strategic mobility lay in the confused railway networks. Except in Victoria, the railways fanned out from the capitals with few connecting lines in the interior. Mobilization in any other than the coastal towns was therefore difficult; and should invasion come, as the alarmists had prophesied, the net of railways could be used to subdue resistance once the principal coastal junctions were captured. As Kitchener was quick to perceive, the railways would serve an enemy far more effectively than they had done the British in South Africa. At the same time, it was far more difficult for Australians to live off the country as the Boers had done. Natural and man-made environment conspired against a prolonged resistance once the organized forces were defeated. Moreover, three different railway gauges and the absence of a link with Western Australia could seriously hinder the movement of defending troops. One of the rare calculations indicated it would take some 60 days to move 30,000 mounted troops from Melbourne to Brisbane. The advocates of universal training argued strenuously that, since the mobility was impossible, every man in every populated part of the continent had to be trained and armed. Australians had to meet the enemy on the beaches. They had also to prepare themselves for a war of resistance. In universal training, it was imagined, lay the cure for the inherent weakness of the Australian transport system.  

Military and political leaders set considerable store by the cadet corps which had been originally raised and trained in the schools of Victoria and New South Wales. Both Hutton and McCay had agreed to invigorate the movement as soon as resources became available. McCay took the first step in 1905, and from early 1907 Deakin extended the system so that those boys who left school or who were attending state schools would receive training if they wished. He hoped eventually to see 150,000 youths up to the age of eighteen trained in cadet corps; he also planned, as we shall see, to use these as a lever for the introduction of universal service. Those officers responsible for the movement were astounded by the success. In 1909 some 30,000 senior and junior cadets, both those at school and who had left, were in training. If the movement
had been allowed to continue undisturbed, officers and troops would, militia officers argued, have been freely available.\textsuperscript{51}

The success of the cadet movement, which relied wholly on volunteer recruitment, indicated how the Commonwealth's small, flexible, and expandable citizen force could have been made effective; for with the same care and money an effective reserve system could have been organized. Hutton's military scheme was viable. Though the innovators were to argue that they were solving the problems of the existing structure, they were in fact more concerned with creating a new army to meet new purposes - as an instrument in nation-building and as a means of security against all possible enemies.

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CHAPTER TEN

NATIONALIST SOLUTIONS: THE PANACEAS (1900-1902)

Not even the innumerable hordes of Asia, now awakening, could, with any hope of success, land a force in a country where it would meet 200,000 or 300,000 persons familiar with the use of arms ... and where our coastal defences, torpedo craft and forts, would be manned by a trained citizen naval force .... (These measures) would render us independent of the rest of the Empire, and able to defend our country without assistance ...

W.M. HUGHES, August 1906.

(A flotilla of destroyers) is a purely defensive one .... Of course, it will attack any enemies on our coasts, but it means that it is not intended for offensive service away from Australia.

CAPTAIN CRESWELL, February 1909.

(While dependent on the Royal Navy and whatever local forces it can afford) Australia might offer a protracted resistance against invading troops by guerrilla warfare conducted from the almost inaccessible vastness of her great waterless interior.

ALFRED DEAKIN, September 1906.
By the end of 1906 little more was to be gained by attempting to influence or cajole Whitehall. Now was the time, declared Ewing, for the expert to disappear and the politician to make his entrance. Now was the time for Deakin to join and guide the discussion of the panaceas Creswell and Hughes had long argued would solve the riddle of the Commonwealth's role in the Empire, ensure total security through impregnability, and create distinctively Australian forces: coastal defence and universal training. Nationalist those measures may have been in intent, but the politicians - like the country they represented - were divided over the issues they raised.¹

Within the Labour Party, Watson - supported by Hughes, Pearce, and Spence - was ready to accept any cogent form of coastal defence and to deprive the military pending their replacement by a new citizen army; but others - including Fisher and O'Malley - were concerned about the cost of the first and rejected any idea of compulsion. Labour was to remain divided until 1908 when, in response to Deakin's challenge, it approved both measures in principle. Even so, policy was not settled until later.²

Nor was the government ready to follow its leader. Senator Playford, speaking for others among the Liberals, was ready to contemplate naval defence so long as the finance could be found but rejected universal training. Sir William Lyne, who replaced Sir John Forrest as Treasurer and was aware of the temper of the opposition in New South Wales, objected to any abrogation of the Naval Agreement. Other ministerialists from Victoria, though willing to give lip service to the principle of universal training, wanted first to appeal to voluntary recruitment, to make universal service obligatory not compulsory.³

Nor was Deakin accepted as the national leader some historians have suggested. Newspapers in Sydney and elsewhere ridiculed his alliance with Labour, dismissed his vision of an Empire reorganized, were appalled at the thought of Australia breaking a solemn treaty with Great Britain,
deplored any local naval force independent of the Royal Navy yet adding nothing to its strength, and were shocked at the suggestion that the Commonwealth could depart from British traditions by pressing its manhood into military service. George Reid and Joseph Cook gave voice to such objections in parliament. Among their followers were men who examined new measures not only on principle but on approved strategic grounds. Provided with information by disturbed citizen officers and prepared to delve into service journals for technical information rather than mere opinions, they proved trenchant critics.\(^4\)

In the face of such difficulties, Deakin and Ewing attempted to negate the influence of Whitehall in several ways: by eschewing strategic assessments of any kind; by suggesting that dangers to Australia were far graver than the British admitted; by speculating whether the Royal Navy would be able to maintain the two-power standard; by rejecting any scheme of Imperial defence which allowed temporary sacrifice on the periphery of Empire; and by proclaiming that Australians demanded national defence schemes. Deakin merely indicated his approval of new measures, in principle. Beyond this, there was hesitancy and evasion. He appears to have been awaiting the outcome of the Imperial Conference due to convene early in 1907. He was waiting for greater agreement among Australians about their future.\(^5\)

During the period of delay there were forces working in his favour. Vague but increasing misgivings about affairs in the Pacific produced potential support. With no specific proposals to consider opposition remained diffuse. Meanwhile enthusiasts were inspired, and sceptics disarmed, by the diverse and confused appeal of the campaigns conducted by Creswell and Hughes. By the time Deakin was prepared to gather the threads of policy, the arguments had been prepared and the emotional foundations laid.

Since much had already been achieved in this direction by the navalists, their questions were comparatively — and deceptively — simple. What weapon of war would the Prime Minister select?
From the turn of the century the French had developed what they considered the most effective form of coastal defence in the defense mobile. The theory relied upon development of two weapons: the torpedo boat and the submarine. Combined, the two vessels offered effective radial port defence. Distributed in many ports and used en masse, particularly by night, torpedo boat and submarine flotillas prevented close blockade, rendered bombardment impossible, and deterred invading armadas. In peace they afforded a sense of security to each of the major ports and satisfied local interests which profited from shipbuilding and maintenance plants. Moreover, torpedo craft, with their greater radius of operation could, like the privateers in the days of sail, prey upon merchantmen, and operate with the fleets as strike weapons.

By 1910 this theory was scorned by many French critics. Calling for a proliferation of naval energies, waste and inefficiency, the defense mobile, it was said, was like guerrilla warfare at sea. It implied a passive posture which might suit policies of non-involvement in peace but could not be used to wage war effectively nor protect sea-borne commerce.

Nevertheless, the British had taken seriously the threat of the torpedo boat to its commerce and fleets. From the nineties began experimentation with a slightly heavier craft capable of destroying the enemy's torpedo boats and then acting with the fleet: out of the torpedo-catcher grew the destroyer. Yet to devise such a vessel, to cram 5,000 horse-power into a structure of 250 tons, to construct a hull light, flexible, and resilient enough to ensure speed but withstand turbulent waters, to give stability to a turtle-backed deck, vibrating, lurching, awash from the seas breaking over the bows, was an engineering challenge of the first order, which resulted in a proliferation of designs by enterprising builders and many tragic failures.
But the challenge was met. At the Jubilee Naval Parade, observed by the Australian premiers from a special yacht, one builder sped an experimental craft in and out of the lines of warships to demonstrate its prowess. No vessel could catch the intruder who weaved in and out of the picket-boats, circled the royal yacht, doffed his cap, and was off. He received an Admiralty contract, and the torpedo boat and the destroyer captured popular fancy. Kipling seized upon them to express the dash and the sentiment of the late Victorian era and provided the lines to be repeated until well after the Russo-Japanese War:

Ho, the Boats! Bloomin' Boats,
With 'er little decks a-jumpin' an' the seas a-runnin' green.
An' it's "Ease 'er down to slow",
An' it's "'OId on all you know",
Chokin' down an' blindin' through it for the honour of the Queen.

It is doubtful whether such a man as R. Thomson, the author of Australian Nationalism, would have thought it a grand thing to choke down fumes, smoke, and cinders on decks awash with Southern seas for the sake of the Queen. Yet he was as impressed as other colonials with the torpedo craft purchased from private builders. Separationists, neutralists, federationists, and Imperial visionaries all acknowledged the virtue of the torpedo boat for Australia. And, Commonwealth ministers from Forrest to Playford, had contemplated their use.6

Yet from 1897 the Admiralty had dismissed Australian proposals to use torpedo craft. The judgement rested upon sound naval principles: given the limited dangers to Australian ports, destroyers would not be worth the expense. They had been built to destroy torpedo craft, not to attack cruisers. Annual fleet manoeuvres indicated that losses would be extremely high in action against superior vessels, that the destroyer was an indifferent scout with limited range of observation, limited radius of action, poor reliability, and limited durability. In 1905 Sir George Clarke privately informed J.W. McCay that, on the basis of experience in the Russo-Japanese War, torpedo craft of any kind would be useless in Australian waters. The tactical use of the vessel had not been clarified and its strategic function was as uncertain as its capabilities.7
Though the role of the destroyer was not clearly defined until after the outbreak of the Great War, changes in destroyer construction after 1906 raised hopes in the Admiralty and were to benefit navalists in Australia. A year earlier a special committee was convened by Fisher to lay down the general principles within which constructors could experiment to produce torpedo craft fit for the navy he envisaged. Even while the Committee of Imperial Defence considered the scheme for Australian defence, the first vessels were being tested. Generally, they fell into four classes.

First came the **Swift**, considered at the time an exorbitantly expensive hybrid between the cruiser and destroyer.* At a speed in excess of 36 knots and with phenomenal ocean-going capabilities, this was the only vessel sturdy enough to fulfil all the duties of a destroyer as they emerged in wartime. Fisher was delighted with the result but such controversy raged about the ship that she was the only one of her type to be built before 1914.

Next came lighter and cheaper vessels called "Ocean-Going" destroyers which, in theory, were to work with the fleets.** With the first of these – the River Class, launched between 1903 and 1906 – had come a radical change in design. Now appeared the traditional features and silhouette of the destroyer: a raised forecastle to prevent seas sweeping the deck; a hull more sturdily constructed than before; the sacrifice of speed for sea-keeping ability. Heavier and more formidable were ships of the Tribal Class, the success of which set the pattern for most destroyers built after 1911.

* Specifications for the **Swift**: 1,800 tons; 4 x 4-inch guns + 2 x 18-inch torpedo tubes; cost £280,000. Radius of action: 2,400 miles at 33 knots; 1,000- miles at full speed.

** The **Improved River Class Destroyer**: 550-600 tons; 1 x 4-inch gun + 3 torpedo tubes; 24-27 knots; cost £380,000. Radius of action: 2,000 miles at 14 knots; 500-600 miles at full speed.

** Tribal Class Destroyer**: 875-1,000 tons; 2 x 4-inch guns + 2 x 18-inch torpedo tubes; 34+ knots.

** H.M.A.S. Parramatta**: 700 tons; 1 x 4-inch + 3 x 18-inch torpedo tubes; 26 knots; estimated cost £80,000+. Radius of action: 2,500 miles at 14 knots; 600-1,000 miles at full speed.
"... turtle-backed decks awash ..."
Avernus in Port Jackson, c. 1890.

"... doffed his cap, and was off ..."
The Turbinia, 1897.

"... a radical change in design ...
Improved River Class Destroyer, 1909."
The last type was the "Coastal Service" destroyer. It proved too light for the sustained coastal patrols for which it was designed and later was reclassified as a torpedo boat for radial port defence. But it was the most powerful of a great assortment of lesser craft.*

By 1911 it was acknowledged that, with torpedo-range opening from 4,000 to 7,000 yards by day, the new destroyers could devastate a closely packed fleet or cruiser squadron so long as they could approach unseen in sufficient numbers. When Churchill became First Lord of the Admiralty, he found in the destroyer flotilla the equivalent of the daring cavalry patrol. His advisers, less romantic, stressed three limitations relevant to Australian proposals: neither crews nor machinery could withstand constant operation at high speed and in a state of alert for much longer than three days; no matter what the size of torpedo craft, they needed the close support of cruisers; and while their main value was at night the task of finding the enemy was difficult and that of distinguishing friend from foe in the ensuing melee involved great risks.

Between 1898 and 1905 another weapon, developed in the light of French experience, had caught public fancy and divided service opinion—the submarine. It was a controversy in which the Australians were to be involved. Proclaimed by one admiral to be underhand, unfair, and damned unEnglish, the submarine suffered great disabilities until 1905: poor manoeuvrability; uncertain stability; restricted field of vision; intricate equipment; specialized crews needing constant relief; poor sea-keeping abilities; a limited radius of action on the surface and a short range when submerged. From 1907 substantial improvements were made. Despite the handicap placed upon them in naval manoeuvres by conservative officers, the submarines did demonstrate that it would be suicidal to expose battle fleets and cruiser squadrons to underwater attack. Fisher and his protégés considered this a potent weapon for defence and a final insurance against invasion. Other officers claimed that they were not worth the money for

* Specifications for the Coastal Destroyer: 250+ tons; 2 x 12 pdr. guns + 3 torpedo tubes; 26 knots; approximate initial cost £50,000 - £80,000. Radius of action: 1,000 miles at 15 knots; 300 miles at full speed.
experimental development. Because, then, of technical difficulties, professional conservatism, and open controversy, the principal duties of submarines in all British war plans prior to 1914 were to protect naval harbours as weapons of localized defence in special waters. 8

One consequence of these technical developments was the organization of a British defense mobile composed of the pre-1909 destroyers, torpedo craft, and submarines. The function of these forces bore some relation to French practice and Australian hopes — but there were crucial differences. Each destroyer flotilla was directed by a more heavily armed flotilla leader — often a light cruiser — and could request, by wireless, support from cruiser squadrons to aid them against stronger enemy craft. They constituted a flexible and complex deterrent of which the Home Fleets formed the dominant part. They were also expected to undertake offensive patrols or to operate with battle squadrons. In this sense they did not constitute a passive line of defence.

Such, then, were the varying European developments which influenced Creswell and Deakin, one to champion the destroyer, the other to accept the submarine, for Australian coastal defence.

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To ensure the desired posture at the outbreak of war, instruments of war must be fashioned to match the resources and the policy of the state. In his own fashion Creswell had attempted to apply this principle in order to please each new ministry. The searching enquiry he suffered at the meeting of the Council of Defence in 1905 compelled him to reconsider his approach. On the mistaken assumption that the postulates laid down by Turner and McCay represented settled Australian policy and in the understandable belief that Australian resources would remain limited, he set about tailoring new schemes, and characteristic resilience had produced a new submission a month later.
Yet throughout 1905 his proposals were little more than an uneasy collation of previous ideas. As the Australian who navigated the Protector to China, he valued the cruiser-destroyer for coastal patrols. That no such vessel appeared in Admiralty lists did now worry him. As commandant in Queensland, he had recommended torpedo boats for the Barrier Route. That such vessels would be ineffective for other than special duties in smooth waters he ignored. As Naval Director he urged Labour to purchase destroyers for radial port defence. Of the limitations and developments in such vessels he seemed unaware. Now he exorted both the Reid and Deakin ministries to purchase three cruiser-destroyers, sixteen destroyers, and fifteen torpedo boats. They would perform varying functions of radial port and coastal defence to suit the special conditions of each state. But he envisaged their role to be something more than that played by old colonial forces. On no account was the new Commonwealth force to be restricted merely to harbour defence.

He was now in no doubt about the posture these instruments of war should—and did—involve. In October 1905, he wrote:

This will provide a defence not designed as a force for action against hostile fleets or squadrons, which is the province of the Imperial fleet, but as a line necessary to us within the defence line of the Imperial fleet—a purely defensive line, that will give security to our naval bases, populous centres, principal ports, and commerce.

In February 1909, he was using the same argument to appeal to Labour but with a slightly different emphasis:

(Our coastal service) is a purely defensive one. That does not mean it will never attack. Of course, it will attack any enemies on our coasts, but it means that it is not intended for offensive service away from Australia.

Gone was the notion of an offensive-defensive navy capable of adding to the battle strength of the Royal Navy.

There were faults in the posture but graver deficiencies in the choice of weapon. Sir George Clarke saw this clearly even while the
Committee of Imperial Defence was preparing its report on Australian schemes. He discussed this issue with Sir John Fisher who, while adamant that the Royal Navy could protect all parts of the Empire, acknowledged that Deakin was under considerable pressure from the navalist press and elements in parliament. He was therefore prepared to make informal but constructive suggestions. It was the outmoded, heterogeneous and ineffective nature of Creswell's projected force that caused most concern. The successful trials of new classes of destroyers suggested far more efficient instruments of war. In June 1906 Clarke informed Deakin that if the Commonwealth was prepared to finance a naval scheme consisting of homogeneous flotillas of destroyers the Admiralty would not object.¹²

Meanwhile, Creswell was inspecting naval establishments in England. He learnt something of French theories of defense mobile but rejected them because they rested so heavily upon the submarine, a vessel which he considered a mere toy, at best a weapon of port, not coastal, defence. This remained the view of Creswell and his colleagues until 1909. They were encouraged by Sir George Clarke and retired naval officers, primarily in good faith but partly because of their opposition to Fisher's reforms.¹³

In the new classes of destroyer, particularly those of the River Class, and in the English Coastal Defence Organization, Creswell saw the appropriate weapon and its justification. By June 1906 he, like Clarke, was thinking in terms of homogeneous destroyer flotillas for Australian service. As flotilla leaders - and as training vessels in the initial stages of the new force - he thought Deakin might be able to borrow from the Admiralty some of the third-class cruisers which were being paid off under the Fisher reorganization scheme. He was learning fast from the destroyer enthusiasts in the Royal Navy.

By June 1906 he had already discussed the prospect informally with Clarke and Fisher. Clarke appears to have given guarded approval, and was later to be of great assistance. Fisher was circumspect but reassuring. Creswell pressed his advantage. The Prime Minister and his
naval advisers felt that they needed sympathy, encouragement, and assistance from the Admiralty. Would these be given to any technically acceptable project? Sir John Fisher said, "Yes".\(^{14}\)

On his return to Australia Creswell immediately conferred with his colleagues. All were agreed on the weapon. All were agreed on the posture. All recognized that Fisher's informal assurance - the sine qua non for Deakin - was to their advantage. When Playford convened a Committee of Naval Officers to comment on the report of the Committee of Imperial Defence in September 1906, they were given the opportunity they desired. Creswell expounded and elaborated its recommendations for the next three years.\(^{15}\)

The composition of the new force bore a marked resemblance to earlier schemes. In place of the Creswellian coastal cruiser, four Ocean destroyers were to patrol coastal routes and act as flotilla leaders. The specifications were vague, but the committee obviously envisaged a destroyer, close in design to the *Swift* and incorporating some of the features of the Tribal Class, which would be capable of service in the heavy seas off the South coast and faster in all weathers than any enemy cruiser. For radial port defence and offensive patrols from the Australian capitals, sixteen River Class destroyers were required, each fitted with armament to attack in daylight merchant auxiliaries and unarmoured cruisers. These could be supported in localized operations by the four or more torpedo boats which were to protect the Barrier Route and river mouths. The new destroyer force, then, was to fulfil the function of the old colonial navies in all states and was to be capable of concentration in Australian waters for coordinated operations.

Organized in this fashion, great things were claimed over the years for the destroyer. It was within the financial means of the Commonwealth. It would give - and be seen to give - adequate protection to Australian and imperial interests in ports and harbours. It was an effective substitute for the Imperial Squadron. It would act as a powerful auxiliary for the Squadron during major operations in Australian waters.
It would prevent blockade. It would compel the enemy commander, ever fearful of attack, to raid by daylight when shore batteries could most effectively reply. It would keep in touch with the enemy, signalling through a series of coastal wireless stations all movements so that coastal trade would not be unduly hindered. It would prevent landing operations near major ports. And once British builders had designed the craft, trained Australian artisans, and sent vessels to Sydney in sections, once Australian oil replaced Australian coal, once training stations were established near centres of commerce, once local shipbuilding and steel industries were stimulated, the Commonwealth could produce and maintain its own national and self-sufficient naval forces.

An even greater virtue of the destroyer was the flexibility of argument Creswell could employ in its justification. Fundamentally his brief was unchanged and the context for the scheme was undoubtedly defence against maverick raiders. Yet his explanations now assumed a variety of forms of Imperial cooperation, changing dangers to the Australian littoral, and an enemy commander curiously less enterprising than his destroyer captains. For Labour politicians he stressed the structural and operational limitations of the destroyer which made it so appropriate for local defence. For Liberals he suggested that the destroyer force could be used easily in Chinese and Indian waters and thus effectively contribute to the strength of the Royal Navy. For Deakin and Ewing he emphasized its deterrence against raiders. For Pearce, Fisher, and Hughes he elaborated its potency against invading forces anywhere on the coast. The destroyer was in turn the Cerberus of Australian coastal trade, the Protector of Imperial interests in the Far East, the sharks to savage the lingering and blockading raider, and the British fire-ships which scattered an armada.

Only when pressed, and then with considerable evasion, did Creswell admit that his destroyers would be ineffective by day once beyond the range of coastal batteries. Only when positing concentration for offensive coastal patrols was it revealed that Creswell assumed that the enemy commander would obligingly remain on accepted coastal routes, that Australian destroyers would find the raider where previously he insisted
cruiser squadrons could not, that his vessels were expected to sally forth from the capitals and operate at high speed for days at a time. Only when closely questioned did Creswell admit that the blockading cruiser could be kept some sixty miles from the mouth of a harbour for less than sixteen hours a day, that coastal trade would have to fend for itself once it cleared port, and that by day the enemy commander could return. Only when exasperated did he claim that the sinking of one enemy cruiser was worth the loss of a half a dozen destroyers - a substantial proportion of his force. Of the many questions concerning cost, control, efficiency, and function raised by Creswell's public critics, there was one he did not answer. Was not sustained close blockade now extremely difficult for large fleets and suicidal for the raider? 16

Nevertheless, Senator Playford was impressed by the Naval Committee's recommendations of September 1906 and led Creswell to believe that they would be implemented. His major doubt was cost. Accordingly, Creswell suggested several methods for financing the destroyer scheme, of which the closest to ministerial requirements involved £250,000 or more annually over a decade. He was quite willing to see an end to the Naval Agreement but felt it proper to suggest the abandonment of the Field Force to finance his scheme. That force, he said, could be justified only if used offensively with the British Army, a course subtly urged on the Commonwealth by Whitehall, disguised from Australians with "a certain amount of make believe", and in express contravention of Commonwealth policy. 17 Playford surveyed the estimates for Deakin. He concluded that if the military vote was curtailed, sufficient savings could be made the following year for the first step to be taken. 18

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As a redemption of Barton's pledge in 1903 and as a means of "self-dependence in our waters" Deakin commended Creswell's destroyer scheme to the House on the 26th of September 1906. 19 It was the
government's intention to experiment with Creswell's proposal over a three-year period. At first twelve lighter vessels would be purchased: the four torpedo boats and eight River Class destroyers. Only if this venture proved successful would the Commonwealth proceed to purchase the Ocean destroyers. The final object was to relieve Great Britain of the burden of naval defence for Australia. That was part of "our general obligation ... but not all". Accordingly, a special appropriation would be requested after the approaching elections.

In those elections the ministerialists suffered greatly. The Prime Minister could count on Watson's support in the House but in the Senate the Liberal-Labour alliance was outnumbered two to one. The strength of the Opposition ensured that there would be no great increase in defence expenditure, no hasty abrogation of the Naval Agreement, no blatant sacrifice of the Field Force, and no easy introduction of universal service. What constituted a clear naval programme for Creswell involved complexities for Deakin arising in part from the balance of power and in part from his own uncertainty. For the three years in which Creswell championed destroyers, Deakin equivocated.

In November 1906, after vainly examining the possibilities of building vessels in Australia as the navalists had wildly suggested, Playford instructed Creswell to proceed with the modified destroyer scheme. For this the government was prepared to find £800,000, and apparently saw no reason for sustained delay. Soon after, Ewing sent two naval officers abroad to examine destroyer construction in Japan, the United States, and Great Britain. Their task was not merely to gain experience, but to decide upon appropriate designs for the craft Deakin had apparently approved. Faced with an overwhelming array of technical data, they turned to Sir George Clarke who, doubtless at Deakin's behest, introduced them to the most prominent naval architects of the day and was instrumental in gaining the services of Professor J.H. Biles, a member of all of Fisher's committees on design. Commissioned by Deakin as consultant engineer, Biles clarified specifications, chose suitable constructors, and helped design a vessel for coastal defence far in advance of any other in Great Britain. By
July 1907, Creswell had approval to call for tenders. Within a month the important service decisions had been made. In September a special naval appropriation was requested of parliament for £250,000, but the matter was not pressed. Creswell was at first apprehensive, and then furious. Months passed and yet Deakin made no decision. Worse, he had intimated that, when he did, he would not favour the destroyer scheme. To save face, Creswell informed the two shipbuilders, who were prepared to meet every Australian condition, that "political contingencies, mainly the passing of the new tariff, have prevented the Government's consideration of tenders".  

In June 1908, even while Creswell was still exhorting Ewing and Deakin to approve a destroyer scheme, the Coast Defence (Appropriation) Bill was hurried through both Houses. It was passed on the express understanding that the money would not be spent without prior parliamentary approval. This revealed the source of Creswell's frustration. Then, and on the previous occasion, there were sufficient numbers in the House to pass appropriation bills if the Prime Minister asserted his leadership. In the words of one keen Imperialist in the Opposition, the ministry had formally presented no "definite and workable scheme of naval construction". What the House, the naval officers, and other ministers required was a clear statement of policy from Deakin.

It failed to appear because Deakin was trying to reconcile four conflicting factors, each bearing some relation to his political difficulties and each an essential part of his grand design: a constant interest in port defence; uncertainty about the appropriate vessel; the demand for Commonwealth control; and the desire for integration into Imperial defence upon his own terms with the public support of the Admiralty.

While Creswell insisted that security, dignity and efficiency could be ensured only by a coastal force, Deakin believed that humble beginnings must be made with a naval extension to shore batteries. As long as raids were the main danger and the capitals clamoured for
evidence of protection, Deakin envisaged a force capable of operating out of the harbour mouth and, indeed, of meeting the determined enemy who at great expense had forced an entry. This was the position adopted in 1903 and stated with varying and misleading emphases from 1905. It reflected a constant concern with the cost of a larger force. It also suited well Deakin's political opponents who repeatedly argued that a naval posture involving radial port defence - so long as the vessels fell automatically to British command in war - would neither interfere with the Naval Agreement, nor encourage support for a force independent from the Royal Navy, nor duplicate the functions of the Imperial Squadron. Deakin differed from them in two respects: he desired a naval force capable of extension into some form of coastal service; he demanded Australian control. These basic aspects of policy had not been made patently clear to Australian naval officers - nor, it seems, discussed with them.

Unresolved problems of this kind were connected with uncertainty - and indeed a degree of indifference - about the choice of vessel. As Deakin admitted to Richard Jebb in 1908:

I am not competent to fix the exact craft to be selected and do not consider the matter essential ... 24

The public discussion of defences and possibilities of Creswell's scheme may have also led Deakin to doubt the virtue of the destroyer, and it is possible that he gradually, if dimly, realized that the defence of commerce called for cruisers. But he did not discuss the issue - or his misgivings - with his naval advisers. This was an abrogation of responsibility which he hoped the Admiralty would bear. 25

As statesman and Imperialist, Deakin was far more interested in the problem of control over whatever force was created. He hoped for a close association with the Royal Navy to ensure efficiency and unified direction in war without impeding the national character of the unit or sacrificing Commonwealth control over its money, men, and ships. To this end, he demanded complete Commonwealth control in peace. The offer of the Australian units in war was deemed a certainty. But the decision to
transfer that force to the Senior Naval Officer in the area for operations in Australian waters had to rest absolutely with the Commonwealth government; and for service beyond Australian waters express parliamentary approval would have to be sought. To substantiate this case Creswell had often invoked colonial practice under the Naval Defence Act of 1865.

The Admiralty was less interested in practice under this Act than in the legality of certain operations. Under International Law, its argument began, there was but one executive authority – the British government. Colonial naval forces posed three interrelated problems: strategic direction by the responsible authority; a common system of regulation and discipline to ensure the international status of colonial ships; and imperial control over any activity likely to involve the whole Empire in international difficulties. The Colonial Naval Defence Act provided simple solutions. Under the Act of 1865, the colonies had been empowered, in peacetime, to maintain and control vessels only for harbour defence and police duties under officers commissioned in the Royal Navy. For any project involving wider operations special Orders-in-Council had always been required. For service outside Australian waters the force had to be commanded by the Senior Naval Officer. Once war was declared, however, colonial vessels could not act independently of the Royal Navy – except perhaps in their limited role for harbour defence. There was a simpler solution anticipated by the Act, the Admiralty argued: the local naval force should fall under the complete control of the Commander-in-Chief of the Australian Station at the declaration of an emergency. Such had been the understanding when the Cerberus was purchased.

After confused and protracted correspondence reaching beyond 1911, solutions were found. Arrangements were made for immediate, complete but not necessarily automatic cooperation in war. Unity of strategic control was further ensured by the Admiralty when it appointed British officers senior to all Australians. Even so, it was understood that the Senior Naval Officer could not give orders for training or manoeuvres of Commonwealth vessels inside Australian waters. He would only request. Outside Australian waters his powers of command over ships was greater.
But a distinction was here drawn between command over a vessel and control of its men. His powers over the internal administration of an Australian ship were limited. The roles played by this Senior Naval Officer in peace and war, no less than the common ground of most regulations, ensured international status for Australian ships. The possibilities for international friction were minimized by the reduction of the Australian Stations — accepted as a working definition of Australian seas — to an area which excluded most foreign possessions, including German New Guinea.* Ultimately, then, Deakin's views — later extended by Hughes, elaborated by Pearce, and scrutinized by Creswell — were accommodated. 26

Much has been written about the impact of colonial control on Imperial affairs. Some commentators have not only seen this as a step towards the Statute of Westminster but have assumed that Deakin gained for Australia Dominion status in his negotiations with the Admiralty before June 1909. Such a view is grossly misleading. For there was an important relation between the type of vessel used for colonial service and the Imperial ramifications of the Colonial Naval Defence Act of 1865. Whatever interpretation is given to that legislation, the Admiralty had recommended — and the colonies could afford — ships of such limited capabilities that neither duality of control over the Crown's ships of war on the high seas nor international incidents were likely to occur. Provision for harbour defence and radial port defence did not raise major constitutional difficulties. Smaller torpedo craft raised no new problem; destroyers like the Swift could; cruisers would.

It was probably in this spirit that the Admiralty considered Deakin's unresolved difficulties when in April 1907 he appeared before the Colonial Conference seeking vindication of Australian naval ambitions and official support for his stand. For, although at first sight the Prime Minister's tactics appeared to have succeeded, the course suggested by Lord Tweedmouth, the First Lord of the Admiralty, involved a return to Imperial policy before 1887. 27

* See Map No. 2.
Fundamentally the British case rested on the assertion that responsibility for naval defence and foreign affairs could be neither divided nor shared: alone the British government would finance and direct the Royal Navy; alone it would formulate foreign policy.* No longer would the Admiralty keep on colonial stations vessels it could ill afford, train men it could not use, or request money it did not want. To gain unfettered control over its fighting ships, it was ready to see the end of the Naval Agreement. 28

Within that context each colony could take whatever steps it thought fit to satisfy the demands of security and sentiment: Canada could make no payment; the Cape could offer unconditional contributions; New Zealand could look upon payment as a subsidy; Newfoundland could raise a naval reserve; Australia, as it evidently wished, could provide its own local naval defence forces. Whatever the decision, the Admiralty was prepared to advise and assist. The initiative lay with each of the Prime Ministers.

At the Conference and in personal conversation with Sir John Fisher, Deakin learnt more about the Admiralty's proposal. Fisher frankly admitted that the restrictions placed on the Imperial Squadron were not worth the £240,000 paid under the Agreement. He wished to break up the Squadron and organize all effective fighting ships in the Pacific into a combined Eastern Squadron capable of operating wherever the Admiralty thought fit. To enliven Empire loyalty in the manner Deakin wished, he was prepared to allow the Eastern Squadron to visit British ports in

* There is some misunderstanding on this point. Campbell-Bannerman was clearly discouraging any idea of Imperial reorganization and dissociating his ministry from any concept related to Chamberlain's Imperialism. Quite without foundation, Deakin - and later commentators - believed that the words implied that once the Dominions bore some responsibility for regional naval defence, they would have won the right to share in the direction of foreign affairs.
the Pacific. Meanwhile, the Commonwealth could use the money it had previously contributed for its own purposes.

Referring explicitly to French practice, both Tweedmouth and Fisher recommended that Australia begin its naval force with submarines and torpedo craft. The Commonwealth was expected to apply uniformly to all states the naval policy adopted by Victoria since the sixties; Australians would tend to port defences while the Royal Navy swept the oceans. In detailed discussion this case was obliquely, but nonetheless effectively, explained. Deakin appeared highly gratified with this solution. In its localized operations the new Australian force, he felt, would protect both Australian and Imperial interests and shipping. In cooperative operations with British squadrons it would fulfil all the requirements of Imperial cooperation. Local defence, no matter what the instrument of war, would be both national and Imperial. And because he had gained the support he desired, Deakin accepted provisionally the Admiralty's suggestion that the submarine was the appropriate weapon for Australian conditions.

Whether, as Creswell was later to believe, the Prime Minister had been blinded by technical expertise and overawed by officials at the Admiralty, is not certain. There were, however, glaring contradictions between intent and achievement, between public justification and fact. Though the careful explanation of the British view of the Colonial Naval Defence Act should have revealed the function of the force proposed, Deakin accepted in good faith that the submarine and the lighter destroyer would provide both adequate coastal protection and the basis for the development of a coastal service. Later he claimed that the Admiralty had accepted the principle of local responsibility for all ports and commerce on Australian shores. Submarines could not achieve this. He also accepted the principle of Imperial cooperation. From Tweedmouth's comment that neither craft proposed could easily voyage overseas, he should have realized that cooperation would be virtually restricted to menial auxiliary operations with a British squadron in the unlikely position of remaining close to Australian shores. If Deakin did perceive these
If national schemes for coastal defence involved a policy "new to all the Dominions of the Empire", observed Deakin in 1907, the adoption of universal training would be "equally unprecedented under the British flag ...". Enthusiasts agreed, and found the prospect exciting. To dismiss voluntary recruitment as a relic of feudalism quite unsuited to a democratic society, to transform each man into a citizen-soldier, to equate the principle of one man—one vote with one automatic rifle, was to reject British example, repudiate colonial practice, and assert Australian egalitarianism. This, they felt, was not merely a venture into military reform. In universal training would be found a distinctively Australian military tradition. Through compulsory service the Commonwealth would pass from a collection of states to a nation in arms. Thus would the irresistible drive to nationhood, predicted by Quick and Garran at the turn of the century, be felt by each Australian family.

The attempt to engender in a new generation of Australians a military prowess, a civic virtue, and a sense of national unity absent in their fathers, was perhaps the greatest undertaking of federal parliament. At first a hostile opponent and then a zealous convert, Senator Pearce saw the arguments for military reform develop. As Minister for Defence in 1911, he was responsible for the implementation of the last of a bewildering array of schemes. The obligation to bear arms, he wrote in 1913, "constituted a gigantic revolution in the political, industrial, and social life of the Commonwealth ...". Yet, he added with mingled curiosity and relief, few such profound changes in the life of nations had "been effected with so little friction".

The success of that revolution owed much to the persistence of William Morris Hughes. From 1901 Hughes, as a private member, had presented to the House a series of motions calling for the adoption of compulsory training. At first he pleaded that Labour-democrat, Liberal-radical, and ultra-conservative, had they the eyes to see the world as he did, could agree to the principle; only Anglo-philic liberals, pacificists, socialists, the timid, and the foolish, were beyond the pale. At first he pleaded in vain. For unlike Creswell, he had not only to forge a
campaign but to create support — even within his own party. Four things stood in his favour: the tide of events in the Pacific and Europe; the sentiments his words could evoke from men of quite disparate political beliefs even while his arguments were being rejected; the private views of Alfred Deakin; and a passionate conviction that liberty, security, and survival could be achieved only through compulsion. It was that conviction which contributed most to his dogged advocacy.  

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English born, Hughes had served briefly in a volunteer battalion of the Royal Fusiliers, a unit recruited from lowly paid artisans, clerks, and teachers, of East London. That was the sum of his formal military experience but only the beginning of impressions which lent fire to his later speeches. After his arrival in Australia in the eighties, he wandered through South-Western Queensland as stone-breaker, boundary-rider, drover, and seaman. Eventually he settled in Sydney, married hastily below the level of his ambition, and struggled to make a living amid slums equal to any he knew in London. His experience of bush life held none of the romance of a Breaker Morant; it had engendered a deep respect for men who met a harsh environment and survived. Nor was there much romantic optimism in his impressions of the squalor and degradation of urban life. There men could rarely meet the challenge of their environment — and often refused to do so. It was this bitter fight for survival and betterment that impressed him deeply, a struggle in which the weak were not only oppressed by the strong but became victims of their own sloth and lethargy. His humanitarian concern for the plight of the working classes and his indignation at capitalist exploitation were to be tinged with suspicion that the corruption of the best ordered nations lay with the will of the people — or their lack of it. From this flowed an uneasy and ill-articulated fascination with natural laws from whose pitiless operations every individual carried
the seed of his own destruction and each society the choice between strength through self-sacrifice and decadence.

Initially these views were submerged in an enthusiasm for radical panaceas that promised the transformation of society. Hughes became a member of an informal discussion group of young radicals, who debated the issues raised by Mill, Spencer, Marx, and George. By temperament eclectic, he absorbed ideas rapidly and superficially as he led the lives of a journalist, law student, union leader, and Labour parliamentarian in New South Wales. In the rough world of Labour politics of the nineties, he prospered. Already emerging was Hughes the politician, a frail figure with an abundance of knotted energy, a mordant wit, a gift for invective, and the capacity for sweeping and biting rhetoric. Hughes, the democrat, challenged monopolies and oligarchies, championed universal suffrage, and defended freedom and liberty. Hughes, the improver, was becoming convinced that those who guided the state should intervene not merely to eradicate evils but to prevent people from the results of their own weaknesses and stupidity. He could forthrightly demand that "the strong arm of the State should interfere with the socially strong and the socially weak" to achieve better working conditions; he could also demand medical inspection before marriage lest children be born with feeble bodies, weak minds, creatures who became a "burden on the State" consuming more than they produce, often becoming "parasites, drunkards, and criminals" yet possessing the right to vote and in turn bringing "into the world a progeny still more degenerate".

Until he stood for the first federal elections, Hughes had little reason to relate his impressions of the role of the state and the needs of defence. Then, while the colonial contingents were being cheered to South Africa, he announced the substance of the case which he elaborated before the House during the ensuing years: if military policy was to be non-aggressive, democratic, and national, then complete security could be found only in a nation in arms. Between a standing army and a compulsorily trained citizen-soldiery there was no middle course. All the male population had therefore to be compelled to bear arms without pay as part of
their civic obligation to the state. Younger men had to be compelled to train for three months in every year until prowess with the rifle became "the national sport as archery used to be in England ...". So began Hughes' campaign for a "broad principle" from which he explicitly dissociated military and organizational details.

In each subsequent exposition, Hughes foresaw brooding and impending dangers to Australian society. A world far more sinister than any imagined by Creswell or Deakin justified radical military reform. Strife, not peace, was the substance of international affairs. War was no dread exception but the natural behaviour of nation-states compelled by unseen laws to expand and clash, struggle or decay. Australia was no exception. If at present she was prepared to adopt a peaceful and defensive posture, this was not only because men in their wisdom willed it so, but because the nation lacked the cause, the instrument, and the resources. Weak and divided yet invitingly wealthy, concerned with domestic reform yet arrogantly parading its immigration laws, Australia was at the moment a natural prey, not a predator. Invasion by European states greedy for empires or by the hordes to the North could therefore never be discounted. Nor could the decay and collapse of British might. The nation could suddenly be exposed to attacks that neither its unreliable volunteers nor its puny regular force would withstand.

External threats were matched by fear of internal weaknesses. Of all forms of government none was so abnormal, Hughes warned, "none so unstable, none so evanescent, as democracy itself". The only solid base was a sturdy yeomanry. But people flocked to the cities, bred, and remained. There men pursued ease and eschewed personal exertion, spent themselves in leisure and scorned self-improvement, sought diversion in spectator sports, drink, races and neglected their parental duties, benefited from the state and evaded civic duties, suffered ills from adulterated food to bubonic plague and remained politically apathetic. If restlessness and disobedience were rife even among those Australians whose vitality was legend, the bitter fruits of racial decadence were to be found in those "physical degenerates", the larrikins. The pushes
were not only "a positive danger to society" but a symptom of the cancer of sloth that was spreading "through every fibre of the social organism". Beyond the reach of the federal government and the normal powers of the state lay inert suffering that could not be ameliorated, a corruption that might not withstand the onslaught of a predatory power, and an instability that could be ill-used in times of political crisis.

None was more ready to exploit that instability than the officer caste produced by a standing army. There lay the gravest internal threat to liberty. Once the citizenry no longer bore personally the sacred duty of defence, he argued, they paid mercenaries who, like the condottieri of renaissance Italy, could sell themselves to the highest bidder. The standing army of modern times, whether conscript or volunteer, was no less militarist and no less a threat to democracy. Professional soldiers formed a class apart from society, as insolent and cruel as it was unproductive, as eager to pursue the glories of wars as it was ready to overawe civil government. Regular troops in their barracks were also a class apart, obedient tools which once trained to use weapons against external enemies were "quite ready, if required, to turn against citizens of their own country". And even if standing armies were not a threat in themselves, they were the "convenient, necessary, and often fearful instruments" of unscrupulous politicians. From ancient Greece to modern France history was strewn with the corpses of democracies crushed under the heels of military despots. Against Caesarism, whether manifest in a Sulla or a Napoleon III, a few responsible citizens were powerless. And the rabble, having spent themselves in pursuit of bread and circuses, were the first to submit and acclaim the new ruler.

From the outset Hughes found federalist defence defective on every count. Any system of voluntary recruitment was held to be inherently expensive and ineffective. Men left the service as soon as the martial glamour had disappeared. Those remaining were too few in number, drawn from restricted classes, and, in a sense, the mercenaries to whom Australians had delegated their sacred duty. The permanent military establishment was small enough to invite attack and large enough to
overawe civil government. Training was hampered by the rich, who wished no interference with business, politicians who claimed special privileges for their states, and men who thought of nothing but pleasure. Enforcement of the levy en masse would result in the creation of an armed rabble without discipline, organization, tradition, and leadership. Boers, said Hughes, might be model soldiers; they were also natural fighting men. Australians had been sapped by the sloth and degradation of urban life; for most the horse and the automatic rifle were equally mysterious. Worse, the scheme rested upon a blind faith in the might of Great Britain, a nation alone in the armed camp of Europe. To depend upon the Royal Navy and upon dishonourable alliances was to trust to chance in a world which demanded preparation for war to preserve the peace, a parade of strength to underwrite policy, and reform for survival in accord with the natural laws determining the fate of nations. The delegation of personal responsibility for defence, within Australia and within the Empire, hastened the process of racial degeneration.

There was but one solution - universal training. Only thus could the state reach into areas denied it by custom and the constitution. Service in short annual camps not only provided the necessary training for a defensive army but inculcated a sense of responsibility and obedience. Compulsory drills not only impressed upon the trainee the sacrifices of leisure necessary to meet the obligations of citizenship but evoked the manly dignity, a regard for the healthy body, clean habits, and sober manners, so indispensable to a healthy and stable democracy. Universal training was not only invaluable to the individual and to the state but, even should it fail to make country life more attractive, would develop sturdy virtues in urban dwellers. Without the evils of a conscript system which imposed the values of a standing army on a nation, the Commonwealth could then gather the numbers needed for its security, inculcate the civic virtues essential for its liberty, and regenerate its people in a manner so necessary for its survival.

As guardians of the state, parliamentarians had to override the
divisions within parties and the hostility of the electorates. Compulsion was unavoidable; the authority of legislators should be unquestionable; firm leadership was necessary. Challenged by members of his own party that he had no sanction for his stand, Hughes replied:

Are we to consider what is or what is not at the present time the sentimental desire of the people? 43

His reply to objections to the principle of compulsion was no less succinct:

No doubt compulsion in itself is very odious. Nothing can be said in its favour, except that without it civilization, peace, and the very many blessings which flow from it would be impossible. 44

The state compelled youths to be educated and adults to be inoculated. Did it have a lesser right in the sphere of defence?

No man ought to be compelled to do anything unless it is for the benefit of the community, himself, or his family. 45

Arguments couched in this fashion were initially quite ineffective. Sermons from the back benches were irrelevant to the major issues before the House. Hughes' diatribes on the evils of militarism during 1903 bore little relation to the removal of objectionable features from Forrest's legislation and Hutton's schemes undertaken by the radicals. Thereafter his campaign faltered and almost died. Yet three years later he was again to the fore and within another three was being congratulated by the Opposition for his prescience. He had found strange allies. For others had been as concerned about the relation between the armed forces and society, the individual and the state, and the moral fibre of nations under the stress of industrialization and urbanization. The years between 1905 and 1907 not only saw the confluence of a number of contemporary arguments but their assimilation into the nationalist vision. On the turbulent waves thus created Hughes sailed with ease, only half conscious of the diversity of sentiment which his words evoked. Universal training was an innovation for the Commonwealth, but it was not without precedent. Nor was it unique.
One stream flowed from the dramatic success of German arms in the Franco-Prussian war — and beyond. Earlier Prussian reformers had foreseen that the creation of mass armies more formidable, aggressive, and fervent than any of the eighteenth century would accompany the growth and modernization of European nations. There was a continuity not to be ignored between the levy en masse of revolutionary France, the clan of Napoleonic armies, and the dimensions of conflict in the American Civil War. They, and their successors, worked not merely to amass the numbers, but to link all classes to the state, tap and evoke patriotic fervour, and harness divisive tendencies through conscription. The defeat of France in 1871 was their military vindication and the uprisings in Paris a testimony of the social forces they had successfully channelled. By the nineties most European states had introduced universal military laws of varying rigidity, and polemicists extolled the success of experiments in the nation at arms. The British attitude was confused: pride in voluntary service was tempered with admiration for the military and industrial efficiency of Prussia. British and colonial officers studied the course of the conflict of 1870 as well as Marlborough's generalship at Blenheim. Reports on German military manoeuvres were obligatory reading. And for more than two decades all officers were examined on the battles of the American Civil War. The issues raised by voluntary service and compulsion, by professional forces and the nation in arms, were discussed sporadically in service journals, but left unresolved.

One answer was summarized by I.S. Bloch, a Warsaw banker, whose works were reviewed in the Bulletin, quoted in federal parliament, condensed in editorials of the Age. His study of European militarism and prophecy of future warfare was popularized by English liberals at the turn of the century because he argued that war was no longer an effective instrument of policy. Future conflicts, he predicted, would involve whole nations, all the potential of industry, mass armies, and modern weaponry. The scale
would be so vast and the magazine rifle so deadly that belligerents would vainly exhaust themselves in horrible stalemated battles. Australian radicals were less interested in this prophecy than in his description of European military castes and his prescription for military survival, and for the preservation of democracy. Given the advantages of defence over offence, a firm belief in the inherent strength of democratic societies, and the conviction that stirring qualities had only to be evoked, Bloch maintained that appropriate modifications of the Swiss military system suited best present and future needs. The resistance of the Boers, he later claimed, proved his point. Many Australians agreed. But, in the light of their hopes and fears, they drew diverse conclusions from European discussion.46

Faced with what was essentially a problem of manpower, Bevan Edwards had warned that some form of compulsory training might be essential after federation. The issue was broached from a different standpoint by George Dibbs at the federal conventions. C.C. Kingston had earlier contemplated a measure of universal service in his own state on the ground that in any democratic society the citizen who votes should be the soldier who defends. Concern for the Swiss experiments in government had led some federationists to consider the Swiss military system. And some Imperial federationists had recommended extravagant military schemes which involved conscript armies for home defence. At the formal level these separate suggestions were drawn together and resulted in the levy en masse with selective conscription in times of crisis considered by the Federal Military Conferences and covered by Forrest's Defence Bill of 1901.

At the informal level the issues were not so easily resolved. Dibbs had spoken for many of his fellow New South Welshmen when he urged that youths be compulsorily trained. Men above the age of eighteen were not to be affected but the young were to be moulded: compulsory education was to be extended to include vigorous physical education and drill. Once they had gained manhood, those with cadet experience would volunteer for service in militia units and provide both the enthusiastic recruits and the officer material so sadly lacking. After 1901 conservative Free-traders
continued to regard the compulsory training of cadets with favour. Thereafter Senator Dobson conducted in the Upper House a campaign no less vigorous than Hughes' to implement such a scheme. Initially some parliamentarians - first among them Senator Playford - objected to the interference of the Commonwealth in the education of youth since this was the province of the state governments. But support for Dobson increased after 1906. During the following year there was increasing pressure in the Senate for government action. Some of Hughes' arguments had been used there to effect. There were, however, significant differences in emphasis. The training of youth was held to be an adjunct of federalist schemes. Compulsory service therefore left the militia free to organize expeditionary forces. Australians would be transformed into efficient, obedient citizens and workers like those who contributed to the might of Germany.

Within the permanent military forces Major J.G. Legge had long been in part agreement. Australian defence, he had declared before the United Services Institute of New South Wales in 1899, "is bound up with the home life of the nation - if that nation decays in mankind so must home defences become ever more precarious". Like Hughes - who had clearly drawn heavily from this address - he assumed that sudden invasion was always possible and concluded that compulsory service for all males under twenty-five was essential for military survival. Like Hughes he also ranged from classical to modern times for his justifications and was clearly influenced by those publicists who saw the imminent decay of the British Empire writ large in the decline and fall of Rome. Unlike Hughes, he saw the problem primarily as a military one, the only remedy to the expense, inefficiency, and paucity of colonial units soon to be amalgamated by the federal government. At first Legge was a lone voice and when Hutton arrived, he fell silent. After 1905, with Hutton shuffled into retirement and the Japanese spectre evoked by the radical press, he returned to the public platform and, although despised by many of his colleagues as a revolutionary and ambitious - even foolhardy - officer, he was appointed to Head-Quarters Staff by Ewing early in 1907. As Bridges' assistant, he was in a position to champion universal service at a time when both Ewing and Deakin felt convinced that it was time for innovation. Soon after he became private
military secretary to the Minister and was responsible for drafting the Liberal ministry's universal military proposals of 1907–1908. Thereafter he prospered greatly.

From well before federation there had developed a large body of sentiment opposed to any element of compulsion and yet ready to entertain the concept of a nation in arms. The franc-tireurs of the Franco-Prussian War and the victory of the Boers in 1885 held more for many Australians than the successes of Prussia.48

Some Victorian radicals appear to have been as impressed by the National Guard of republican France. They wished to draw officers from all classes, make service in the ranks a prerequisite for promotion, establish control by unit committee in which each soldier had a voice, and extend the principle of the rifle clubs so that each commander could be elected to his position. They saw no reason, however, to make service compulsory. An appeal to a sense of duty would suffice. By 1906 a formidable array of politicians and members of the Australian Natives Association had formed a Victorian Division of the Australian National Defence League to introduce a voluntary and universal system of military training for all males between the ages of eighteen and forty-five. The example of new rifle companies to form a National Reserve would encourage enlistment in a system shorn of all vestiges of militarism and free from those elements of compulsion championed by Hughes and his friends in New South Wales. In November 1906 the Victorian League approached Alfred Deakin who commended the scheme to the Military Board; the Inspector-General, Brigadier-General Hoad, was led to believe the Prime Minister favoured the project. Certainly Deakin had told a delegation of the League that "whatever decision the Commonwealth might come to in regard to compulsory military service, it would ... be approached ... by trying voluntary service first...". Yet he had also warned the League that it "should not shrink from the idea of compulsory service ..."49 and privately informed others that he was "not in any way committed to the proposals"50 presented by the deputation. He was, nevertheless, impressed by the idea that the patriotism in each Australian had only to be quickened by the Commonwealth.
The lore of the bushman and the experience of the Labour movement suggested a different precedent for spontaneous military organizations. A partial and unexpected fulfilment of Thomson's prediction that Australians would improvise citizen armies to hold off the enemy from the interior came with the strikes of the nineties. The camps formed by the labouring and shearing unions in the outback took on a military air. There liberty and justice were fused with militancy and mateship. Strike committees were provoked into hurling martial defiance at the coastal cities. One union leader, W.G. Spence, claimed that, if the men wished to act like the communards of the bush, they could mobilize ten thousand armed horsemen and take possession of Australia within a week. Though these were flamboyant excesses in a tense situation, the press—and perhaps the strikers—were expected to take the possibilities of guerrilla warfare seriously. Spence and the Bulletin were among the first to join Hughes on his crusade.

With the arrival of the forces of law and order came talk of blood staining the wattle. The use of police and mounted rifle units not only emphasized further the element of class consciousness which had produced the strikers' improvised resistance but sharply posed the problems arising from the social composition of the citizen-soldiery. The resulting attitude to organized citizen forces was curiously ambivalent. Much of the strikers' indignation was directed at the special constables recruited from clerks, shop assistants, artisans, and labourers of the towns, many of whom also served in the citizen forces. Most regiments of mounted rifles used to scour the plains and break up urban demonstrations were drawn from the same social groups, from the yeomanry Hughes extolled, and often officered by men of commerce directly connected with pastoralists and land owners. Yet even in those units, and definitely in others, there were miners and workers who, the unionists felt, were sympathetic to their cause. The few permanent troops and the regular officers used by the state governments would, like their European counterparts, obey every instruction. The citizen-soldiery might patrol and obey most orders, but would they not fire high should conflict come? Except for a brief skirmish in Melbourne, the question was not answered. Blood did not stain the
wattle. Long after the event, the *Bulletin* continued to deplore clerks who adopted martial airs and pastoralist-soldiers who became the pets of the Government House set, and yet sprang to defend the citizen-soldiery from political sneers. And politicians dwelling upon the evils of militarism spoke of arrogant and plumèd cock-spurred roosters on horseback, yet praised the fighting calibre of the manly Australian. Military finery was equated with class privilege. Before 1901 two solutions were mentioned in the Labour movement, but never sharply posed: to extend the franchise so that all soldiers would be responsible citizens; to recruit the citizen-soldiery on the widest possible social basis. Within a decade the first had been achieved; during the Boer War improvised colonial units demonstrated the efficacy of the second. Just as Hughes wished to root out the weeds through military reform, others wished to knock the petals from the tall poppies.

Yet there was no impulse among Labour men to achieve one through the other, to make military service as compulsory as the duty of voting. Most of them believed after 1901 in defence by volunteer units, rifle clubs, and improvised armies. From the first session of federal parliament spokesmen made it plain that they had no wish to dwell upon the ruinous industrial struggles. One leading figure declared that his party's desire was "to do away with strife of this description". The aim was to knit and to better society under the Commonwealth, not to exacerbate its internal conflicts. Liberal radicals were therefore left to make explicit many oblique references and assert that a citizen army could not be easily used against strikers. It was in that general context that Hughes' expositions on the role of the state and the evils of militarism were doubtless interpreted. Yet no amount of heightened rhetoric could convince many Labour members that compulsion would not lead to Prussianism. From 1904 Watson and Hughes set about disarming this opposition. While Watson stressed that 80,000 trainees could be raised on far less than current military expenditure, Hughes argued that only a universal and compulsory system could give effect to the principle laid down by the Labour Conference of 1902 - that defence should rest with citizens. The rise of Japan in the Pacific provided a more telling argument. At the Conference of 1905
universal training gained increased support. Previously Senator Pearce had stood firmly against compulsion; now his advocacy was as forthright as Hughes'. Watson considered introducing a proposal for compulsory training nearer to the Swiss system than that suggested by the Melburnians — and informed Deakin of his intention. But opposition by a small group within his own party remained strong and was being only slowly eroded by elaborate fears of Asian invasion and the promise of innumerable other benefits from universal training. 52

The decisive influence upon Hughes' campaign came from within the British world. In 1905 — as fortune had it, soon after Japanese victory in the Pacific — the National Service League was formed in England under the leadership of Lord Roberts. Like many others, Roberts had been distressed at the performance of the British Army in South Africa. Privately convinced that it would be quickly shattered if pitted against an enemy on the Continent — and not, as public testimony seemed to indicate, because he feared German invasion of England — he advocated national service on a scale more rigorous than any contemplated in Australia. Though not aware of all of his reasons, wherever Roberts and his Conservative supporters were willing to go, many Australians were prepared to follow. Had not the hero of South Africa warned that the Royal Navy might not be equal to its task? Had he not used arguments somewhat like those of Hughes'? If military reform was demanded at the centre of Empire, was it not essential on the periphery?

First to act was Colonel G.R. Campbell, a citizen officer who lived in Moss Vale near the heart-land of conservative military opinion. He decided that an association should be formed, supported informally by the parent body in England, not identified with any political party, ready to awaken Australians to their dangers and their duty, and prepared to urge upon parliament appropriate adoptions of the Swiss system. To this end, he spoke with Hughes who satisfied him on two counts:

One was that he did not know what would become of our country and our people if the youth did not get some discipline instilled in them; the other that he was a staunch Imperialist, one who believed
in a United Empire, although he couldn't say that all members of his party held similar views. 53

As joint secretaries, they created the New South Wales Division of the Australian National Defence League and launched its periodical, the Call. Campbell managed to co-opt an imposing array of public dignitaries with a leavening of socially prominent citizen-soldiers under the presidency of Sir Normand MacLaurin, the Chancellor of the University of Sydney. Hughes toured country towns to establish branches by appealing to mayors and leading citizens. The tone of membership - and most contributions to the Call - was decidedly respectable and conservative.

Partly because of this the League never became popular. Instead of a net of branches there were only ever twenty-one. The Call sold at best 1,300 copies. Instead of the 10,000 members Hughes and Campbell envisaged, the League in its best years could claim only 1,600. The Military Board refused to allow the involvement of any member of the permanent forces; it further ruled that should citizen-soldiers join in their capacities as citizens, they would be held responsible for any views printed in the press. Despite the explicit programme of compulsory training which led to severe differences with its counterpart in Victoria, the League was neither firm in its purpose nor firmly supported by its members. By 1907 it found that it could accommodate conflicting views only by postponing compulsory service for adults and applying the system to youth in the hope of later extending the system. Moreover, there were militia officers who were not willing to see federalist defence - and their own regiments - swept away by radical reform. And there were more members who clung to the Naval Agreement and were disturbed at all navalist projects - Liberal and Labour. Most looked upon other measures of the Liberal-Labour alliance with suspicion and considered elements in Labour as a threat to property and society.

If the League failed as a pressure group it became an effective extra-parliamentary committee which wielded influence primarily because politicians themselves believed in one or another aspect of its cause. It asked individual members of parliament whether they were willing to
maintain the integrity of the British Empire, maintain a White Australia, make defence efficient by favouring a programme of compulsory training. Because of the absence of precise commitment the League and its counterpart in Victoria could claim substantial support from members of all parties, except Labour. From the Free-traders, George Reid and Sir William McMillan gave their vague blessing; from the Liberals, Ewing and Deakin indicated their tentative support; and from the Labour movement, Watson, Hughes, Pearce, and Holman were variously enthusiastic. It therefore continued to distribute its periodical to all politicians, report lists of converts, and scorn the apostates. Campbell became the watchdog of the innovators and established direct relations with the Prime Minister, his colleagues, and officers of the Defence Department. His function was to keep in the mind of legislators the need for prolonged training, evident in the Swiss system. On the inner committee of the League were journalists from the Bulletin, two successive editors from the Worker, and the Australian correspondent to The Times, A.W. Jose. The League's proposals were favoured by these influential newspapers and Jose became an important link between English Conservatives and the Australian campaigners. The remainder of the press was less impressed with the League than with Roberts' stature and the development of parliamentary discussion. They awaited definite proposals from the Prime Minister. Indeed the creation of editorial support and the most active phases of the Defence League followed, not preceded, Deakin's entry into the public campaign.

Perhaps the greatest contribution of the Defence League lay in the Call. There the arguments for universal training were far more sharply posed than in parliamentary debate or press editorials. There, also, universal training became a panacea for a great many Australian ills. Some implied that the federal leaders of Labour were the only men who understood fully the desire for a self-reliant Australia. Others replied that universal training would give Labour a national base, deprive it of its appeal to sectional interests, and temper its radical and socialistic tendencies. Apart from deterring the invader, it was argued, a mass citizen army would have to be financed by a direct land tax and thus land monopolies would be broken. A responsible citizenry produced by military
... universal training, the panacea for so many ills...

"MY TROUBLES."
A NEW SETTING TO A POPULAR PICTURE

from the Call, March 1910.
service, it was said, would tolerate none of the social evils so eloquently listed by Hughes — nor industrial strikes. All ethical objections were swept away on three general grounds: the fear of the Asiatic menace soon to be supplemented by the German challenge to British sea power; a belief that a laissez faire state was quite antipathetical to the ideal of a compact, coherent Australia wherein the extremes of wealth would be overcome not by civil discord and anarchy but through compulsory legislation of many kinds; and the conviction that the duty of defence, quite unlike the preparation for military aggression, was without blemish.

In September 1907 Hughes predicted that, as things stood, universal training would not become law before 1913. The end of both the Naval Agreement and the Anglo-Japanese Alliance would then presumably galvanize opinion where sustained campaigning had failed. If, however, Labour came to power — and the federal parliamentarians were given the leadership they deserved — the measure might well be passed sooner. Within three months of Hughes' assessment Deakin announced that universal training was an essential part of his government's defence policy. The Prime Minister's entry into the public campaign probably owed more to Hughes than he would admit. But his assumptions were often different and his proposals the result of more than two years careful deliberation. 54

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Pursuing the issues he had raised in his correspondence with Sir George Clarke, Deakin discussed universal training with Senator Playford in November 1906. Playford agreed that security against all possible enemies could be achieved by compulsorily training men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one. But he was adamant that the majority of Australians would reject such a plan because of the expense, the disruption of social and industrial life, and the radical break with British traditions. It was later reported in the press that only one man in the Cabinet opposed
universal training. Presumably that man was Playford. He lost his seat in the ensuing federal election and was replaced by Deakin's colleague, Ewing. Though there was apparently no longer opposition to the principle within Cabinet, other ministers doubtless continued to share Deakin's doubts about the financial barrier to innovation and felt, as he did, that Australians had been insufficiently prepared for it. 55

To overcome the latter, Deakin had, from late 1906, encouraged the Victorian League while maintaining correspondence with Campbell. He contemplated urging the amalgamation of the Leagues in the two states so that one policy could be pressed upon federal parliamentarians. Realizing that such a venture was impossible, he was content to see as much extra-parliamentary activity as possible in which vague proposals drew the most diverse support for some change in federalist defence. 56

One matter did, however, have to be resolved. The example of the democratic Swiss was being invoked in quite contradictory ways. To end controversy, Colonel Bridges, before his return from London where he had appeared before the Committee of Imperial Defence, was ordered to make a full report on the Swiss military system. Bridges' assessment was competent and impartial. He showed that the Swiss themselves wished to extend the limited period of training, especially the sixty days recruit training in the first year; he suggested that the cost in Australia would be far greater than any Swiss figures indicated, if only because the Commonwealth ought to pay its trainees militia rates; and he hinted that a similar scheme in Australia would be a vast undertaking, if only because Switzerland was a small country with a compact society. Nevertheless, the report made it clear that no system could resemble the Swiss unless there was a substantial period of compulsory training. It was presented to the House in October 1907, and distributed freely by the Defence Leagues, but was presented to Deakin well before then. By that time Major Legge was available to present further commentary. 57

Many of these developments, like Ewing's lone and sudden conversion in the House and like Dobson's increased agitation in the
Senate during the last quarter of 1907, were preparations for the announcement of a decision Deakin apparently made in London earlier that year.

There was no hint of universal training in the military discussions at the Imperial Conference. Indeed Haldane, the Minister of State for War, who conducted those discussions with tact and skill, was steering the Territorial Bill through Commons. It is therefore improbable that the issue was broached by any member of Campbell-Bannerman's ministry. The value of Haldane's contribution lay elsewhere. 58

He readily dismissed any idea of a formal Imperial Reserve, arguing that the laws and the people of Greater Britain neither allowed nor tolerated prior military commitments and a disruption of their citizen forces. Yet this clear reversal of Chamberlain's attitude brought the Army Council and the War Office close to the position advocated vainly by Hutton several years earlier. Without seeming to question the tenets of colonial nationalism, Haldane dwelt upon the Peninsular Wars and the experience in South Africa, and predicted that the Empire might again call upon its citizen-soldiery in a supreme emergency. Cooperation could be effective only if the Dominion forces followed the pattern of armaments and organization of the British Territorials. Local military legislation, he suggested, could be amended in accord with the Territorial Bill which allowed the commanding officers of militia units, on consultation with the Crown's representatives, to offer all or part of their force for overseas service. In this way it would be possible to assess the military resources of the Empire available for concentration without any form of commitment. Each Dominion could consider these principles in the light of its own policy.

However, Haldane urgently recommended the creation of an Imperial General Staff with sections in each of the Dominions. This was to be a purely advisory body allowing for the interchange of staff officers and dissemination of military information. Command was not one of its functions but uniformity and cohesion, with sufficient latitude for
national differences, was its express aim. Effective local defence would be the first result; the creation of forces capable of cooperation the second. While preserving the freedom of independence of both Great Britain and the British Dominions, which Campbell-Bannerman had announced as the foundation of his Imperial policy,

... the Empire would be defended as no other nation in the world is defended, because its resources would be available from so many quarters. 59

Deakin felt that Haldane's case met his requirements. Before the Conference he had considered the formation of an elite Imperial Reserve without disfavour. Hoad, Bridges, and the Military Board, had forthrightly opposed that suggestion. There might be no insuperable barriers to its implementation, they had argued, but it did not fall within parliament's concept of military policy. It was far wiser for the government to set its own defence policy in order before indulging in exotic schemes. Without demur the Prime Minister had accepted these arguments. Now in the Imperial General Staff he saw a better instrument to the same end: the development of Australian military forces under Commonwealth control integrated into a permissive and consultative system of Imperial defence. 60

While in London the Prime Minister discovered more than the means of tempering the excesses of colonial nationalism. He saw clearly another strand of British policy which justified instituting military preparations. The period of aggrandizement was over. On one occasion he declared:

What was the British Empire today? It was an Empire upon whose banner and beneath whose shield was written the word peace. No one suspected it of aggressive designs on any people of the world. But everyone realized that no one had more to lose, no one had more to protect, no one had more to retain than the British Empire. 61

The Australian desire for peaceful and non-provocative policies was now matched by a similar temper in Great Britain. At the same time he acknowledged that the common dangers might become so intense that
continued passivity would be unmanly. There reached a point in the affairs of men when force had to be met with force. The British nation was usually sober, placable, and reasonable. Once consciences were stirred all foreign states would stand in fear.

Also expanding his views in London was Hughes. As a Labour administrator from one of the most free and democratic nations in the world ready to denounce Liberals, Fabians, and Labourites in Great Britain, he was invited by Roberts to address the National Service League. This he did with characteristic vigour, stressing that the degradation of race was more apparent in the heartland of Empire than on the frontier. His audience was moved. Roberts commended him as a radical with a rare sense of civic responsibility and national vision, while The Times began to wonder where England would find such a leader brimming with the sacred fire to stir the masses.

Shortly afterwards Deakin was asked to address the same body. Already feted by the Conservatives, and praised in The Times as the finest Imperialist of them all, Deakin was to appear on the same platform as Roberts, Milner, Brassey, Northcliffe, and other leading figures. Doubtless, he was aware of the ovation given to Hughes. Doubtless, he felt that his performance could be no less striking. In any event, he made his first unequivocal public declaration in favour of compulsory training. Only one barrier stood, he said, between Australians and their desire for universal service - the cost. Deakin left for Australia, a man committed.

On his return, and during a long recuperation from serious illness, he surveyed all aspects of policy in the light of his experience in London. It was at this stage that consultation with Ewing revealed the deficiencies in federalist defence. Two courses of action were open to Deakin. If he was to make Hutton's scheme effective, to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Imperial Defence, to launch an extensive plan for the interchange of officers, to establish the Australian Section of the Imperial General Staff, and to develop a cadet scheme, much more would have to be spent. Alternatively, the same funds could be
spent on the creation of a new citizen army. It was then that recommenda-
tions of both Ewing and Legge seemed to promise the introduction of a mild
form of universal training for about £1,000,000 annually. Out of this
came positive plans for the National Guard.

Thus it was that Hughes acted as a catalyst — and then only one
of many — in Deakin's procedure for defining a national defence policy.
Many views these two men held in common, though not with the same
intensity. There were also as many differences in their assumptions as
there had been in their political styles.

Though possessing as much faith in legislation and legislators
as Hughes, Deakin conceived the role of the state in other terms. His
beliefs reflected complexities that no Labour leader had yet been required
to face and problems rooted deep in the federation movement that Liberals
found difficult to resolve. Society, he assumed, not only existed
independently of the state but did so in a robust and healthy fashion
performing separate and effective functions which rarely warranted govern-
ment interference. Injustices had certainly to be removed and opportunities
opened to all, but to achieve this men had only to exercise their con-
sciences and their wills. A man had a right to judge what was of benefit
for himself, his family, and the community. The sentimental desire of
people was of the first importance. To that degree parliament was not
Burke's deliberative assembly concerned only with the national interest
but rather Mill's committee of grievances and congress of opinions. Men
might err; but because they could be enlightened they were not lost.
They might have to be reminded of their dignity and their duty, but not
indoctrinated. To that degree the statesman's task was to suggest rather
than prescribe, to convince rather than convert, to persuade rather than
compel.

Deakin was careful to act on these precepts. Accordingly, on
receiving Clarke's assessment that external dangers could not be used for
a decade to justify military reform, he set great store by the extension
of the cadet movement. The cadet corps — and even the rifle companies
suggested by the Victorian Defence League - would become the schools of civic virtue and its graduates the exemplars of the military tradition possible in an egalitarian society. As increasing numbers passed through the system and more families became convinced of the benefits derived from military service, so a self-educated electorate would be created to support universal training when the dangers might be graver and the resources of the Commonwealth more plenteous. Previous conversations with Clarke had apparently convinced him that military institutions of the kind contemplated reached deep into a society and were profoundly affected by its values and development. To approach the problem in this manner was to await the gradual elevation of the community through other legislation and the acceptance of defence as personal duty.

But there was neither world enough nor time for such an experiment. From the outset strong influences were compelling Deakin to accept the element of compulsion Hughes had championed. Genuine unease about future security, a desire to complete a national defence scheme, pressure from various quarters for decision, the appeal of popular social-Darwinian thought, and the Prime Minister's failing health all undoubtedly played their part. But Deakin was conscious of two other problems. As the instrument of nation-building parliament had an essential deliberative role that was being continually ignored and often directly thwarted by the attitude of state governments and the indifference of the electorate. Soon the limits of those national policies which could be legitimately pursued while respecting the federal structure of the constitution would be reached. Yet a sense of national unity seemed ever distant. Moreover, the prophets who had foretold internal divisions within society, factious strife, and the eventual paralysis of government seemed too close to their vindication. The major difficulty to face the Commonwealth, two such prophets had declared at the turn of the century, was not merely "registering popular will, but organising and guiding it". Only by firm measures presented by strong leaders so that the community expressed an opinion on "the direction of progress ... on general policy and not single questions ..." would men be induced to "subordinate their class
prejudices to the general welfare"\textsuperscript{65} and thus be saved from their anti-social tendencies. Only by coherent and large political organizations could the process of government be stabilized in the two-party system.

Deakin was caught between the partial fulfilment of these predictions and an abhorrence of tight organization of the Labour Party. With the number of his own followers dwindling, the parties and factions in the House seemed to be increasing and the prospect of a stable two-party system as distant as national unity. Yet the divisive forces in Australian society which exacerbated the problem seemed to grow apace. Could a degree of social — even political — cohesion be achieved through compulsory service without damaging the Liberal polity he valued? In far more general terms Deakin had evidently discussed these issues with Clarke before 1905 and he was to touch upon them in each of his later speeches. The emphasis was often cloaked in flowing rhetoric, but the notes he prepared for his speeches clearly indicated his concern. The following phrases "Universal Training — Make for solidarity and unity — No distinction class or calling — Not National unless Universal — Australia one and indivisible"\textsuperscript{66} were the ingredients of a case that Ewing put more bluntly:

It is claimed by some opponents of universal training that Australia is in no danger, and that there is no justification for serious preparation. In my opinion, they have signally failed to read the sign of the times. But the beneficial physical results consequent upon even a brief period of training on our young men, the advantages of discipline, and a period of control, and the stimulation of broad sentiments of national responsibility working towards the gradual obliteration of local jealousies and class prejudices, are in themselves worth more than the proposed cost to our young Commonwealth. \textsuperscript{67}

Once in power and faced with similar problems, Pearce and Hughes were to echo this declaration. The regeneration of race was a long-term and visionary aim. The use of the military forces as an agency for nation-building promised the amelioration of practical political problems.

To Ewing's list Deakin, from his first public declaration in
London, had added a sharpened awareness of Imperial responsibilities. In stressing the new unity of Empire he had called upon all members to provide mutual defence; in accepting the principle of the Imperial General Staff he claimed to be considering local problems in the broadest national context; in emphasizing that Great Britain would pursue essentially defensive policies he probably realized that the spirit of 1899 could be the more easily evoked during the next emergency. Yet universal training — unlike Hutton's Field Force or the British Territorials — carried its own restraints. Compulsorily trained members of the National Guard would doubtless grasp their duty to both King and country. They could not easily be sent overseas. Nor could they easily be organized into an expeditionary force. Though Deakin did not have to face this problem, the general lines of his policy were clear. In Australia he stressed that the new citizen army would be only for home defence, always under unquestioned parliamentary control. In dealings with Whitehall, while refusing to make any specific commitment, he was prepared to contemplate the machinery for rapid induction into Imperial service. He would have been willing to see plans laid for an Australian Expeditionary Force composed of volunteers drawn from the National Guard.

In this he differed from Hughes, not so much in principle as in his readiness to admit that the Commonwealth had Imperial military commitments. Consistently from 1901 — and with special emphasis for Roberts in 1907 — Hughes argued that he stood for sane imperialism. To preserve the integrity of the Empire each member had to defend itself and leave all offensive operations to the British forces. The Commonwealth had therefore only to render itself invulnerable. With home defence the duty of the compulsorily trained citizens ceased. The Empire that depended upon pressed troops would soon crumble. No man should be compelled to fight on foreign soil. Indeed had Hughes expounded any other view in public he would have been repudiated by his colleagues. For they envisaged defending Australia as if it were some isolated and besieged garrison — a view that Deakin strove to counter.

But there consideration of Hughes' campaign cannot rest. For
On the 13th of December 1907, in the dying hours of a parliament awaiting the Christmas recess, Deakin felt the time was ripe to announce his policy. Its elaboration involved a sweeping review of Australian defences from the eighties to the deliberations at the recent Imperial Conference. Its justifications were a skilful blend of personal convictions and the arguments of others. Its many features had been derived from as many sources. Yet before the Prime Minister arose to address a dwindling House, few outside the ministry knew its final form. It was an amalgam which Deakin and Ewing had privately produced and for which they were jointly responsible.\(^7^1\)

There were three key notes. Imperial responsibilities were to be met but always to Australian advantage. The problems that had confronted both colonial premiers and Australian federationists were to be settled by experimental policies, national in scale and impact. All defence preparations, while ensuring a measure of military autarky, were for conflict on no larger a scale than "a war of resistance".\(^7^2\)

Deakin admitted failure in arriving at any arrangement acceptable to both nation and Empire by which Australia could help maintain its first line of defence — the Royal Navy. He promised to continue the search for "a constitutional means of Imperial cooperation".\(^7^3\) But he was far from despair. Had not Campbell-Bannerman implied that once the Commonwealth shared in naval defence it could share also in the direction of foreign affairs? Had not Lord Tweedmouth admitted that the Admiralty was willing to take in kind what had previously been paid in hard cash? Could not, then, the contribution of men and resources lead the reorganization of Empire and radical changes in Imperial defence? Though lightly touched upon, this issue ran like a crimson thread through all aspects of the Prime Minister's naval proposals.

As a means of furthering local naval defence and ensuring an appropriate measure of Imperial cooperation, revision of the Naval Agreement was commended to the House. The Admiralty, Deakin informed the wary, wanted an end to existing arrangements. During discussions in
London, he misinformed his supporters, the ground had been carefully prepared for amendment. Instead of the odious cash contribution, the Commonwealth could spend most of its annual grant of £200,000 on training more men than were engaged in the Imperial Squadron and all of the naval militia. The Admiralty's role was to provide four light cruisers. The Australians who manned them were to be kept in local waters during peace or war. So, inferentially, would the vessels. This was not, however, to be the realization of a host of outmoded navalist programmes. The cruisers would patrol the coasts and police Australian interests in the South-Western Pacific; they would be the drill ships for the new navy; they might even serve as flotilla leaders. 74

For the Commonwealth Naval Forces were to be reorganized on national lines. Six submarines and six Coastal destroyers would be purchased and distributed to each of the capitals. Though by then uneasy about the submarine, Deakin conjured up vivid pictures of their threat to the enemy from the deep. And though he had fully grasped their localized role for radial port defence, he felt the submarine to be the only vessel the Commonwealth could afford within the ensuing five years. After that a coastal service might be extended on the basis provided by the submarine flotillas. He was also ready to meet the objection that any local navy would become land-locked, isolated, and inefficient. For he had discovered the means of tempering the attitude of the "little Australians".

By combining the experience of the Australians in the Imperial Squadron who were sent to England with the offer of the British to send instructors and model crews for the submarine service, and doubtless remembering the principle of the Imperial General Staff, Deakin formulated his principle of interchangeability. Australian officers and ratings would serve on Australian vessels, then pass to the Royal Navy, and be replaced by Britishers. Higher training, promotion, experience, and the opportunities opened by an unimpeded flow of personnel between the colonial and the British service made for efficiency and cohesion. Local defence, said Deakin, was "Imperial defence at a particular spot, but none the less Imperial on that account". 75 For not only would the vessels protect
British interests in Australian ports and cooperate with British Squadrons, but they

... would fly the White Ensign with the Southern Cross, and be altogether Australian in cost and in political control, as to their movements and stations. In everything else, they would be part of the British Navy, the officers and men being simply seconded for fixed terms for service under our general control; but in every other respect indistinguishable from the men in the Imperial Squadrons here or elsewhere. 76

Deakin considered this his major contribution to both the navalist campaign and to the new Imperialism. He had privately informed Sir John Fisher that by such a scheme "... I feel we cannot do better to help you to combine Australian and Imperial Defence in one". 77

For the Prime Minister of Australia to adopt such a stand with a handful of submarines was doubtless considered the height of impudence in Whitehall. Yet there was an inference to be drawn from his exposition which was probably noted at the Admiralty for it paved the way for the naval policy of 1909. Deakin could not evidently foresee an occasion when the Australian force would not cooperate with the British or when it would not pass to British control. For if the Commonwealth wished to adopt an attitude of passive belligerency or a policy of cautious reserve such as that pursued by Barton in 1901, there would, as one interjector pointed out, be members of the Royal Navy in Australian waters who could not easily serve for the government which paid them. In dismissing this objection Deakin came close to admitting that British control would be automatic in war. Why, then, did he demand so energetically Commonwealth control? As a constitutional principle, as an assertion of national identity, as the only means to ensure that the vessels stayed within Australian waters where the populace wanted them - these reasons were clearly involved. There was another inference doubtless noted and rejected in Whitehall. To inaugurate an Imperial Naval Service was to convert the British Admiralty into an Imperial Naval Board. To possess the right to exercise separate control was to gain sufficient discretionary power for a voice in at least one Council of Empire. Campbell-Bannerman had slammed the
door on Chamberlain's Imperialism. Deakin acted as if the portals were loose on their hinges.

Military reform, Deakin admitted, was no less of an experiment in which it was best to aim high and watch the results.* Through universal training would arise the National Guard for Defence. To create the new army Hutton's forces were to be swept away. The old soldiers would become instructors of the young until the National Guard produced all its officers from the ranks. Selected for their initiative, tested by competitive examination, and bearing no stain of class, these new men would command in such a manner that "there will be no need to mention discipline." For youth would grow to full manhood in gigantic new schools of citizenship where "meretricious display, the glitter of goldlace, or the glamour of a separate caste" were cast aside for a simple devotion to duty. From the age of twelve until the age of twenty-six men would slowly be inducted into the new military organization. They would start as cadets learning the rudiments of drill from their teachers. For three years after the age of eighteen they would be taken to annual camps, where for eighteen days they would be introduced immediately to field tactics, special musketry, forced marches—only those matters which were absolutely necessary for war. Thereafter, men would be expected to give the equivalent of seven days service a year.

Within eight years the Commonwealth would command 214,000 men, each with a total of about forty-eight days field service, all physically fit for war, properly equipped, and organized into self-contained brigades. Within twenty years 750,000 Australians would have received military training. They might not be the soldiers of Prussia. It was hoped that they would not be tested in war. But were conflict to come they would

* Between 1907 and 1908 there were considerable changes to a number of proposals. Presented here are aspects as they were clearly explained for the first time. For a general picture of the various schemes, see Table E.
know enough, fighting defensively in the country with which they were
familiar, to have the advantage over the best trained troops in the world.

"It is on patriotic feeling we rely", declared Deakin. Indeed, this was so. No trainee was to be paid. His record-book might well be regarded as a passport to advancement if his employer followed the example of the state and federal governments. They would be asked to give preference to the successful citizen-soldier. Beyond that the National Guard would have to depend on the attractions of camp life, its competitive spirit, and the military fervour and active patriotism that would be evoked in the community. As a corollary to this permissiveness, in part forced upon him by having to keep cost to the minimum, Deakin was loath to impose punishment on trainees who avoided service - or the parents and employers who prevented them. A trainee could be shamed. He could be declared ineligible for employment by the state. He could lose the right to vote and to receive an invalid or old-age pension. But he could not be prosecuted. Moreover, the scheme would be applied to selected urban areas at first. It was to start with youths of eighteen. Only slowly would it be extended to other areas and other age groups. Still Deakin felt that a self-educated electorate would support more thorough measures later.

This, then, was the Prime Minister's personal solution to the problems he had set before Sir George Clarke more than two years earlier. The nationalist content was clear. Yet there was such preoccupation with fulfilling the original promises of the federation movement that Deakin was carried to a position not unlike that adopted by colonists in the eighties.

Certainly he had answered many of the questions posed by the federationists and discussed at the Colonial Conference of 1897. Local naval effort would be restricted within the appropriate "lines of defence" while cash contributions would no longer fetter the Admiralty or embarrass Australian ministries. Though neither naval vessels nor military units were expected to leave the country, naval personnel and military officers were to be freely interchanged. Schools of instruction in each state
would follow the introduction of long awaited uniform defence regulations and organizations. The standard weapon of the National Guard was to be the new short *Lee-Enfield* automatic rifle manufactured by a government plant near Sydney. Yet the spirit of military reform was closer to that championed by Kingston in the nineties than that advocated by the Federal Military Conferences. The functions of both the naval and military forces imposed by their character owed more to colonialist policy than to federalist schemes conceived by Forrest and Beaumont, Barton and Hutton. Despite Deakin's efforts to temper the raw nationalist content of campaigns conducted by Hughes and Creswell, neither the military nor the naval forces would add anything of value to Imperial defence. The Prime Minister stood with one foot pointing towards colonial self-reliance and the other foot raised as if to march towards the Imperial alliance, much extolled by Richard Jebb. Deakin lent more heavily on the first foot, and Jebb was quick to remind him of this awkward and undignified posture.

Deakin replied that he was laying "the seeds" for future policy, and not holding forth "the fruits". Small - and perhaps clearly deficient - beginnings had been forced upon him by limited resources. This was indeed manifest in the Prime Minister's programme. As with the destroyer scheme of 1906, he again took a three-year period for experimentation. The defence estimates for 1907-1908 stood at £1,400,000. Deakin calculated that to amend the Agreement, purchase submarines, and launch universal training, he would need to spend at most only £400,000 more annually. Beyond that limit he felt he could not plan.

The immediate fruits of Deakin's policy were neither submarines nor citizen-soldiers but controversy. Over two hundred thousand copies of his speech were prepared for free distribution during the parliamentary recess. He then awaited the response. Many men, less gentle than Jebb, denied that there had been any planning at all, and decided that the new policy was a defective amalgam of hasty compromises based upon advice insufficiently appreciated when it was not clearly misrepresented. They held that the Prime Minister had clearly failed as a substitute for the Council of Defence.
### TABLE A: The Swiss System prior 1908

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Universal Training for males 21-32 years.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Male Youths 10-19 years: Compulsory Gymnasium Voluntary Drill.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recruit Training at 21 years: 65 days Compulsory Service in Barracks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Line Troops 22-32 years: 7 days camp annually.</td>
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### TABLE B: British Territorial System 1908

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voluntary enlistment for males 17-35 years.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruit Training: 40 hours drill and instruction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Line Troops: 40 hours drill annually plus 8-15 days camp.</td>
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### TABLE C: Australian Militia System 1903-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voluntary enlistment for males 12-35 years.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cadet Training: 52 hours drill annually.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recruit Training: 24+ days drill and instruction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Line Troops: 16-20 days annually including 4-8 days camp.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Senior Cadet Training</td>
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<td>Elementary Drill</td>
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<td>52 hours drill 4 days camp</td>
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The first to erupt was Sir John Fisher. He would brook no plan which allowed the colonies to demand control over British vessels. No matter how high-minded Australian intentions might be Deakin's plan was fundamentally selfish and absolutely unacceptable. Admiralty memoranda discreetly avoided all mention of interchangeability and intimated that between the continuance of the Agreement and its complete abrogation there was no middle course. The British were prepared to consider the demand for Australian control sympathetically. But, in stressing the need for an efficient and localized submarine service, they pointed out that capital and maintenance costs would be far greater than the Prime Minister thought. Correspondence faltered from August 1908 and died. With that, hope for a clear announcement of naval policy faded. 82

The Australian response was no less unfavourable. Altogether unfeasible and thoroughly un-British, snorted the anti-navalist press. What right had Deakin to attack the Agreement in the name of the Australian people? Radial port defences may be required, but what right had the Commonwealth to demand unfettered control in war? Perhaps a naval policy was required for the future, but consider the jumble of proposals: the tin-pot squadron of cruiser-destroyers; the butter fleet of armed merchantmen; the spent fleet of scrapped British cruisers; the mosquito service of destroyers; and now, the porpoise school of submarines. What precisely was Deakin's naval programme? How would it reconcile all Australian demands? 83

Altogether impractical and clearly too British, decided the Age. Within the Defence Department Creswell expounded this proposition. Amid indignation lay telling criticisms. The strategic assumption for the naval force was the possibility of raids; the justification for universal training was the possibility of invasion. What was Deakin's defence policy? Membership of the projected Imperial Naval Service would mean
years away from home. Had Deakin begun to probe the difficulties of interchangeability? Submarines meant port defence and the "land-locked" force the ministry had deplored. The diversion of men, money, and skill to such specialized and unreliable vessels was no preparation for an Australian service capable of coastal patrols. There was no seed of a sea-going force here! Did he not see that the purchase of submarines would set back plans for a national coastal service at least twenty years? Creswell concluded that not only had "the Prime Minister pronounced against any Australian service as a separate unit ..." but he had suggested a scheme which would "practically repeat the first Naval Agreement". 84

"Deakinize the Haldane plan and what more is needed?" asked The Times. 85 A great deal, decided Colonel Bridges. Many of the fundamental political and strategic problems left undecided by previous ministries had been confused rather than resolved. Yet even within its own terms, the proposed military programme was foolish. The abolition of the permanent forces and the militia would lead to chaos and defencelessness! Better that they be left until the experiment succeeds. Better still that trainees be absorbed into existing units. Promotion from the ranks only by competitive examination was a folly! Examinations alone were "not a test of character, diligence, energy, power of command .... At most they show that candidates are fit for promotion". Schools of instruction were no substitute for a centralized military college. There was no better experience for officers than regimental responsibilities. Training under the universal system would be dangerously inadequate! The men would in no way be proficient. The officers would neither be expert nor familiar with the troops they were to lead. To make training obligatory and duty permissive might be wise for the leaders of a democratic country. But if the government wanted an effective force and persisted with universal service, it would have to prolong training and increase the powers of the state over individuals. It would also have to increase the power of the military over the trainee. "The maintenance of discipline under a compulsory system", warned Bridges, "will not be as easy as it is now when men join from love of soldiering and can leave if they find the work irksome." 86
Bridges' reservations were writ large by potential supporters and indignant opponents. Hughes, supported by Campbell and the Defence League, pronounced the programme hopelessly impractical, neither compulsory nor universal in design. The Swiss gave each recruit sixty-five days of intensive training before induction into a regiment. Unless Australians spent at least forty days in camp during the first year, Deakin's plan would fail. The men must be paid; then they can be compelled to give adequate service. George Reid condemned both the naval and military programmes as impractical and needless. So long as raids were the dangers facing Australians, neither was justified. Perhaps a decade hence innovation might be warranted. Until then, the only sensible step was to train youths below the age of eighteen. 87

The scope of Reid's argument owed something to conservative views in New South Wales, but more to the revolt of militia officers in the Field Force. At the insistence of radicals in his own ranks, Deakin took the unprecedented course of distributing his speech throughout the forces and inviting comment. More than two thousand officers - and a handful of men - accepted the invitation. Outside the long-established regiments there was little informed discussion of defence policy and less of the dangers facing Australia. There was instead a general feeling that the period of neglect had ended and that at last the citizen forces could begin to achieve the efficiency to which they had aspired. On this ground, almost all favoured universal training. Many, however, found it easier to share Bridges' doubts than Deakin's optimism. A drill sergeant put the matter bluntly:

It is all very well to talk of Patriotism - What is Patriotism nowadays? I will tell you. Patriotism in this age of business and sport, is dormant in everyday life, especially when you get nothing for it. It is deep down, and I think that only a great danger, or a national calamity, or a danger to our national existence would bring it to life. 88

Pay, gaudy uniforms, and perhaps even a greater measure of compulsion, this barrack-room realist decided, would be essential.
Officers of the leading militia units would have none of this reckless experimentation. They exposed all the weaknesses of Deakin's project and concluded that if £400,000 were to be found annually it could best be spent on making the existing forces efficient. Their arguments traversed the justifications for Hutton's military scheme which had been keenly discussed since 1896. The demand for an efficient military scheme capable of flexible response to local and Imperial dangers was as persuasive as a great faith in the spirit of voluntary recruitment. Yet their passions were not without the attitudes Deakin and Ewing deplored. Comparing the militia system with compulsory service, one officer declared:

The one embraces the flower of the physique of the nation - the willing defender of his country - and with military knowledge gained only by steadfast regimental association; the other - while also embracing men of good physique - includes the indifferent, the untameable, the larrrikin, filthy in both mind and body, the sometime gaol-bird and also - it must be admitted - the disaffected. 89

Their campaign was articulate and powerful. Organized protest failed in South Australia and Western Australia, faltered in Queensland, but flourished in the other states. There the Argus and the Daily Telegraph took up their cause. George Reid and Joseph Cook followed suit. Yet these officers were no less interested in nation-building through military service than Deakin. They continued to believe that security and honour could be had only by enriching the Field Force with new blood, by introducing universal training for youths as Reid suggested. Then sufficient recruits would voluntarily enlist in the militia to meet Australia's present and future needs. Fundamentally, however, they had no wish to be swallowed up in a mass army or to be cast aside. They made retention of their units a condition of quiescence - and the basis of further agitation. That condition Deakin and Ewing were compelled to meet in August 1908. 90

As the man partly responsible for the military scheme, Major Legge was under considerable pressure. Deakin and Ewing referred all criticism to him. Any extension of the existing system, Legge answered,
would involve at best a fortnight before effective mobilization. By then "the enemy's ships would have gone back for more troops, and what is happening to some of our people we can not bear to think". The Prime Minister and his colleague had publicly referred to the threat of alien rule. Whether they shared the alarmist picture of sack, rape, and pillage by coloured troops, whether they too expected the yellow bolt from the blue, was not clear. They did, however, expect him to resolve their difficulties. And Legge continued to urge compulsory service. The Age and the Sydney Morning Herald wanted training to cease at the age of eighteen and service thereafter to continue voluntarily in rifle clubs. This, said Legge, would result "in an immense assembly of schoolboys ... and a similar mob of willing riflemen", not an army. The Argus and the Daily Telegraph "dominated by their pocket experts who are wedded to the imperial ideas and prejudices" and now supported by George Reid, wanted a militia of 50,000 or more recruited from youthful trainees. That, decided Legge, would cost a fortune, perhaps £5,000,000 annually.\(^1\)

Yet even financial advisers were having second thoughts about cost. They estimated that should both the Admiralty and the militia officers be accommodated the estimates would soar beyond £2,000,000 annually. If the troops were to be paid, if all capital costs could be calculated, if training could not be carried out in improvised camps, the sum could be higher. Yet these doubts, so cautiously phrased, merely touched on the problem. As the militia officers had pointed out, there was nothing quite so Utopian as the belief that Australians could duplicate the Swiss effort for £1,400,000 a year. In 1904 the British had rejected a scheme of national service because an intake of 80,000 men annually would cost £6,000,000. Though less rigorous the Australian scheme would clearly be expensive. Indeed so it proved. In 1913 the Commonwealth had 160,000 men over the age of eighteen in arms. The military estimates stood at £3,400,000. Review of the scheme indicated that success might not be achieved for more than twice as much. If war had not intervened it may soon have become clear that the innovators had undertaken programmes too costly to sustain.\(^2\)
By October 1908 Deakin had considerable reason to feel uneasy. The naval programme had not been formulated. The military legislation had been withdrawn for reconsideration. The press, he felt, had failed to support him, with even those "papers ordinarily upholding the ministry standing aloof or complaining ...".93 A month later the Liberal government fell. Yet in his despondency, Deakin had underestimated his role as educator. The explosions of indignation which greeted his speech were the necessary preparation for more satisfactory policies arrived at two years later. True, his powers of manipulation ebbed, and then faded. But even as the formulation of policy fell to the Labour Party, his influence was being felt.

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Apart from the widespread support evoked for the principle of a local naval force and universal training - as distinct from their application advocated in December 1907 - Deakin had forced his non-Labour opponents into what proved an advantageous position. The hard core of resistance had been reduced to the Daily Telegraph, the Argus, and the Mercury - and the followers of George Reid and Joseph Cook. Yet even these were capable of a change of heart - and accommodation. Certainly they wanted a greater Imperial content to naval programmes and the blessings of the Admiralty just as they had in 1901. Certainly they wished to dilute the National Guard to a recruiting ground for the Field Force. But they rested their arguments on one premise: the British Navy would continue to maintain a two-power standard. Already there was evidence in the press to indicate that this was no longer tenable. They had also admitted that once danger to the Empire was clear many of their objections would be waived. That danger was soon to be seen.94

It was foreshadowed by the visit of the Great White Fleet in 1908. Only the staunchest Imperialist failed to be moved by the sight of sixteen American battleships steaming into Port Jackson and Port Phillip. For the first time Australians saw prime ships of war. Not for
many decades would they see them amassed in such strength. Deakin had invited the battle squadrons to sharpen awareness of Australian vulnerability in the Pacific, to demonstrate the need for Anglo-Saxon unity, and to stimulate public interest in his defence proposals. Discussion he aroused. The alarmists argued that the enemy might come as did the United States fleet. The anti-navalist press answered that, should that be the case, it would be best to rely on the Royal Navy whose might was greater than the Americans. Even if the strength of the Royal Navy were not in doubt, retorted the navalists, it was manifestly absent from Pacific waters. The battleship, declared Deakin, was the symbol of the independence to which Australian-Britons could aspire — if they began immediately with port and coastal defence. Others, observing the ships before them, wondered if submarines and destroyers would be sufficient. The debate over navalist aspirations and Australia's role in the Empire was intensified. And having glimpsed the possible dimensions of modern naval warfare, more Australians felt that they could not afford to create a force isolated from the Royal Navy. That conviction was shortly to influence the Labour Party. 95

Deakin's initiative had already compelled Labour to take a stand. In July 1908, a few months before Ewing was due to introduce the new military legislation to the House, the Triennial Conference of the party accepted the principle of universal training as a complement to its demand for a national naval force. Among the thirty-one delegates, however, there were ten dissentients who feared conscription at the hands of militarists and the despatch of Australians to foreign wars. Misgiving was more widespread than voting figures indicated. Many branches — particularly in Victoria — indicated their intention to rescind the measure. The hesitation of Labour's new leader, Andrew Fisher, reflected these reservations. He avoided public commitment and, although he became convinced that the introduction of a direct land tax to finance defence and social reform would make universal training feasible and even desirable, he insisted that Labour members who had joined the party before the conference were not bound by its decision. 96
The opportunity for the parliamentarians to translate principle into policy came in November 1908. Then Labour, under the leadership of Fisher and Hughes, took office for the second time. The alliance was over. In the sphere of defence, now directed by Senator Pearce, the party was freed from the Imperialist experimentation. It was eager to introduce its own nationalist defence programmes. It was not, however, free from the public discussion Deakin had evoked nor some of the difficulties he had encountered.

During the ensuing three months, Pearce prepared Labour's military legislation which would result in the new Citizen Army for home defence. It was based on the plan for the National Guard, drafted with Legge's assistance, and designed to remedy the faults in Deakin's proposal. All trainees were to be paid. All were to face stiff penalties or imprisonment for wanton neglect of duty. The period of training was almost doubled by supplementing annual camps with compulsory drills and parades to be held during weekends and evenings. All were legally obliged to forego leisure. Despite these changes, the scope of Labour's scheme was restricted. Pearce could not overcome three difficulties: cost, the attitude of the militia officers, and misgivings within the Labour movement. It was therefore decided that compulsory training should cease at the age of twenty-one. Thereafter, the Commonwealth would depend on the trainees who voluntarily enlisted to serve either in a special volunteer reserve or in a new citizen militia. The old citizen forces would be preserved in tact to provide the necessary regimental organization until they were gradually supplanted by the new. Hutton's Field Force was not to be swept away but gradually erased.97

In formulating its naval programme the second Labour ministry strove to avoid the blunders of the first. Fisher was due to announce his policy sometime in March 1909. There was considerable pressure upon him from within the Labour movement to assert that Australia's responsibility to the Empire would end with self-defence. Outside the movement, the issues Deakin had raised had suddenly been further disturbed by a growing
demand that the Commonwealth should give direct assistance to the Royal Navy to help meet the German naval challenge. Both Deakin and Cook, now the leaders of two other parties, had joined in the cry. There was an increasing need to scotch doubts about Labour's attitude to Imperial defence. For although some Labour members could afford to be truculent, Pearce and Hughes knew that they must not alienate the support at the coming federal election. They therefore proceeded with caution and turned not only to Creswell but the Governor-General. 98

In February 1909 Creswell responded with yet another series of memoranda calling for destroyer defence. Exposing each twist and turn in previous negotiations, he argued that only the destroyer scheme of 1906 would suit the posture Labour desired for the Commonwealth. The programme was ready; tenders from shipbuilders were at hand; and two colleagues were in England eager to act. Would Labour act where Deakin had faltered? Pearce decided it would. By 1912, Fisher later announced, Australia would possess a coastal service of four Ocean destroyers, nineteen destroyers of the Improved River Class, and a larger vessel for police work in the South-West Pacific. Local naval effort was no longer to be plagued by Deakin's impractical trappings or to be restricted to radial port defence.

Protracted deliberations with the Governor-General, Lord Dudley, settled the more contentious issues. It was quickly agreed that the Naval Agreement should neither be abrogated nor revised but must be allowed to run its course. It was also realized that the opposition might be disarmed and the support of some of Deakin's erstwhile followers ensured if the problem of control was solved. Despite minor objections raised by Hughes, the views of Dudley and Pearce prevailed. Australian control in peacetime was clarified and generally held to be the same as that allowed by the Colonial Naval Defence Act. In war, however, strategic control over the destroyer flotillas would pass to the Senior Naval Officer representing the British government on the Australian Station. This, Fisher later declared, was definite and unequivocal. The only proviso was that the ministry of the day - not parliament - should be consulted before Australian vessels were withdrawn to distant seas. Formally, then,
Labour was prepared to concede far more than Deakin. But Labour ministers were frankly disinterested in schemes of Imperial reorganization and were doubtless consoled by Creswell's assurance that destroyers were of little value for general service and would be taken from Australian waters only in the most exceptional circumstances.

Not only was Creswell heard with respect, Cabinet was willing to act swiftly on his advice. It was prepared to find the £2,600,000 for capital costs without once doubting his financial calculations. It was also ready, at his suggestion, to use immediately the £250,000 the Liberal ministry had put aside after passing the Coast Defence ( Appropriation) Act of 1908. Deakin had assured the House that the sum would not be expended without prior parliamentary approval. But Deakin had prevaricated; he had not defined a naval policy; his promises were not to shackle Labour. Neither Fisher, Hughes, nor Pearce were to be thwarted as Dawson had been in 1904. On the 5th of February 1909, one day after Creswell had submitted his first memorandum, the ministry decided to order three of the River Class destroyers and its naval representatives in London were instructed to renew, as soon as possible, the tenders with two shipbuilders Professor Biles had recommended.

A month was to elapse before the Colonial Office was officially informed, and yet another before the Admiralty was told of previous decisions and future programmes. When the H.M.A.S. Parramatta and Yarra arrived in Australia during 1910, members of the second Labour ministry could, therefore, take pride in the fact that they had ordered the first vessels of the Australian navy.

For all that, the union between more sophisticated parliamentary navalists and well-prepared naval expert was only one degree more fruitful than in 1904. Andrew Fisher announced his policy in March 1909. One month later Deakin and Cook at the head of a Fusion Ministry forced Labour from office. None of its legislation was presented to the House. Only the order for the three destroyers stood
untouched, not as a precursor to policies of the Imperial alliance yet to come, but as a reminder of the garrison mentality which, through fear and parsimony, had dominated the nationalist era. If Creswell had been allowed to proceed with his destroyer programme, the paternity of the Australian navy would have definitely been established. But that force still would not have been the Royal Australian Navy of 1914.
PART FOUR

IMPERIALIST DEFENCE POLICY: THE TACIT ALLIANCE

(1909 and After)

(In) Australia ... there is not merely a compatibility, but even a causal connection between nationalism and Imperialism ...

RICHARD JEBB, 1905.

From the theoretical naval and military stand-point, it is argued that any system of divided control is unsound. On the other hand, to give up control is to surrender the principle of local autonomy .... Wise statesmen will, however, recognize that national sentiment, after all, is a more potent cement than written agreements drawn up by naval and military strategists.

SENATOR PEARCE, May 1914.

Australians will stand beside the mother country to help and defend her to our last man and our last shilling.

ANDREW FISHER, July 1914.
More than a decade of discussion had failed to produce an acceptable Imperial dimension in Australian policy. The federalist solution had been rejected by the innovators. Yet they in turn had not met the complex requirements of security and sentiment. The nationalist era ended with incomplete projects and unfulfilled aspirations. Then in 1909 it suddenly seemed possible to resolve all major difficulties.

The first half of the year saw the stimulation and the consolidation of Imperial sentiment. The second half witnessed the reshaping of previous schemes and their integration into a new concept of Imperial defence. Further appeal to Whitehall produced promises and plans which assumed that the demand for nation impregnability and the desire for Imperial autarky were not merely co-existent but reciprocal. The results pleased Deakin, satisfied Bridges, and delighted Creswell. They won the approval of Cook and Reid, their followers and supporters. They were at first reluctantly accepted by Fisher, Pearce, and Hughes; and within a year were being championed as if they were the sole product of the Labour Party. Though some time was to pass before decisions were translated into detailed projects, the deliberations of 1909 resulted in policies which most Australians acknowledged met the demands of nation and Empire.

With the acquisition of the fleet unit suggested by Sir John Fisher and the creation of the National Citizen Force along the lines approved by Lord Kitchener, the Commonwealth possessed the trappings of a nation-state within Greater Britain. Henceforward, it could assume responsibilities for regional — not merely local — defence. Because the fleet unit included a battle-cruiser of use only when operating with the Royal Navy on the high seas and because the new army was to provide the men and material for an expeditionary force that would become "as an instrument of policy",¹ the relation between Australia and Great Britain became that of an alliance. Henceforward, its naval posture would be one of active cooperation and its military potential would be sufficient to follow suit. Because Australians continued to demand control over their
forces in peacetime and because they still feared catastrophe in the Pacific as well as danger from the European enemies of the Crown, few formal arrangements were made. Henceforward, the policy of the Commonwealth on the outbreak of war would be one of active belligerency but the degree of military commitment, it was said, would depend on the circumstances. Lord Esher acknowledged the new stance in 1911. "The Empire", he said, "is not a federation, but an alliance between greater and lesser States based upon understandings not so clearly defined as those which exist between some States in Europe."²

Yet the very forces which compelled prudent restraint in peace could lead to fervent commitment in war. Germans did not aid Austrians nor Frenchmen respond to Russians as Australians joined the British in 1914. By then Australian aspirations and Imperial sentiment had become so fused that the British cause became for many a national crusade. By then the Commonwealth had ships and men in excess of its needs for security in the Pacific. They were willingly used in the European maelstrom. If 1899 was the exception to colonial policy, 1914 saw the fulfilment of the decisions of 1909 and all the impulses which preceded them.
CHAPTER ELEVEN

IMPERIAL PARTNERSHIP: PLANS AND PROMISES

... (It) is difficult to conceive any circumstances under which an overseas Dominion would not feel called upon to throw in its lot entirely with the Mother Country .... It might possibly be that a war would be unpopular in a given Dominion for a short period, but let the Empire, or any portion of the Empire, be seriously threatened, and I am sure the revulsion of feeling would be very great indeed.

COLONEL FOXTON, 1909.

... (We) accept the position that the burden of defence must in the future be borne, not by part, but by whole Empire ... We accept the position that a fuller Imperial partnership, particularly in regard to defence, is indispensable to the future security of the Imperial fabric .... (We) will provide an expeditionary force for immediate despatch overseas or elsewhere whenever the Government of the day feel themselves under an obligation.

JOSEPH COOK, 1909.

... (We) are in the unique position of being a nation within a nation .... a country with a separate navy .... (But) while the Navy that we are establishing shall be, in some respects, separate from the British Navy, it shall at the same time be auxiliary to that Navy .... All ships shall be kept ready for any emergency .... Whatever wars the Empire may become involved in, we shall be involved also. If those wars be of a naval character, we shall be directly concerned in them, even though we may have done nothing to bring them about ...

SENATOR PEARCE, 1910.
The coalition of remnant Liberal and the Free-trader groups resulted not only in the Fusion government of May 1909 and the fall of the second Labour ministry. It produced two strong parties in the House and martialed the numbers to pass legislation with ease until April 1910. It also assembled Imperialists of the most diverse kinds behind Alfred Deakin. Those who had criticized nationalist defence were now aligned with its key exponent.

The elimination of the "little Australians" from power had been effected amid a burst of Imperial fervour not unlike that of 1899. For more than two decades Australians had been assured that the Royal Navy would always maintain sufficient battle strength to engage any two of its most powerful adversaries. In Opposition, Deakin's present allies had often pointed to the two-power standard not realizing what a shibboleth it had become. Naval rivalry had not merely increased; it had been transformed. The appearance of Fisher's Dreadnought battleship in 1906 had rendered obsolescent all previously built capital ships. All naval powers had only to build the same class of vessel, ship for ship with the British, to rival the fighting capacity of the Royal Navy. After a pause of eighteen months to absorb the implications of the new design, Germany did so. By 1909 mistaken assessments in the Admiralty indicated that within the immediate future Great Britain could claim less than a ratio of five to four against one naval rival. Other figures, produced in the House of Commons by the British Conservatives, suggested British sea power would be eclipsed before 1913. A campaign that began with an attack on the restricted naval programme of Asquith's Liberal government ended in furore when the two-power standard was officially abandoned. Though British opinion was divided, the effect was equal to that felt by the world when Russia exploded her first atomic device. The grim fact, clear for all Australians to see, was that Britain no longer possessed a monopoly of naval might. 3

On the 19th of March 1909 the Age sounded the alarm. It
reduced the issues to three. The Empire and Australia were in deadly peril. Future navalist projects would include not only measures for local defence but a force capable of positive "assistance to the Empire in time of emergency ...". In the meantime, since Great Britain needed Dreadnoughts to meet the German challenge, Australians must provide them. Within a week the rest of the daily press expounded the arguments of the British Conservatives with increasing excitement and hurled cries of "Imperial Defiance in Imperial Defence" at the world. Civic meetings in all capitals passed resolutions favouring the gift of battleships to the Motherland. Each donation was reported in the press which urged Australians to greater sacrifice. The Dreadnought scare was under way.

Deakin and Cook applauded these spontaneous outbursts of loyalty. By the 22nd of March Deakin supported the movement; on the same day Cook promised a Dreadnought for Great Britain if ever he was returned to office. This emphasized the political content of the campaign which had from the outset been manipulated partly to expose Labour's wanton neglect of Imperial responsibilities. Fisher was called upon by the press to contribute a battleship in the name of the Commonwealth as New Zealand had done. He accepted instead Creswell's scheme and arranged for Australian representation at the Imperial Defence Conference the British government felt compelled to convene. At this, the premiers of New South Wales and Victoria - in addition to other brave resolutions - promised to provide a battleship should the federal government fail its manifest Imperial duty. The agitation continued without relief until Asquith's government withstood a vote of no-confidence on its naval programme with an overwhelming majority. Then, as one contemporary observed, "... something of a chill fell upon the movement ..." and many began to ask whether they had been encouraged to take part in "a political coup de theatre". Of the millions promised for one, two, and often it seemed three Dreadnoughts, only a little more than £100,000 was collected. The Dreadnought scare was over.

It had been more than mere melodrama. On reflection C.E.W. Bean felt that the quiet and inscrutable Australian had responded like a wild
BULL: "HERE ARE THE GIFTS OF OUR OVER-SEA COLONIES. A DREADNOUGHT FROM AUSTRALIA, CANADA, NEW ZEALAND, SOUTH AFRICA, AND INDIA."

ANNIA: "GOD BLESS MY SONS!"
bull "nostrils wide, at the first scent of danger". Beneath the "superficial political squabble" he believed that silent body of men and women who constituted the heart of the nation had fulfilled the prophecy made by George Reid at the Jubilee Celebrations. Others noted the same quickening of nationalist sentiment amid Imperial fervour that had marked Commonwealth participation in the South African War. Senator Pearce felt that the principal consequence of the crisis had been not so much the rallying of support for a greater Royal Navy under British control but the "solidifying opinion in favour of an Australian-owned and controlled Navy ...". The spirit of 1909 was not, however, that of 1897 or 1902.

For both Bean and Pearce had sensed that the crisis had undermined the assumptions of the "little Australians". Nationalists of all kinds continued to believe that Australia should be made impregnable. Indeed the Dreadnought scare had greatly intensified fears of the Yellow Peril in both the press and the top levels of government. While German rivalry continued it was difficult to see how the Royal Navy could concentrate any battle strength in the Pacific. At the same time substantial doubts had been raised about the sanity of an Imperial policy which stopped at self-defence. Such had been the misgivings within the Fisher ministry about Labour's policy, that he had hastened to inform the Governor-General - and the public - that while his programmes would continue to provide for Australian defence, "still, in the event of a crisis, all the resources of the Commonwealth would be cheerfully placed at the disposal of the Mother Country ...". This was more than an admission drawn from Fisher in the midst of clamour. It was part of a gradual change in attitudes whose processes Richard Jebb had been quick to perceive, if not to examine: as each Australian demand was accommodated within new concepts of Empire, national and Imperial sentiment became not merely the more compatible but reciprocal.

The Anglo-Japanese Alliance had never been popular among Australian nationalists, and after 1909 Imperialists looked upon it with reservations. Nor was it ever viewed favourably within the Admiralty. Sir John Fisher considered the treaty "the very worst thing that England
ever did for herself". And he had continued to hold this view partly because he wished to see Anglo-American naval cooperation and partly because he wanted to create a self-sufficient Imperial navy capable of dealing with all possible foes. Many an influential British Imperialist, interested equally in defence and preferential trade, also envisaged an autarkic Empire in a state of permanent siege. As one of the many heirs to Chamberlain's later campaigns, L.S. Amery explained one fundamental assumption in 1910:

We exist as an Empire today ... by the grace of the Americans and the Japanese. No empire can live for long by foreign favour or foreign alliances. If its strength is not within itself it must in the end come to grief. 10

The words could have been Hughes'. On such shared assumptions it was possible to extend the drive for national self-sufficiency to plans for Imperial autarky. As Senator Pearce put it in 1914:

Australia believes that in the interests of the Empire itself we cannot leave British interests in the Pacific either to the arbitrament of European nations or the friendly keeping of an Asiatic ally. 11

Once Australians were shown how nationalist plans could be integrated in Imperial defence, they were ready — if not eager — to maintain British interests in the Far East to suit their own ends.

The assimilation of many basic tenets of policy in a manner which the Bulletin of the eighties would have found inconceivable was aided by the attitudes of those parliamentarians who claimed special privileges and duties as first class citizens of the white Empire. More and more from 1904 Australian chauvinism resulted in demands upon Greater Britain rather than postures of defiance at the rest of the world. In that year Deakin announced:

... our own interests and those of the Empire are bound up with the application of our present forms of government to the new circumstances of a new world, as a preparation for the new Empire that is to be ... 12

Having drawn from English liberal ideals to justify Australian opposition to the Boer War, H.B. Higgins also had no hesitation in reversing the
process and asserting that Australian standards were best for imperial policy. Labour parliamentarians agreed. It was not only that the Commonwealth was held to be the social laboratory for Greater Britain. The aspirations and values which nationalists wished to embody in domestic legislation were projected upon the British world. Thus the development of self-government in Australia was urged upon the British government as the solution to the problems of Home Rule; the principle of White Australia was to be applied so that no British ship trading with the Commonwealth would carry coloured crews; the navigation laws were to be altered so that English seamen would serve under Australian awards; British leadership and supremacy was to be preserved in South Africa because of its manifest virtues in the Antipodes; nationalist protectionist policies were fused with Chamberlain's campaign for tariff preference. The issue which provoked the most forthright stand was the introduction of Chinese labour on the Rand. Watson and Deakin felt their opposition was justified on two grounds: Commonwealth participation in the South African War gave it the status of an Imperial partner; Australians had unique experience in immigration problems and self-government which the British administration must heed. Nationalists were convinced that they had the right to correct aberrations in imperial policy not merely because some values were held in common but because Australian standards were best for all Britons. 13

These gestures were more important than accomplishment. They became part of Australian Imperialism. When in 1911 Fisher declared that each Dominion possessed the fundamental right to strike the British flag during an unjust war, Hughes could answer Labour's critics:

... any departure from recognition of the common standards, the common destiny, and the common responsibility of the various members of the Empire ... would be not merely destructive of an idea, but fatal ... to the independence of some of them .... (N)eutrality .... is (therefore) incompatible with any form of alliance .... I know Mr. Fisher's views very well ... he was merely emphasizing the other side of an idea which I have put forward ... 14

The gestures also indicated how an excess of national enthusiasm or of Imperial loyalty could result in the same fervent support for Britain
and Empire. Defence policy was never based on an examination of explicit and definite Australian interests, despite the acceptance of Imperial duties in the Pacific during an emergency. The war aims implied in policy were therefore vague, but potent: the defence of Australian soil, the preservation of national values, and the maintenance of British integrity. In the absence of a clear and present danger to the Commonwealth, the values of liberty, justice, democracy, self-government - and even White Australia - no less than the fate of the Empire could be determined in the Pacific Islands or the North Sea, Gallipoli or Flanders Fields.

It was an impulse such as this that Bean thought he had detected during the Dreadnought scare. Yet "the superficial political squabble" was more important than he acknowledged. One price of coalition had been the reshaping of Deakin's schemes to satisfy Cook and his followers. Indeed Cook was made Minister for Defence. Yet much of the foundation of opposition to naval and military reform had crumbled. Reid now admitted that the Empire was by no means as secure as he thought; nor was Australia as safe as he had suggested. In this spirit he congratulated Hughes on his prescience late in 1909. The danger was sufficient to justify new programmes. With Liberals still favouring a National Guard and conservatives demanding new militia forces, the plans for universal training were therefore thrown back into the melting-pot. With nationalists still favouring a localized naval force and Imperialists demanding an addition to British naval strength, order had to be imposed on the confused suggestions for submarines, destroyers, cruisers, increased naval contributions, and donations for battleships that the scare had left in its wake. The Fusion had but one general commitment - the possible gift of a Dreadnought from the Commonwealth.

On assuming office the Prime Minister immediately attempted to clarify matters by yet another appeal to Whitehall. On the 4th of June 1909 Deakin, the Imperialist, informed the British government that apart from proposals for coastal defence, his ministry "now begs to offer to the Empire an Australian Dreadnought ...". Deakin, the nationalist, added "or such addition to its naval strength as may be determined after
consultation with the Naval and Military Conference in London, at which it will be represented. 15

* * *

At the Imperial Conference of 1907 the British government had acknowledged the differential growth of national sentiment in Greater Britain. The result had been the encouragement of the separate and disparate local policies Tweedmouth had been prepared to condone rather than the degree of coordination Haldane had suggested. The naval crisis revealed the opportunity to redress the balance. Could the Dominions be encouraged to provide for their own security in such a manner that their forces would be capable of contributing "immediately and materially to the requirements of Imperial defence"? To answer this question Asquith convened the Imperial Defence Conference in July 1909. 16

The plans and briefs prepared by the Admiralty and the War Office were comprehensive and thorough. Yet no enemy was postulated for the Dominion delegations. Naval rivalry with the Triple Alliance was mentioned though the friendly relations between Great Britain and all European powers were stressed. The military defence of all parts of the Empire was also mentioned though neither the source nor the degree of danger was specified. Doubtless to strengthen its case and possibly because it hoped for strength in the Pacific when the Japanese Alliance had run its course, the Admiralty hinted darkly that by 1915 the strength of German and Japanese fleets would be "very formidable, and the position of Australia in the event of war might be one of some danger". 17 Without explaining the nature of treaty commitments or suggesting probable spheres of operation, the War Office dwelled upon the need for Imperial military forces "available for expeditionary action ... to protect our land frontiers, to cooperate with an allied Power, to carry a war into an enemy's country, and to bring it to a decisive issue". 18 British recommendations rested on the prevalence and intensity of vague fears. For it was assumed that "some day" a
conflict of huge dimensions might sweep the world and involve all Greater Britons. The aim was clearly to create an Empire impregnable in peace and formidable in war. 19

In substance Haldane's recommendations rested on the proposals of 1907: common organization, training, and weapons for all the Crown's citizen forces to enhance their capabilities for mutual support and coordination. Greater stress was, however, placed on amending colonial legislation so that whole units could volunteer for overseas service. The new Imperial General Staff could then draw up strategic plans which would incorporate the total military might of the Empire. These would overcome the disorganization which marked the South African campaigns, yet would not interfere with the control of Dominions over their forces or the spontaneity of offers in times of crisis. By 1909 Hutton's vision had at last become part of the official basis for military autarky. Explaining the role of the Imperial Staff, Haldane had earlier declared:

Canada might easily add five or six territorial divisions for her own defence, and for the assistance of Great Britain in times of emergency .... Australia might produce five divisions, New Zealand one, South Africa four or five. The Colonies will (so add to our regular and citizen forces that we will eventually possess) an Army of the Empire of ... twenty-three army corps. The German army has just twenty-three .... 20

A similar spirit pervaded the Admiralty. Tweedmouth had been replaced by Reginald McKenna whose cool judgement now tempered Sir John Fisher's ruthless enthusiasm. Once a protege of Sir Charles Dilke, McKenna not only felt that he understood the aspirations stirring Greater Britain but had become so familiar with naval hopes in the Commonwealth that he supposed the rest of the Dominions might eventually follow whatever path he could prepare for the Australians. At the time Fisher was under a cloud. He had been chastized for taking insufficient interest in the Committee of Imperial Defence. He had been charged by his most influential critic, Lord Beresford, with gross neglect of measures to protect the sea-borne commerce of the Empire. He was also acutely aware that the
Admiralty had failed to organize the Eastern Fleet of cruiser squadrons contemplated from before 1904. Now, then, was the appropriate time to plan in such large terms that critics would be confounded and lines of future Dominion naval policy would be set for all time. The basic premise used by the two Lords of the Admiralty, Fisher later explained, was simple: "... our greater Colonies are practically independent nations and are not going to subscribe to other people's Navies." 21

Indeed McKenna and Fisher had seen the issues raised by the Australian response to the naval crisis more clearly than Deakin. It was certain that Australians would wish to proceed with their own naval plans. The outburst of Imperial loyalty in no way denied the solid trunk of nationalism upon which any lasting scheme must rest. It was obvious that Creswell's destroyers were as defective as Tweedmouth's submarines. Both involved ill-founded strategic judgement, inadequate protection against raiders or invasion, services doomed to inaction and inefficiency, vessels of no value to the Royal Navy, and poor Imperial politics. It was probable that at the policy level the problem of control could be easily overcome. The discussions provoked by Deakin and the later attitude of Labour indicated that administrative decisions about the role of the Senior Naval Officer and the limits of the Australian Station would ensure Commonwealth control in peace and Admiralty direction in war. It was clear that limited finance was no longer the barrier Deakin thought. Local naval defence and the gift of a Dreadnought which the Fusion ministry had promised would cost far more than £500,000 annually for the next twenty years, irrespective of all shore establishments. How, then, could nationalist aspirations and Imperial sentiment be welded in a scheme within the terms of reference in Deakin's telegram?

Fisher had the answer. In the recently launched battle-cruiser, the *Indomitable*, he saw an exciting equivalent to the *Dreadnought*, almost as formidable in fire-power and greater in speed. There was the weapon. It would deter or destroy commerce raiders of any kind; it could form squadrons more powerful than any enemy in distant seas; it could also play an important role in the concentration of battle fleets. With
characteristic gusto, Fisher later described the potential of colonial navies thus:

The Observer has hit the nail on the head in its leading article recommending the Indomitable type for colonial imitation, and not the small Beresfordian cruisers, which like ants will all be eaten up by one 'indomitable' armadillo, which puts out its tongue and licks them all up! 22

In the creation of a fleet unit with attendant vessels of complementary abilities he saw that local security and the protection of sea-borne commerce would be found in operations on the high seas. There lay the germs of an Australian naval policy anticipated eight years before by Beaumont. Accordingly, the Admiralty exhorted the Dominions to dismiss all idea of local naval forces and create navies. As in 1865 and 1887 Australia could blaze the trail. The Commonwealth could organize its own self-contained fleet capable of both offence and defence: one battle-cruiser; three second-class cruisers; six modified River Class destroyers; and three submarines. To establish the model the British were prepared to assist. If Australians raised £500,000 annually, Whitehall was willing to grant £250,000 annually for maintenance. Apart from shore establishments, the Commonwealth fleet unit would be financed by Imperial cooperation.

This, however, was only part of the grand design. Once equipped with fleet units the Dominions could cooperate to maintain naval supremacy in the Pacific, the very area which caused Australians most alarm and the sphere where British naval strength was weakest. In combination the fleet units could sweep the Eastern seas and, should a grave crisis arise, deter the enemy until battle strength at present concentrated in European waters was redistributed. Fisher explained the future to Esher:

I am surprised how utterly both the Cabinet and the Press have so failed to see the "inwardness" of the new "Pacific Fleet" .... It means eventually Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Cape (that is, South Africa) and India running a complete Navy! We manage the job in Europe. They'll manage it against the Yankees, Japs, and Chinese as the occasion demands out there. 23

Here, again, the British would assist. Pending decision by the other Dominions, the Royal Navy would establish units equivalent to the Austra-
lian on the China and East Indies Stations if the Australians would take the first step. Slowly the British-Australasian Fleet would be replaced by the Imperial Pacific Fleet.

The Australian delegation was awed, but not overwhemed, by the scale of the British proposals. To represent the Commonwealth Deakin had chosen Colonel Foxton, a minister without portfolio in the Fusion government. A cautious and tactful politician from Queensland, Foxton was a militia officer in the Field Force of decidedly conservative views. He had championed Hutton's schemes, favoured increased contributions under the Naval Agreement, and discussed the formation of an Imperial Reserve with Deakin in 1907. Yet there was little reason for the suspicion and indignation caused in Labour ranks by this replacement for Senator Pearce. Foxton understood fully the Prime Minister's purpose which was fundamentally the same as that outlined earlier for Sir George Clarke. Moreover, he was accompanied by Creswell and Bridges, the one eager to wrest from the Admiralty approval for coastal defence where Deakin had failed and the other adamant that no Imperial commitment should be countenanced before domestic military policy was settled. In addition, Foxton had been instructed that while the Commonwealth would agree to "a warlike machinery so organized as to be instantly ready for war" he would not "be able to promise the enlistment of Australians in military forces for other than home defence or to weaken the Federal Parliament's control over the whole of the local naval and military forces in times of peace". It was clear from the outset, then, that within these limits the Australian delegation could support the British request for preparations "for the general defence of the Empire".

Quick to grasp the precedents for Haldane's proposals and the absence of any infringement of local autonomy, Foxton displayed none of the suspicion that fired Smuts and Herriman from South Africa or Borden from Canada. He quietly stated that all were acceptable - in principle; that all would be implemented - as far as possible; and that Colonel Bridges would agree to technicalities - as far as he saw fit. He was quite prepared to support the British case on these terms, and with some
justice informed Deakin that the military proposals were "mostly in accord with Australian ideals and practice ...". The basis of this agreement was revealed during the discussion. In refusing to pledge the Cape, Merriman summarized the case for the dissentients. To raise expeditionary forces, he said, always poses the question:

What is the war about — what has led you to go into war? Supposing you had a war in the Balkans ... the colonists would be very reluctant indeed to send a force to engage in that .... (Do) you suppose that any colonist would for a single moment send an expeditionary force to help an Eastern Power? Never! 27

Complexities arising out of Dominion interests in the Imperial maze did not bedevil Foxton any more than ideas of neutrality or passive belligerency mentioned by other delegates. His answer was simple: no Imperial war would be unpopular for long; a conflict of any dimension would lead to fervent commitment. Gone was the reservation Reid had voiced in 1897. 28

McKenna's proposals took a little longer for the Australians to evaluate. Yet even while he continued to expound Deakin's brief before the conference, Foxton requested ministerial direction convinced that the Admiralty schemes "more nearly approach our views than those of the other Dominions ..."). 29 Here at last was the resolution to the multiple issues raised by the navalist campaign, the substance of a policy Australian in origin and Imperial in end and value, and the promise of a navy in which each faction could find something of value. Would the Fusion government accept it? At first Creswell, suspicious that this was another piece of chicanery, felt that it should not. Then as he grasped the potential of the new force, he became increasingly enthusiastic. To direct a fleet unit instead of destroyers surpassed his wildest dreams. With the promise of a battle-cruiser, nationalist advocate became new Imperialist. Deeply impressed by the "great trust and responsibility" the British bestowed upon the Commonwealth, Creswell exhorted the Fusion ministry to spare no effort "to make the vessels of the Australian Unit such an efficient addition to the Royal Navy, as to do us honour even in that distinguished company". 30
JOSEPH COOK

... an Australian policy for full Imperial partnership...

COLONEL FOXTON

... no Imperial war can be unpopular for long...
a precedent established in the first parliament: a loan of £3,500,000 was to be raised to finance the project. Two days later Joseph Cook announced the new naval programme to the House. It was designed, he said, to ensure Australian security in the Pacific and to meet the responsibilities of Imperial partnership. Shortly afterwards the Naval Loan Act 1909 was passed.

At the instigation of McKenna and Fisher, a distinctive Australian naval policy had been decided. Deakin had failed to reorganize the Empire. His complex procedures had borne fruit. Creswell had suffered considerable frustration in the pursuit of futile policies. Now he, too, was triumphant.

* * *

The military policy of the Fusion ministry involved greater difficulties. As yet it had no Imperial *imprimatur*. Even so, on the 21st of September, Cook introduced the Defence Bill of 1909 which aimed, by a series of compromises, to overcome all the principal objections within Australia and to produce an army equivalent to the proposed fleet unit.

The conservatives had made it a condition of coalition that the Field Force would be reformed, not abolished. Fundamentally, then, the bill was designed to meet the objections of those militia officers who had opposed the institution of the National Guard and to satisfy Hutton's followers who had urged the use of universal training to infuse new life into his schemes.* The most satisfactory features of the legislation introduced by Deakin and Pearce were to be implemented so that youths would be compulsorily trained - but only to the age of twenty. They could then voluntarily enlist in the Field Force. The ultimate goal was to create a militia army at the war strength Hutton had recommended, complete in all arms and services, with a huge trained reserve for further expansion.

* The scope of piecemeal and essential reform contemplated by the ministry can be gauged from the criticisms examined in Chapters Nine and Ten above.
In all the Commonwealth would command 200,000 troops. Cane was the appeal
to improvisd forces, campaigns of resistance, and guerrilla warfare.
The stress was clearly upon the creation of citizen forces more efficient
and better-equipped than the British Territorials.

The Fusion ministry was also prepared to implement some of the
proposals discussed at the 1909 Conference. The Imperial General Staff
(Commonwealth Section) was established. The path towards Imperial coopera-
tion was cleared of minor barriers. Three aspects of South African
experience were not to be repeated. Bridges urged the formation of Austra-
lian troops into divisions not only for home defence, but so that they
would not again be scattered amid British forces. He also stressed that,
should an expeditionary force ever be organized, Australians should not be
tied to the protection of lines of communications unless they directly
served their compatriots. Nor was the ghost of Breaker Morant to bedevil
Anglo-British relations. After prolonged correspondence with the War
Office, it was agreed that on active service Australians would operate
under the Army Act. But Australian officers would pass judgement on their
own men and all serious offenders would be shipped back to the Commonwealth
for punishment. Deakin and Cook were apparently prepared to go further
than Bridges. Once the new scheme was launched, it was implied, the
Defence Acts would be amended to allow the immediate despatch of an
expeditionary force anywhere within the Australian sphere of interest
- or beyond.34

Despite the strength of the Fusion in the House, the military
policy of Imperial partnership provoked considerable opposition. All
Labour and some Liberal parliamentarians thought it a retrograde step.
Lieutenant-Colonel Legge agreed. The Daily Telegraph and Argus, still
opposed to compulsion, suspected that Cook had fallen victim to Deakin's
wiles. As important, the Teutonic and Yellow Perils were being discussed
in ministerial circles, yet neither the government nor the first Chief of
the General Staff, Brigadier-General Hoad, could decide the strategic
foundation which would justify their military programme.* Help was at hand.

* These difficulties have been more fully described in Chapter Eight
above.
The Defence Act 1909 was given Royal Assent on the 13th of December. Twelve days later Hoad and Legge arrived in Port Darwin to meet Lord Kitchener. If Rome could not satisfy the ministry's detailed requirements, the Caesar on vacation would.\textsuperscript{35}

Conscious of the need for military advice equivalent to the naval proposals of the 1909 Conference, Deakin had invited Kitchener to visit Australia earlier in July. Apparently he was given liberty to recommend the most sweeping reform to complete the Fusion's policies. In reality he was expected to pronounce judgement on the "possible invasion of this country", to provide strategic foundations for existing projects, and to amend them in the light of previous schemes for universal training.\textsuperscript{36} He was also to bear in mind "not only the public interests of the Commonwealth" but "imperial reasons (such) as ... the General Staff so as to associate military forces of all Dominions with those of the Mother Country".\textsuperscript{37} It is almost certain that Kitchener acted on no advice from the Committee of Imperial Defence though he may have been given general directions by the War Office. It is certain that he exercised his private judgement within the existing Australian context which both Hoad and Legge clarified for him. With their assistance, he was able to submit his recommendations on the 12th of February 1910. The broad principles of national and Imperial defence were then privately explained to Deakin and Cook during the following weeks and it was agreed that one of Kitchener's aides, Major-General Kirkpatrick, would be appointed Inspector-General to direct the implementation of the scheme and to unfold its responsibilities as the new National Citizen Force came into being.\textsuperscript{38}

Despite many contradictory features, the Kitchener scheme settled the basis of universal service. The Field Force would be gradually absorbed in the National Citizen Force. From the age of twelve until twenty-five males would be compulsorily trained. Though emphasis was placed upon recruit training, men were expected to supplement a mere six days of annual compulsory service with voluntary drills. The nation was divided into battalion areas to be controlled by permanent officers educated at a central military college. Thus would the 1909 Act be amended.
EASTWARD HO!

Britannia (to India). "We can ill spare him; but you see we give you of our best!"

PUNCH, July 16, 1902

... the Caesar to whom Deakin appealed ...
Thus would the virtues the innovators wished to inculcate in Australians be impressed from schooldays to domesticity. Thus would the Commonwealth possess a competent military machine. By 1920, 40,000 troops could be detailed for garrison duties, yet remain part of a mobile army of seven Light Horse Brigades and seven Infantry Divisions.

Although the new army was created to meet all possible enemies, Kitchener's published strategic assessment did not openly admit the probability of invasion. Exercising his famed intuition, he informed Legge that a great conflict in which Australia would be directly involved was possible before 1920. In this context the temporary loss of Royal Naval supremacy in the Pacific, it was said, was "quite conceivable". Should the British government fail to maintain the proper combination of might and diplomacy, it was implied, Australians could expect not merely raids and landing parties but operations of greater size — if not full-scale invasion. Even so, it was suggested, "the best defence is generally by taking the offensive and there should therefore be no difference in the enrolment, organization, and equipment of any unit (of the National Citizen Force)". 39

In a guarded fashion Kitchener had rested his assessment on the principles of national impregnabiliy, Imperial autarky, and the combination of the military might of the Empire. These principles Kirkpatrick expounded during the ensuing three years in a fashion to satisfy alarmists. Despite the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Japan was chosen as the likely enemy of Australia. From European enemies or Asian adversaries, the forces could expect attack by three or four unarmoured cruisers accompanied by transports capable of landing 2,000 troops. Should, however, British and Australian naval forces be defeated, the enemies could despatch expeditionary forces. They would, of course, court defeat at the hands of the Australians and would risk being cut off from the source of supply once British superiority was re-established. Such actions were, nevertheless, possible. Only if Great Britain were defeated could Australian territory "be successfully conquered and permanently occupied by an organized invader from overseas". 40 While such a defeat was inadmissible,
preparations for disaster on a scale just one degree less grave than this would be wise. Plans had therefore to be prepared for the mobilization of the Australian army to meet an invader landing at Brisbane, Newcastle, Sydney, or Melbourne. Coastal transports and naval cover had to be arranged for movement of special expeditionary forces so that an invader could be expelled from Tasmania, South Australia, Western Australia, and the Northern Territory. 41

What was the mobile army of over 100,000 troops to do if the scale of attack remained limited to raids? Was it only to maintain public confidence? Kirkpatrick replied that preparation for offensive operations was the "most effectual means of employing an army as an instrument of policy". 42 There were specific Australian interests in the Pacific demanding protection. The creation of a Royal Australian Navy not merely imbued Australian policy with a spirit of offensive but clarified the proper sphere of external military operations. The navy would want enemy ports occupied and it was essential to deny hostile powers access to all probable bases. It was essential therefore to prepare for campaigns in New Caledonia, the New Hebrides, German New Guinea, and adjoining islands. The sphere would necessarily be extended by cooperation with New Zealand forces. And plans must be laid for combined operations with the British in the Phillipines and India. Events would reveal the extent of more purely Imperial responsibilities. 43

This advice implied that insofar as British might and British diplomacy protected the Commonwealth in the Pacific, Australian troops would be available for general Imperial service. Did Kitchener have this in mind? It is possible. Before his visit to Australia he informed the British ambassador in Tokyo that "the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was a sheet-anchor" in British Far Eastern policy and that "in all her legitimate aspirations we should stand by Japan through thick and thin" - including her claims on Manchuria. 44 Kitchener clearly thought the Alliance would be renewed. So it proved. And before his visit to Japan, he was asked to accept the Mediterranean command. On the 14th of July 1909, Esher explained the great potential of that post:
The underlying idea is that the Mediterranean Garrison should form a nucleus of a great Imperial Concentration in time of war - a concentration of Imperial forces, naval and military, drawn from every quarter of the Empire.

I need not elaborate the idea, which you will seize at once; from that central position you, with your experience and authority, will be able to do more to influence Colonial opinion than you would be able to do, or than anyone would be able to do, from here. 45

Though Kitchener later refused the position, he doubtless had these duties in his mind when he visited Australia. The plan was to create a great Imperial Strategic Reserve in Egypt. So it eventually proved. 46

On the 14th of February 1910 Deakin announced that, having appealed to Caesar, the Fusion would "defer to Caesar's judgement". 47 The Defence Act of 1909 would be amended accordingly. Indeed Caesar had settled many issues. His stature could be invoked to remove opposition to reform. His memorandum encompassed all Australian fears. His scheme promised the realization of all Australian hopes. There were, however, many unresolved problems. Would not the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance remove most of the dangers countenanced? What was Japanese intent? How could Australian statesmen proceed to move detailed assessments without knowledge of foreign policy? Did not the creation of the Royal Australian Navy limit the scale of attack for which such a massive army had been created? Would not the proposed Imperial Pacific Fleet offer security enough? And were it not to be organized, how could the army relieve any distant area in Australia when the enemy was assumed to have control of the seas? Was not the scale of preparations for home defence, both naval and military, excessive? Would other governments accept Kirkpatrick's recommendations for expeditionary forces which restored the balance between naval and military programmes? None of these questions were posed. The prime task was to end prevarication and implement military reform. On the 24th of March 1910 Cook informed the Military Board that future policy would be governed by the spirit and the letter of the Kitchener memorandum.

One month later the Fusion was overwhelmingly defeated in the
federal elections. Labour was returned with added strength and greater exuberance. Deakin's manoeuvres had seen the creation of a defence policy founded on a concept of Imperial partnership and forces capable of fulfilling the obligations of an active Imperial alliance. Labour was obliged to work within that context. Its role was not to negate Deakin's accomplishment. It carried most of the proposals to their final stages. It did, however, convert the active alliance into a tacit agreement.

* * *

Once in office Labour accepted the Admiralty proposals of 1909, but refused financial assistance from the British and repealed the Naval Loan Act in the belief that national defence projects should be paid from revenue. Hailed in some quarters as the essence of self-reliance, this step allowed Andrew Fisher to demand the construction of three lighter vessels in Australia. It also strengthened the claim for Commonwealth control in peace and increased the potential of its discretionary powers on the outbreak of war. Perhaps for this reason the limits of the Australian Station were so severely restricted. With that, hopes for regional defence diminished. Labour spent its three years of power unravelling the minor but complex problem of administration, recruitment, and shore establishments which arose once the Naval Defence Act came into operation on the 1st of January 1911.

The extent of Labour's commitment to the new Imperialism was often obscured by both its supporters and its detractors. Some members of the Opposition, now led by Joseph Cook, raised such a disturbance over Australian control that elements of the press charged the government with proto-republicanism. Many Labour members apparently did not see that the fleet unit could realize its potential only on the high seas. In many speeches the Prime Minister indicated that the fleet unit would be used primarily for local defence. In turn this provoked the question whether the initials of the much-vaunted Australian navy - R.A.N. - would be an apt description of Labour naval policy. Yet below the verbiage, the
... self-defence comes first ...

... there can be no passive belligerency ...
direction of policy was clear. The acquisition of a fleet unit, said Pearce in 1910, meant that a posture of benevolent neutrality or passive belligerency in an Imperial war was no longer tenable. From its nature and its method of control, the Royal Australian Navy would join the Royal Navy in any emergency calling for naval operations. Whatever wars the Empire was engaged upon, therefore, Australia would be involved.

In fact the spirit of Imperial cooperation envisaged by McKenna ebbed more quickly in London than Melbourne. With the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and the intensification of German naval rivalry after 1912, the Admiralty, under Winston Churchill, decided that it was neither necessary nor desirable to fulfil the promises of 1909. The British could not spare the vessels for the Imperial Pacific Fleet. The project lapsed. Because the Commonwealth had done all that had been asked, the Labour ministry was indignant at this breach of agreement. Suspicion of British intentions was further inflamed when Churchill later suggested that the Australian fleet unit be assembled at Gibraltar, there to form the basis of a Dominion Squadron. At the time he faced more pressing problems of matching the naval strength of the Triple Alliance in the Mediterranean. And doubtless he considered it realistic to recommend that Australians rest content with the protection afforded by British diplomacy and the goodwill of Japan. In Australia it caused a furore.

By a quirk of parliamentary fortune Cook and the conservatives were back in power when the storm broke. Significantly, his stand was the same as that which would have been taken by Deakin or by Pearce. No British government was to reassert the principle of Imperial survival by the sacrifice of Australian security! This was a gross perversion of Imperial policy! It was an insult to national self-respect! Though the storm soon passed it left a reservoir of doubt and stiffened the resolve of those who believed that the correct posture in peace - and perhaps in war - was to examine carefully the British case before extensive involvement. The two Australian parties had been reminded that there was both a national and an Imperial content to their policy. If the British could neglect the first and misinterpret the second, there was definite need
to maintain Commonwealth control over its armed forces in peacetime.

In short, the alliance persisted but it was now tacit rather than active. This had become part of Australian policy, no longer a source of intense party controversy.

When on the 4th of October 1913 the principal elements of the Royal Australian Navy steamed line-ahead into Port Jackson, the welcome was tumultuous. Sir John Fisher's vision and Deakin's faith were embodied in the leading battle-cruiser, the Australia, with the Southern Cross at the jackstaff and the White Ensign fluttering from the stern. Beaumont's judgement and Forrest's deliberations were represented in the Melbourne and the Sydney. Creswell's persistence and Labour's resolute action were symbolized by the escorting destroyers Warrego, Parramatta, and Yarra. It was the occasion for grand speeches. But in the light of all that had preceded this moment, Cook's words held special meaning for his contemporaries:

Since Captain Cook's arrival, no more memorable event has happened than the advent of the Australian Fleet. As the former marked the birth of Australia, so the latter announces its coming of age, its recognition of the growing responsibilities of nationhood, and its resolve to accept and discharge them as a duty both to itself and to the Empire ... It is the expression of Australia's resolve to pursue, in freedom, its national ideals, and to hand down unimpaired and unsullied the heritage it has received, and which it holds and cherishes as an inviolable trust. 48

* * *

The third Labour ministry insisted upon modifications to the Kitchener scheme before it was incorporated in legislation. On the one hand, the long campaign conducted by Hughes had not resulted in an adequate measure of universal service. On the other, the stand taken by H.B. Higgins in the first parliament had seemed to be undermined by the Fusion government.
Lieutenant-Colonel Legge met the first objection. In substance, he stressed that the element of voluntary training recommended by Kitchener spelt disaster. Labour therefore accepted his advice and decided to make eight days drill per year as compulsory as eight days of camp. The compulsory training of all other arms was increased correspondingly. In effect, this did not only satisfy Hughes but other ministers who realized that the greater the measure of compulsory service the greater the restraint upon requesting whole units to volunteer for overseas service.

While this issue was being settled, Pearce and Hughes examined the possibility of dismissing Kirkpatrick and replacing him with an Australian more sympathetic to Labour's views. This they found they could not do without breaking faith with the War Office. Pearce decided, therefore, to ignore Kirkpatrick's strategic advice for the time being, and to use him merely as Inspector-General. This role Kirkpatrick played most effectively, exposing each weakness in the military system with a force and clarity absent in his predecessors. For he had two firm criteria: the standards set by Kitchener; and the assumption that the army must be ready for conflict within one month of the warning that an emergency was imminent.

With a clear policy and funds undreamt of in earlier days, Pearce then turned to administrative decisions in a manner military officers had long awaited. He gave new life to the Council of Defence and the administrative boards. There the problems of fixed defences were thoroughly examined — if not all solved. Pay was increased; a military college was established; armament and clothing factories began production. A huge programme to re-equip the forces with everything from field guns to aeroplanes was undertaken. In short, all that Hutton had hoped for — and far more — resulted from the implementation of the Kitchener scheme. Yet in launching universal training Pearce proceeded with caution. The preliminary tasks of registering and medically examining all the youths the scheme involved were formidable in themselves. Although regulations were promulgated in June 1911, the full force of the law was not invoked until January 1913. Of the estimated 260,000 youths below the age of eighteen in Australia only 90,000 were being trained in 1914. The number
declared unfit was lower than Hughes would have estimated — less than six percent. The number brought before courts for neglect of duty was much higher — over twelve percent. Some declared that the period of training would have to be longer. Others were disturbed at the intrusion upon civil liberties. Many pointed to a total defence estimate of nearly £6,000,000 for experiments barely under way and wondered where it would all end. A few asked whether the danger facing Australia warranted the disruption. No one could with precision answer the question: What was the effect of compelling men and youths to give twenty-four Saturdays a year to the state without pay? In an apprehensive moment Pearce was moved to offer a tentative answer: "deep discontent".49

Yet a moment of gloom did not rob Pearce and others of pride in their achievement. For by 1914 the experiment was pronounced a success. Already the Citizen Force boasted 45,000 young men and there was ample promise to be confident of the future. Nor did criticism obscure the zeal and enthusiasm that swept through the citizen officers drawn from the old militia as they saw their new army taking shape. Not only had their status been enhanced but articles in unit journals testified to their urgent desire for expertise. Such men were bound to wonder whether they would fight overseas. Pearce could not ignore the question forever or the assumptions in the Kitchener report which Kirkpatrick continued to expound. Officially decision was deferred. Unofficially plans were drawn up for an Australian expeditionary force. Between 1912 and 1914 at least two schemes were apparently drafted and put aside for use in times of emergency.

Yet although Deakin's efforts to infuse an Imperial dimension into military policy had been successful, these confidential arrangements bore the tenets of the tacit alliance. In 1912 Pearce asked Major C.B.B. White, the Director of Military Operations, and Major-General Gordon, the Chief of the General Staff, to produce a skeleton organization which would combine Australian and New Zealand forces roughly in proportion to their military contributions during the South African War. He did so on the express understanding that, as Kirkpatrick put it, preparations did
"not commit either government to their execution" but were "wise precautions, not definite obligations". He apparently agreed in principle that the sphere of combined operations might conceivably be those Kirkpatrick had outlined or that the units organized in one division could join "the Imperial forces during an Imperial war, should the respective people so decide to do". But it was not the task of the Commonwealth to conceive what those operations might be. Moreover, Pearce laid down three conditions. No part of the Australian forces was to be assigned to overseas duty. All draft plans had to depend on individual and voluntary recruitment when the emergency arose in accord with the principle enunciated by Higgins a decade earlier and embodied in Section 49 of the Defence Act. The British government was not to be informed of his secret decision or led to believe that the Commonwealth would be prepared to commit its forces. Gordon felt that these conditions must lead to dislocation and confusion on the outbreak of war and a long period of training before embarkation. He desired the selection of special units or a list of individual trainees who in advance would "signify their willingness to serve overseas should the need arise". Pearce was adamant. Major White therefore drafted a scheme for an expeditionary force of 12,000 volunteers drawn from the youthful members of the Citizen Force and men who had military experience in the militia.

Once the conservatives led by Cook came to power in June 1913, Gordon again objected to Pearce's arrangement. It is likely that another plan was then drafted, on the same basis as White's, for a complete Australian division "for service anywhere within the Empire or out of it ...". This the Cook ministry apparently accepted and the Imperial government was informed of its decision. In a most tentative fashion, then, the basis had been laid for the Australian Imperial Forces.

In all other respects, the conservatives did not depart from the stand taken by Pearce. Such restraint, they thought, was in part justified by the fear that Australia was insecure - for all its defence preparations. Despite the explicit assurance Grey had given Andrew Fisher in 1911 that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance would have to be maintained to
protect all Imperial interests in the Pacific - or ignorant of the fact - the Chief of the General Staff assumed that the Alliance could be terminated at any time. And he apparently had no trouble convincing his civilian superiors that the nation was vulnerable to attack anywhere from Rockhampton to Geraldton on the Western coast. Further discussion revealed the enormity of the questions Kitchener had left unanswered. The Japanese, it was argued, could occupy any relatively unpopulated section of the continent "with the object of securing territorial accession upon the conclusion of the war" with positive gains to strengthen their hands at any peace conference. There was no coordination between naval and military policies or between Commonwealth programmes and British naval dispositions to prevent this. The only solution, the Cook ministry decided, was to request another Imperial Conference. Sober investigation revealed, on the one hand, that Australian impregnability was impossible without reliance upon British might and diplomacy. On the other, it was extremely difficult to proceed with plans for use of the forces the Commonwealth had created without knowledge of British foreign policy and British war plans. And again, refusal to integrate national schemes into imperial defence deprived the Australians of the knowledge they thought they needed. For all the talk of partnership and alliance, the riddle of Empire at the policy level involved as many unanswered questions as in the eighties.

The time was not, however, ripe for misgivings within Australia. By and large, governments were content with partial resolution of their problems. The Commonwealth would soon have the forces of a nation-state. If it could not act like one, it did not yet wish to do so. External interest remained unexamined and no definite plans prepared for operations beyond the shores of the Commonwealth - not even in its own sphere of influence. Inordinate fears of Asian incursion marked definite limits to the degree of commitment to Empire - in peace. The impulse towards imperial partnership should be tempered by the persistence of the garrison mentality. Security, no less than self-respect and autonomy, demanded that there be no formal Imperial strategic war plan. As in the case with disagreements with Churchill over naval policy, the tacit alliance had become part of national - not party - policy.
On the 4th of May 1914 Senator Pearce summarized the Australian stance for the Governor-General. Traversing all the arguments provoked by the failure of the promise of 1909, he explained that the Royal Australian Navy was ready for "immediate and complete" cooperation in times of emergency. Until then it would remain firmly under Commonwealth control. Arguing once more that no alliance was more inherently unstable than the Anglo-Japanese but also acknowledging that Germany would be the Empire's enemy in both Europe and the Pacific, he admitted that plans existed for the mobilization of an expeditionary force within six weeks of the approach of a crisis. Nevertheless, the extent of military aid, he warned, would rest with the Commonwealth just as service abroad "must always be left to voluntary action". The absence of Imperial strategic plans, he said, need cause the British no concern. For "national sentiment, after all, is a more potent cement than written agreements ...". 55

Pearce was amply vindicated within two months, and the special connotations of the term "national" — so different now in usage from the days of the Imperial federationists — were to be further explored during the first two years of the Great War.

* * *

The Royal Australian Navy prepared for active service on the 30th of July 1914. Eleven days later control was formally transferred from the Commonwealth to the Admiralty. The ensuing six months saw the test of many pre-war arguments. The potential of cruiser warfare was manifest in Von Spee's German China Squadron. The predictions of Rear-Admiral Sir William Rooke Creswell were partially realized in the operations of the HMS. But the raiding activities of that one enterprising enemy officer could never have been prevented, restricted, or deterred by a destroyer service in Australian waters. Sir John Fisher's promise that a battle-cruiser would fulfil every requirement of Commonwealth policy was redeemed. The presence of the Australia not only worried Von Spee but became a dominant influence on all his decisions. The assurances
Vice-Admiral Sir William R. Creswell.
Australia ... Battle Cruiser
... THE FLEET UNIT

Sydney ... Protected Cruiser

Parramatta ... Destroyer
implicit in British policy and explicit in advice from Whitehall were no less effective. With the declaration of war by Japan, the China Squadron proceeded to Germany so that its armoured cruisers could supplement the High Seas Fleet. If Coronel seemed to support the arguments of those Australians who had feared the grave weaknesses in the Royal Naval shield, Falkland justified the many Australians who had faith in British might. The new nationalists and the new Imperialists could both find honour and vindication in the engagement between the Emden and the Sydney. The raider which featured in so many hypothetical discussions was destroyed by an Australian man of war.

To engage the enemy the Sydney had left a convoy bearing an Australian expeditionary force destined soon to do battle near — if not in — the Balkans. The decision to meet unwritten military commitments had been taken one day before the formal declaration of war; and two of Hutton's protégés, Major-General Bridges and Major White, had been selected to lead the Commonwealth contingent of 20,000 men. It was they who made certain that the force to represent Australia would not be scattered amid British units to lose its identity as in 1899. It was they who strove to create a distinctive army from the trainees whom the advocates of universal service had produced, from the veterans of the South African War and the experienced militiamen on whom the federalists had depended, and from untrained citizens in whom everyone had placed trust. Haste, improvisation, and confusion there had certainly been. But the organization of units — and their eventual expansion — was eased by the matériel, the officers, and the plans which military reforms had produced. The force was ready to sail by the 21st of September. With all effort directed to that end, there was little to be spared for military expeditions to the North. Thus it was that the incomplete citizen army designed initially for defence against an enemy which seemed to threaten national existence and national values in the Pacific formed the genesis of an army for a distant war which was later held to involve the same dangers. Appropriately it was called the Australian Imperial Force.

But the advent of war revealed the inadequacy not only of schemes
but of policies justified as preparations for defence and for peace. By 1913 the extent of naval commitments in an Imperial war, it seemed, would be determined by the number of ships. Military commitment, it was believed, would be limited by national considerations. And, it was further assumed, Australians would be restrained by a cool and sober judgement of the nature of the British cause and the scale of the conflict. In true Whig fashion, Reid had declared in 1901: "Let us never forget that with all the glitter and glory of deeds of heroism on the field all these are black, dark chapters in the progress of humanity .... War is a horror." He was stressing but one aspect of an ambivalent attitude. The other Forrest emphasized when, two days before the outbreak of the Great War, he cried: "If Great Britain goes to her Armageddon, we will go with her!" Mingled with national and Imperial sentiment was an indifference to military affairs in peace matched by a will to war in times of crisis. Prolonged discussion of defence policy in a troubled world had emphasized the second by attempting to overcome the first.

The advocates of universal training had held that preparation for defence was a sacred duty. And defence, it was often said, was preparation for peace. Through military service men would be so introduced to the horrors of war that jingoism would be a thing of the past. Had not the Swiss proven this, they asked. The Swiss model was, in fact, seriously deficient. Peoples in arms conducted war with indisputable elan — and great savagery and aggression. All the states cited in the continuous debate had so acted — even the Swiss. Yet not only had the innovators studiously neglected the Imperial dimension of Australian experience. They had believed it both realistic and proper to march in line with the "modern European nations"; to recall the spirit of revolutionary France; and to scorn professional armies for their decorous encounters when war was "a brutal bloody game" in which success went to the "big battalions" and in which "a nation in arms had the last word amid the strife of peoples and the shock of interests". Despite themselves, they were preparing their compatriots for total war. This was a process obscured by the refusal to admit that the martial ethos they sought to create in the civilian population could operate lustily under the cloak of democracy and Empire.
From 1905 Deakin and Hughes had indicated the instability of this ambivalent attitude to war. In many respects they were Nietzsche's priest and warrior in federal parliament. Deakin claimed to be an expert only in the departments of peace and looked upon war as "the dread exception". Hughes carried the preparation for the inevitable conflict almost to the point of exultation. Yet neither Deakin nor Hughes had been untouched by the mood which led men to howl for blood in 1914. The corollary of the assertion that universal training would ensure no bloodshed and rape on Australian soil was that war would be conducted overseas and that it would be conducted with vigour. Neither had examined the question that had given Cavan Duffy such concern forty years earlier: What was a war of defence? In the context of the times conflicts of any dimension greater than skirmishes with natives could be wars of defence - and on this crude criterion could warrant fervent commitment. It was H.B. Higgins, even while resisting Commonwealth participation in the Boer War, who had declared that were Great Britain ever in need "every man and every shilling" would be spent "in defending the Empire". The justifiable yet blind insistence of Australians upon home defence and their understandable refusal to examine their own specific interests in the imperial maze - symbolized by their treatment of Hutton and their neglect of Kirkpatrick - had become increasingly unreal after 1908. In the place of careful deliberations, such as might have been produced by meetings of the Council of Defence, came vague assurances of spontaneous, undirected, and unlimited military assistance for the British cause. Mass armies might well be used, Hughes once declared to a British audience, against "even the most determined of those who seek to spoil us of our prestige, our trade, or our very national existence ...". If military preparations involved for him racial regeneration, war could be the crucible in which moral fibre was tested. Deakin's terms of reference were equally imprecise - and potent. Once Britons passed from passivity to fervent commitment, he had said, not only would nations quake but war would become the testing ground of Australian and British "self-sustaining power" and "moral courage". To both might became right once the Empire was challenged. For Australians war was not the continuation of state policy by other means, but a crusade.
It was Hughes' fortune to pursue the path Forrest had declared open. As military reformer, the policy he had helped fashion had no war aims. As warrior-statesman, the crusade which he led he had helped to prepare. Though a shrewd bargainer over the conference table and in political corridors, Hughes was essentially an emotive rhetorician. He had at first resisted the public clamour for assistance to the British cause in South Africa, and then had capitulated readily to the fervent throngs. And if the South African War had led him to express flamboyant sentiments, his advocacy of universal training so that Australia no longer need creep timorously upon the world stage had kept them alive. In his speeches there had been much ambiguity. Society, country, nation, race, state, civilization, Australia, England, and Empire were terms that flowed from his lips, often used interchangeably: defence for one was defence for all. The tone of his war speeches was not therefore unfamiliar to those who had supported his stand. Having declared the British cause to be no struggle for aggrandizement or territories in 1916, he exulted that Germany had chosen to translate its commercial rivalry into war. Thus could its power and influence be extirpated. But the struggle which had caused him to mourn the death of so many Australians promised more:

This war has done great things for the Empire ... It has saved us from moral - aye, and physical - degeneration and decay .... I believe that the trade and greatness of Empire were slipping from us. We were becoming flabby .... This war has purged us, and is purging us .... This war, like the glorious beams of the sun, has quite dried up the mists of suspicion with which class regarded class .... Before this war "Empire" was a name which merely fell from the lips of men .... But today it is real, and not a shibboleth. This war is the beacon light that is lighting us on; it is the sign and shibboleth of our race, and ... the means of our salvation. 66

Fervent commitment was justified because the Great War was a struggle of defence against an enemy which knew only the law of force:

Civilization is at stake. Free government is at stake. Liberty is at stake. Our national independence is at stake. Our economic welfare is at stake. Everything is at stake - spiritual, moral, and material - for which we as a people stand .... We will never lay down our arms until we have crushed German military despotism. 67
Hughes the war leader, Hughes the fiery and unforgiving statesman at Versailles — and Hughes the leader of the conscriptionists — was the same man who urged the creation of a nation in arms.

The national sentiment upon which Pearce had put such store intensified, rather than limited, commitment. The assumptions of 1909 became the basis of Australian attitudes to the Great War. It was in the nature of crusades that leaders knew few restraints. None was seriously challenged until the conscription referenda of 1916.

Until then, Hutton's men fulfilled their destiny in the charges of the Light Horse upon the sands of Palestine and Syria. The innovators were vindicated in the mud of Flanders Fields. Both saw the realization of their hopes at Gallipoli. For the men of the first Australian Imperial Force were thrice blessed by the extended discussions of defence before 1914. First, they were citizens displaying virtues and hardiness to belie the prophets of racial degeneration. Secondly, they were soldiers whose bravery and initiative established a national military tradition and whose cohesion epitomized the national unity Deakin had sought. Thirdly, they were the volunteers who fought not only for country but for King. They also fulfilled the predictions — current in 1885 and again in 1899 — that the nation would be fused and its identity clarified through personal sacrifice and blood. And debate about military reform had prepared other ground for ANZAC. For if Australians had been expected to find harmony and civic virtue in self-control and reverence, if they were to discover honour and security in the reformation of their society, they were also told that glory and grace was to be found in death. In 1906 the Bishop of North Queensland had written:

There is a nobility of character in a man, who is thus willing to part with his life for his country which atones for many failings .... Such readiness is more in accord with the Supreme Example of Christian self-sacrifice than the position of those who deprecate any preparation for national defence .... 68
In the *Official History*, C.E.W. Bean noted many of these qualities. He also answered by inference the questions raised before 1914. What was of worth in Australian society? How did it cohere? How did men prosper apart from the state? How would men withstand the shock of war without the inculcation of virtue? Bean replied that Australians were in no need of indoctrination. With a natural grace they had displayed outstanding decency, fortitude, and dignity. There was, moreover, a quality which some called comradeship but which Australians termed mateship.
FOOTNOTES

Note: Except for quotations, the material cited for any particular paragraph has been consolidated under one footnote, the number of which appears at the end of the final sentence.

The format of footnotes has been designed to indicate clearly the source of particulars and to overcome the difficulties of all sources appearing at the end of the work.
### ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.W.M.</td>
<td>Australian War Memorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAO</td>
<td>Commonwealth Archives Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDC</td>
<td>Colonial Defence Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.H.B.E.</td>
<td>Cambridge History of the British Empire</td>
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<td>CID</td>
<td>Committee of Imperial Defence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.N.L.</td>
<td>Commonwealth National Library</td>
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<td>CPD</td>
<td>Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates</td>
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<td>CPP</td>
<td>Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers</td>
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<tr>
<td>D.D.</td>
<td>Defence Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>N.S.W.P.D.</td>
<td>New South Wales Parliamentary Debates</td>
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<tr>
<td>N.S.W.P.P.</td>
<td>New South Wales Parliamentary Papers</td>
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<tr>
<td>ODC</td>
<td>Overseas Defence Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANA</td>
<td>Royal Australian Navy : Archives</td>
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<tr>
<td>RUSIJ</td>
<td>Royal United Services Institute Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USM</td>
<td>United Services Magazine</td>
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* Other abbreviations are used but these usually involve short titles for the many official papers and are clearly marked in the footnotes.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER ONE

1 On Deakin and British troops in Australia:
The Times, 17 May 1907.

On sources for Chapter One:
Originally this Chapter — like most of the early parts of this work — was five times the present length. Because it now serves as an introductory essay, resting for the most part on familiar sources, no further footnotes will be used. The works consulted appear in the bibliography.

The following list either supplements the material cited there or indicates the more important sources:

(1) Precis of important colonial decisions, both military and naval, 1860-1900.
Confidential Papers ... Imperial Defence Conference 1909 ..., pp.1-6, 33-36. (CAO : CP103, S12, B8)


(6) Files from the Department of Defence, Victoria, 1883-1900 (CAO : MP106).
(Notes Chapter Two : continuing 1)

   Deakin: pp.73, 76, 82.
   Dibbs: pp.184 ff.


   Comments: pp.87-88, 317-318, 775, 1069.

   On Deakin and control of defence: pp.2249 ff.
   On Barton and control: pp.2252 ff.

(5) Report, Together with Appendices of the Federal Military Conference ... to consider a General Scheme of Military Defence ... Sydney, October 1894 (Bound Papers, Defence Department, Canberra, No.45.30, 12302).

(6) Report of the Intercolonial Military Conference on the 14th December 1896 ... (Bound Papers, cited above).

(7) Report and Summary of Proceedings, together with Schedules and Minutes of the Intercolonial Military Committee ... Sydney, January 1896: Also including "General Scheme of Defence", February 1896 and the draft "Federal Defence Agreement", February 1896 (Printed Papers 1890-1900 : Defence Department, Canberra).

(8) Departmental files on military defence:
   On service of Victorian troops outside the colony October 1887: Downs to Crown Solicitor (CAO : MP106, 87/2686).
   On lack of colonial military coordination: Brownrigg to Premier of Victoria, November 1888 (CAO : MP106, 88/3168a).
   Reid to other Premiers on military defence, c. March 1894 (CAO : MP106, 94/930).

Correspondence N.S.W. and other colonies on military legislation, 1896-1899 (CAO : MP106, 97/1435).

(9) Memoranda by Robert Collins on federal defence, 1896-1899, for the guidance of the Victorian government (Bound Papers, Defence Department, Canberra, No.45.30/12302).
2 Quotation from:  

3 Quotation from:  
Reid to All Australian Premiers, 16 April 1895 (Reproduced in part in Colonial Defence Committee Memorandum No.119 of 1896: See special collection of CDC memoranda held by Commonwealth Archives Office, Canberra).

4 Quotation from:  
Clause 18 of the draft "Federal Defence Agreement" of February 1896 in Papers of the Military Conference, January-February 1896, cited above.

On armament for the colonial infantry:

Considerable time was spent during these and subsequent discussions on the rifle to be adopted by the Australian colonies. The issues were: whether Australians should have automatic weapons; whether the colonies should have uniform arms and ammunition; whether those arms should be of imperial pattern to allow coordination of the forces; when Australian governments could afford to replace - or convert - the weapons they possessed. These problems were vitiated by changing patterns of armament.

Briefly, the changes in the rifle were these. In the eighties the standard weapon of the British infantryman was the Martini-Henry rifle. Possessing a calibre of .45" and a powerful recoil, this rifle was single-loading with a simple falling block breech mechanism. The Australian forces purchased many of these as well as a few Mannlicher rifles of .256" calibre with a similar action. In the early nineties, the British Army experimented with a magazine rifle using cordite-propelled bullets, the Lee-Wetford. This weapon had a .303" calibre, a bolt action, and a metal cut-off in the magazine to prevent troops from squandering ammunition. The Wetford barrel was found to be far less successful than the Lee breech mechanism, mainly because of the increased muzzle velocity given by cordite charges. During the Boer War the Lee-Enfield rifle (the M.L.E.) was introduced. The Lee mechanism was then matched by an Enfield barrel to produce an efficient and durable magazine rifle. The difficulty for the infantryman, however, lay partly in its length. Duly, the War Office experimented with modified versions and soon after 1903 the Short, Magazine, Lee-Enfield rifle (the S.M.L.E.) was produced. This was the weapon to be used by British and Australian forces in 1914.
The Commonwealth did not decide to re-arm fully with the S.M.L.E. until 1907 or after. And although the creation of a small arms factory was often discussed from 1894, the contracts were not arranged until in 1908, and rifles were produced after 1912. The Australian rifle was the S.M.L.E. manufactured under licence in New South Wales.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER THREE

1 From the point of view of the premiers this distinction is appropriate. From the point of view of many in liberal and radical circles in Britain Imperialism (i.e. concern for the unity of the Empire, particularly of Greater Britain or the self-governing colonies) was identified with Imperialism (i.e. a passion for aggression and conquest).

See:

Information on the Colonial Conference and the Jubilee celebrations has been gleaned from:


Reid, op. cit., pp.149-150.
Minutes; Colonial Conference 1897, pp.149-150.


This impression of Chamberlain, the sympathetic listener and the bargainer, is vindicated in the Minutes of the Conference.
For examples of the accommodation of colonial interests see:
Minutes: Colonial Conference, 1897; for Commercial Treaty
with Japan, pp. 94-92; and for Alien Immigration, pp. 130 et seq.


6 Ibid., pp. 178-179, 181.

7 Ibid., pp. 185-186.

Miss Kelhuish of the Sydney University is in the final stages writing
her Ph.D. on Australian views and the development of the Imperial
Conference, 1887-1902. This should illuminate the Conference from
the Australian viewpoint in all its aspects.

Murdoch, *op. cit.*, pp. 145-147, 150.
Reid, *op. cit.*

From the evidence I have considered it is clear Reid is a much
underrated man. For a persuasive article attempting to reinstate
him see:

W.G. McMinn, "George Reid and Federation: the Origin of the
'Yes-No Policy'," in *Historical Studies: Australia and New

9 *Australian Encyclopaedia*, Vol. 8, p. 60.
This summary is also founded on other evidence to be used later in
this work.

For an excellent comment on Turner as Federal Treasurer see:

G. Sawyer, *Australian Federal Politics and Law* (Melbourne 1956:
H.U.P.) pp. 16-17.

10 *Australian Encyclopaedia*, Vol. 4, p. 162.
Other evidence for this sketch of Forrest will be presented later
from Chapter IV of this work.
Minutes: Colonial Conference 1897:
Chamberlain's exposition, pp. 6-7, 24, 30-31.
Turner's exposition, pp. 21-22.
Quote from p. 31.

Minutes: Colonial Conference 1897:
Forrest's response, pp. 29-32.
Kingston's response, p. 27.
Reid's response, pp. 32, 37, 38, 39.
Turner's response, pp. 77, 86-89.

Ibid., p. 2.

Ibid., pp. 2-4, 100.

Ibid., pp. 107-108.

Ibid., p. 107.

Ibid.
For the premiers on political relations and the efficacy of regular conference:
Seddon of New Zealand, pp. 103-105, 106-108.
Braddon, p. 107.
Turner, pp. 100, 115-116.
Forrest, pp. 100, 106.

Ibid.:
Chamberlain's exposition, pp. 4-5.

Ibid.:
Beaumont, pp. 54-57, 141.
First Lord of the Admiralty (Goschen), pp. 140-149.
Laurier's observations, pp. 58, 61-62.

Ibid., p. 57.
21 Minutes: Colonial Conference 1897:
Beaumont's case and the Australian response:
   Beaumont, pp. 54-56.
   Braddon, p. 85.
   Forrest, pp. 56-57.
   Kingston, p. 63.
   Turner, pp. 56-57.
   Reid, p. 57.

22 Ibid.: Chamberlain, pp. 56, 60.
   Turner, pp. 55-57.

23 Ibid., p. 55.

24 Ibid.: Reid's case and support from the other Australians, pp. 55-56, 61-62.
   Quote, p. 62.

25 Ibid.: Goschen, pp. 140-149.

26 Ibid., pp. 142, 143, 148.

27 Ibid., pp. 210 ff.

28 Ibid., p. 216.

29 Ibid.: Chamberlain quoted, p. 6.
   A memorandum was drawn up by the C.D.C. on 12 June 1897 for the guidance of the Conference, pp. 190-194.
   Discussion on each clause of the document, pp. 64-77.

   Nelson, pp. 64-65.
   Reid, pp. 64-65.
   Laurier, pp. 64-65.
   Turner, p. 65.
31 Minutes: Colonial Conference 1897:
The British case, pp. 66-70.
The Australian response, pp. 67-70:
    Reid, pp. 67, 68, 70.
    Kingston, pp. 67, 71.

32 Ibid.
The British case and discussion, p. 71.

33 Ibid.
The British case and discussion, pp. 71-72.

34 Ibid.
The British case and discussion, pp. 73-74.

35 Ibid.
The British case and discussion, p. 74.

36 On the Colonial Contingents and the South African War:
   Condensed in a few pages are the results of three month's
   research on the Australian response to the South African War
   from which the present work developed. The sources consulted
   are copious. But as the intention here is to sketch the
   colonial response which the first Commonwealth government had
   to consider - examined in Chapter Five below - there is no
   need to do more than indicate the material from which the
   generalizations are made.

   For short accounts:
   Grimshaw, Some Attitudes to the Imperial Connection, pp. 12 ff.
   R. Jebb, Studies in Colonial Nationalism (London 1905: Edward
   Arnold) pp. 103 ff.
   K.C.T. Waller, Australia and the Boer War (Unpublished Paper:
   University of Queensland).

   On a brief summary of sources:

   (1) Parliamentary debates:
   Parliamentary discussion in each of the colonial legislatures,
   from September 1899 until June 1900, has been examined, in
   particular the controversy in Queensland, New South Wales, and
   Victoria.
Contemporary works:
A selection of books and pamphlets written by war correspondents and others appears in the bibliography at the end of this work.

Newspapers:
Apart from selective examination of the newspapers cited in Chapters below, the following have been perused:
The Advertiser, 1899-1902.
The Sydney Morning Herald, 1899-1902.
The Bulletin, 1898-1904.

Departmental files:
Two groups of files relating to participation in the Boer War were passed to the Defence Department. Those at the Australian War Memorial and in the Commonwealth Archives Office (Accession: MP84, S2) have been exhaustively examined. Others were left when it became clear that the problems of writing a thorough politico-military study of the Australian role in South Africa were insurmountable.

Battle reports, diaries, etc.:
Collections held by the Commonwealth Archives Office, the Australian War Memorial, the Victorian Public Library, the South Australian Archives, and the Mitchell Library have been perused. On these - plus the printed and official histories - the generalizations on Australian military performance are based.

37 Quotation from:
The Age, 16 May 1899.

38 Quotation from:
The Age, 11 September 1899.

39 Quotation from:
Grimshaw, op.cit., p.15.

40 Quotation from:
The Bulletin, 6 January 1900.
See also:

41 Quotations from:
Lieutenant-Colonel Henry to Deakin, February 1908 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1856/5/51).
See also:

Grimshaw, *op.cit.*, pp. 15 ff.

W. T. Reay, *Australians in War: With the Australian Regiment from Melbourne to Bloemfontein* (Melbourne 1900: Massina).

42 Quotation from:

*The Age*, 17 November 1902.

See also:

*Fragmentary Records of Service Background of Volunteers* (D.D., 02/615: A.W.M.).

*Nominal Rolls of the Victorian Contingents* (Public Library of Victoria).


Note: The estimates of social background are only hypothetical, based on the above sources.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER FOUR

(Starting from Introduction to Part Two)

Preface - Quotation from:
J.A. La Nauze, "Foundations of the Commonwealth" in Alfred
Deakin: Two Lectures (Brisbane 1960: University of Queensland

1 Quick and Garran, Annotated Constitution of the Australian Commonwealth,
p.335.

2 Ibid., p.341.

3 Deakin to Northcote, 22 December 1906, para.6.
(CAO: CP103, S12, P/M 06/5561)

4 Undated pencil drafts for a speech in 1907-1908 (Deakin Papers).
See also:
Below Chapter Eight.
Below Chapter Nine.

5 Deakin to Northcote, 31 October 1906, para.13.
(CAO: CP103, S12, P/M 06/5561)

6 On the power of the Commonwealth:
Joseph Chamberlain and his unofficial representative in Australia
during 1901, Sir John Anderson, were sympathetic to the Common-
wealth's need for supremacy vis à vis the states. In the
Vondel case, Chamberlain assumed the supremacy of the Common-
wealth in external affairs while Alfred Deakin, the Attorney-
General, proved more cautious. In matters of precedent given
the members of the Commonwealth parliament - an issue which
absorbed a great deal of time and correspondence - the Colonial
Office again displayed the wish to see the central government
supreme. Generally, the Colonial Office realized the necessity
of the Commonwealth to overcome provincialism.
G. Sawyer, Australian Federal Politics and Law 1901-1929
(Melbourne 1956: M.U.P.) p.82.
Sir John Anderson to Edmund Barton, 1 January 1901, 2 August
1901 (Barton Papers: C.M.L.).
On Barton-Deakin Programme in 1901:
Deakin to Barton, 7 November 1900 (Barton Papers: C.N.L.).
Governor-General's Address (CPD 1: 28-9, 10 May 1901).

Quotation from:
Deakin to Barton, 3 June 1902 (Barton Papers: C.N.L.).

On Party strengths:
Protectionists : 32
Free-traders : 27
Labour : 16
Yet as Sawyer writes (Australian Federal Politics, p.82) this is to be wise after the event. The party alignments were far more uncertain initially than these figures indicate.

The Labour Party was divided on the tariff issue. The potential total Protectionist vote was 37 to 33; but 5 uncommitted Labour members could turn the issue. Furthermore, in the Senate matters were even more troublesome for Barton and Deakin. The Protectionist, Free-trade, Labour strengths were 17:11:8. But alignments were so uncertain that the possible defection of one potential Protectionist - Senator Dobson - was to give Deakin considerable worry.

On State representation in the House:
Protectionists : 16 seats from Victoria out of a total 32.
Free-traders : 15 seats from N.S.W. out of a total 27.

On the strength of the "radical nationalists":
The strength of this group will emerge as the narrative proceeds. Taking the debates and divisions over the immigration Restriction Bill, the Naval Agreement Bill, the Defence Bill of 1901, and the resolution to support the British in South Africa, the radical group clearly included:

From the Protectionists -
J.N. Hume-Cook (Vic.)
H.B. Higgins (Vic.)
V.L. Solomon (S.A.)

Mauger (Vic.)
H.A. Crouch (Vic.)
J. Wilkinson (Qu.)

From the Opposition -
A.H. Conroy (N.S.W.)
P. Glynn (S.A.)
A. Poynton (S.A.)
C.B. Edwards (N.S.W.)

J.W. McCay (Vic.)

From Labour -
Nearly all of the Labour parliamentarians could be expected to resist measures likely to involve subservience to Great Britain, especially after 1902 when party policy on the formation of a national navy was clarified and after the Boer War had ended. However, of the sixteen, the following could be considered the hard-core radicals:
(Notes Chapter Four: beginning 9)

Bamford (Qv.) Batchelor (S.A.)
Mahon (W.A.) McDonald (Qv.)
Ronald (Vic.) Thomas (N.S.W.)

The following were moderate — or more discreet —
Hughes (N.S.W.) Watson (N.S.W.)
Fisher (Qv.) Page (Qv.)
Spence (Qv.)

In short, the 16 Labour members could be joined by 6 ministerialists and 5 Free-traders on some issues. Of these at least 22 could unite on some issues. That no debate ended in such a revolt does not remove the power given to the leaders of this group — Higgins, McCay, and Watson. Nor does the fact that many of the Labour politicians took little interest during this period in defence.

It is significant, for instance, that during the debates on immigration the government depended on some opposition voters and the party whips were hard at work. During the debates on the South African War and the Naval Agreement the government relied upon support from Reid and his followers.

9 Deakin to Barton, 7 November 1900 (Barton Papers : C.N.L.).

10 On Barton's promise:
CPD 8 : 11006.
CPD 12 : 11650.

On the confidential minute:
Minute with erasure of 18 May 1902.
(CAO : CP717, St, Vol.32, E/A 02/85)

On giving life to the constitution:
Barton explained this at length before the Colonial Conference of 1902:
Colonial Office, Miscellaneous No.144, Confidential — Conference between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Premiers of the Self-Governing Colonies: Minutes of Proceedings and Papers ... , pp.9-10, 29-30, 46, 121.
HEREAFTER: Minutes : Colonial Conference 1902.

On Watson's support:
CPD 3 : 3192-2, 30 July 1902.

11 On the Braddon Clause:

On Barton at the Colonial Conference:
Minutes : Colonial Conference 1902, pp.29-30, 121.
12 On State expenditure:
   The figures are approximate, taken from:
   Naval & Military Forces of the Commonwealth (Numbers and Cost),
   CPP : 1903, Vol.II (Ordered to be Printed, 24 July 1903).

13 On motion by Braddon (Free-trade):
   CPD 9 : 12093, 30 April 1902.
   On Watson's attack:
   CPD 9 : 12096 ff., 30 April 1902.
   On Watson's motion:
   CPD 9 : 12211, 30 April 1902.

14 On Forrest's promise:
   CPD 9 : 12090 ff., 30 April 1902.
   On Turner's response:
   CPD 9 : 12102 ff., 30 April 1902.
   On Forrest's departmental instructions:
   CAO : MP84, S2, B56, 1902/2811.
   On Forrest's reductions:
   Statement by Minister of State for Defence on the Estimates of
   the Defence Department for the Financial Year 1903-4, CPP : 1903,
   Vol.II, p.129 (Ordered to be Printed, 30 July 1903).

15 Table of Defence Expenditure from:
   Commonwealth Year Book, No.12, p.1017.

16 On O'Malley:
   Advertiser, 1 September 1902.
   CPD 3 : 3532 ff., 31 July 1901.

17 On Hughes:
   CPD 3 : 3291-9, 31 July 1902.
   A full treatment of Hughes' views will be found in Chapter Nine.
   On Higgins:
   See below in this Chapter.
   On Watson:
   CPD 3 : 3192, 30 July 1901.

18 Age, 12 December 1901.
On the Age and the British in South Africa:

Age, 11 September 1899,
19 December 1899,
26 December 1899,
7 March 1901,
7 August 1901,
16 January 1902.

On the Age and the nation in arms:

Age (Editorial), 7 March 1901,
7 August 1901,
16 January 1902.


 Australians came to learn of Bloch's work from a debate in the Royal United Services Journal in 1900 and articles in other periodicals. See:


On amateurs among the politicians:
There were enough amateurs among the politicians to give voice eventually to the idea of a nation-in-arms. Of the government members Deakin, Kingston, Crouch, Wilkinson, and Salmon had had some experience in the volunteers or rifle clubs. Of the Labour Party politicians Watson, Hughes, Spence, had been citizen-soldier; Page had served in the British regular forces. Among the Free-traders were Conroy and McCoy. Others in the lower House like Barton, Reid, Braden, and Ewing could claim long experience with the problems of defence. In the upper House there was a group of senators with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in the citizen forces: Lt.Col. C.St.Clair Cameron (Tas.); Lt.Col. Hon. A.J. Gould (N.S.W.); Lt.Col. J. Cosh Neild (N.S.W.); Lt.Col. Hon. Sir F.T. Sargood (Vic.); and Senator Ryrie. As later events demonstrated, direct and informal connections existed between many New South Wales Free-traders and eminent members of the militia units. Future military policy was to be moulded by such men.

For samples:
Hume-Cook, CPD 4 : 4639-42, 6 September 1901.
Glynn, CPD 4 : 4642-4646, 6 September 1901.
In this truncated exposition of Australian immigration policy the intention is to establish the concern of politicians with the future of the white British race – particularly in southern seas. Generalizations are based upon the debate in Commonwealth parliament on the Immigration Act.

See also:
Gollan, Radical and Working Class Politics, p.195.

On the Asian hordes:
Solomon – CPD 1 : 507, 30 May 1901.
Ewing – CPD 14 : 2052, 7 July 1903.
Groom – CPD 14 : 2129.
Crouch – CPD 3 : 2959, July–August 1901.
McLean – CPD 3 : 3203, July–August 1901.
Kirwan – CPD 3 : 3524, July–August 1901.
Senator Pearce – CPD 1 : 260, 23 May 1901.

On opposition to invasion scares:

On Barton and Hughes:
Barton – CPD 14 : 1777, 7 July 1903.
Hughes – CPD 15 : 3073–8, 5 August 1903.

On lack of concern for security:
Sissons, op.cit., Vol. II, p.8 lists the following who see little danger to Australia:
Ronald (Labour),
Sawyers (Free-trade),
McDonald (Labour),
J. Cook (Free-trade),
O'Malley (Labour),
Conroy (Free-trade),
Forrest (Protectionist),
Wilks (Free-trade),
Higgins (Protectionist),
McCay (Free-trade),
J.H. Cook (Protectionist),
Brown (Labour),
V.L. Solomon (Protectionist).

Sydney Morning Herald, 15 February 1901.

On the New Hebrides issue generally:
Departmental summary of attitudes 1900–1903.
(CAO : MP178, S1, 1902/2005)
On Henry Labouchere:
Labouchere to Barton, 16 May 1900 (Barton Papers : C.N.L.).

On Sources:
See below Chapter Eight and relevant notes.

25 On those favouring renewal of the Agreement in 1901:

Labour:
- Watson (CPD 3 : 3195–6),
- Hughes (CPD 3 : 3329–30),
- Fowler (CPD 3 : 3430),
- Watkin (CPD 3 : 3438).

Protectionist:
- Quick (CPD 3 : 2967),
- Higgins (CPD 3 : 2991),
- Braddon (CPD 3 : 3201),
- McLean (CPD 3 : 3203),
- A.C. Groom (CPD 3 : 3594),
- R. Edwards (CPD 3 : 3598),
- Barton (CPD 3 : 3598),

Free-trade:
- G.B. Edwards (CPD 3 : 2981),
- Reid (CPD 3 : 3107),
- S.W. Cook (CPD 3 : 3189),
- McCay (CPD 3 : 3205),
- McMillan (CPD 3 : 3303),
- Knox (CPD 3 : 3306),
- Manifold (CPD 3 : 3308),
- Cruickshank (CPD 3 : 3430),
- Sawyers (CPD 3 : 3519),
- J. Cook (CPD 3 : 3529),
- Wilks (CPD 14 : 1992),
- Poynton (CPD 14 : 1992).

On those against:
Against without reservation:
- Crouch – Protectionist (CPD 3 : 2964–5).
- McDonald – Labour (CPD 3 : 3250 ff.).

On those radicals who were silent:
- Hume-Cook, Mauger, Thomas and Page.

On the response of Barton and Forrest:
- Barton (CPD 3 : 3598 ff., July 1901).

On the change in Labour Party attitudes:

26 On Australians having no love of war:
- Barton (Age, 15 February 1901).
- Reid (CPD 3 : 3107, 20 July 1901).
On the dominance of the citizen soldiery and paramount interest in defence:

- Forrest (Age, 26 February 1901).
- Crouch (Age, 26 March 1901).
- McCay (Age, 30 March 1901).
- McEacham (Age, 27 February 1901).
- Barton (Age, 7 January 1901; 17 January 1901; 12 February 1901; 15 February 1901).
- Quick (Age, 25 March 1901).
- Turner (Age, 12 March 1901).
- Mauger (Age, 12 March 1901).
- Reid (Sydney Morning Herald, 13 February 1901).

On Labour views:
- Age, 8 March 1901.
- Sydney Morning Herald, 19 February 1901.
- Bulletin, 16 February 1901.
- Broadhead, op. cit., pp. 7-9.

On Cabinet's views of use of Australian troops overseas:
- Age, 15 February 1901.
- Minutes: Colonial Conference 1902, pp. 31-32.
- See discussion on the Defence Bill in this Chapter and Chapter Five on South Africa.

On the iniquities of Imperial Defence:
- Glynn (CPD 1: 193, 22 May 1901).

On the demand for self-reliance:
- Watson (CPD 3: 3192-4, 30 July 1902).

On limited aims in organization of the military forces:
- Reid (CPD 3: 3107, 26 July 1901).
- Deakin (Age, 7 March 1901).
- Quick (Age, 25 March 1901).
- Barton (Age, 17 January 1901).
- See also Barton's summary Minutes: Colonial Conference 1902, pp. 87 ff.

On Sir John Forrest:
These, and the following generalizations about Forrest as a Minister are based upon departmental minutes by him too numerous to quote, evidence that will be revealed later in the narrative, and Forrest's testimonials to the House while Minister for Defence.

- CPD 2: 2159 ff., 9 July 1901.
- CPD 9: 12090 ff., 30 April 1902.
- CPD 14: 2264 ff., 16 July 1903.
28 On the responsibility borne by Forrest:
Barton in the Age, 12 February 1901.
CAO : CP146, S2, 01/84/–.
CAO : MP160, S1, B5, 1901/60.
Papers of the Attorney-General's Department on the drafts of the
1901 Defence Bill (Attorney-General's Department, Canberra).

29 On the assimilation of Colonial Acts:
Age, 26 February 1901.
Further Report of the Federal Military Committee, Assembled at
Melbourne, Victoria, 12 June 1901.
HEREAFTER : Military Committee 1901.
CPP : 1902, Vol.2 (Ordered to be Printed 21 August 1901).
Various drafts of the Bill and some correspondence relating to
them are to be found in a bundle of papers on the Defence Bill
of 1901 at the Attorney-General's Department, Canberra.
Some seventy clauses of the first draft depended in part on the
Queensland Defence Acts, 1884-1896. Only some eight had no
colonial precedent.

On advice sought from the Victorians:
Sir Frederick Sargood to Forrest, 10 June 1901.
J.W. McCay (?) to Forrest, Undated.
(CAO : MP160, S1, 1901/640)

On protests at some of Forrest's drafts:
Military Committee 1901, p.6.

On the final draft of the Defence Bill of 1901:
A Bill to Provide for the Defences of the Commonwealth (C.15
250/9.7.1901 n.a. – F 5492) in file held by Attorney-General's
Department, Canberra.
HEREAFTER : Defence Bill 1901.

30 On the supremacy of civil authority:
Defence Bill 1901, Clauses 4, 6-10.

On command of the forces:
Ibid., Clauses 7-8.

On naval powers:
Ibid., Clause 37.
Sargood to Forrest, 10 June 1901 (CAO : MP160, S1, 1901/640).

On division of the military forces:
Defence Bill 1901, Clauses 27-30, 81.

On authority of commandants:
Ibid., Clause 9.

On promotion from ranks:
Ibid., Clauses 10-15.
Military Committee 1901, p.11.
On the Army Act:
Defence Bill 1901, Clauses 58, 59.

On the death sentence:
Ibid., Clause 86.

31 On the levy en masse:
Ibid., Clauses 31-36.

On penalties:
Ibid., Clauses 96-97.

32 On Overseas service:
Military Committee 1901, p. 11.
Barton's private address to a deputation of the "Peace, Humanity, and Arbitration Society", 22 January 1901.
(CAO : CP146, S2, 01/84/-)

On the permanent forces and overseas service:
Defence Bill 1901, Clause 49.

On the citizen forces and overseas service:
Ibid., Clause 48 (this clause is quoted in part).
Ibid., Clause 52.

On raising special units for overseas service:
Ibid., Clause 111 (this clause is quoted in part).
Ibid., Clause 50.

33 CPD 2 : 2159 ff., 9 July 1901.

34 On Forrest's performance:
Forrest did point to the militia units as the model of a future army, to the importance of executive control, to the power over finance given to the civil department, and to the possibility of despatching troops to Fiji. But his description of a provision which allowed promotion of officers only after written examination as one of the most important features of the Bill indicated his inability to present - or to grasp? - essentials. Parliamentarians view that Forrest's performance on this occasion was inept is indicated by the unsympathetic report in the Age, 10 July 1901. Catarrh and grief may well have contributed to his discomfort.

On the Debate on the Bill:
CPD 3 : 2958, 3102, 3186, 3292, 3416, 3515, 3591, 3607 and ff.

On the response of parliament:
Age, 8 August 1901.
On Barton's performance:
Barton (CPD 3 : 3599 ff., 9 August 1901).

On the Amendments:
Proposed Amendments in the Defence Bill, 12 September 1901
(Attorney-General's Department, Canberra).
HERAFTER : Amendments September 1901.

35 On the role of rifle clubs:
Watson (CPD 3 : 3191 ff., 30 July 1901).
On an amendment of Piesse, Forrest proposed to alter Clause 119
of the Bill.

On preference for rankers only to commission:
Crouch (CPD 3 : 2959 ff., 24 July 1901).
Proposed amendment to Clause 11; Forrest refused to allow this
change.

On the Council of Defence:
Proposed by Sir John Quick as a new clause and allowed by Forrest.

On fears for civil authority:
This argument was expounded by Sargood to Forrest in June 1901.
CAO : MP160, S1, B5, 1901/640.

On restriction of service to particular States:
Proposed by McCay as an amendment to Clause 50 and allowed by
Forrest. Citizen-soldiers could, however, be taken over state
boundaries for camps of continuous training.

36 On objections to the Army Act:
Amendments proposed by McCay and changes made by Forrest to
Clauses 58, 59, 83, 84 and 104 of the Bill.

On limitations to discretionary power of the officers:
Amendments by Forrest to Clause 104 restricting punishment of
citizen soldiers to a maximum fine of £5. Members of Permanent
Forces could have pay stopped for fourteen days or be confined
to barracks for twenty-one days, only seven of which might
involve imprisonment.

37 CPD 3 : 2991, 24 July 1901.

38 Quotation from:
J.W. McCay (CPD 9 : 12111, 30 April 1902).

On Higgins' criticisms:
CPD 3 : 2990 ff., 24 July 1901.

On Labour support for Higgins:
For Watson's immediate response (CPD 3 : 2992). For the
declaration of support (CPD 4 : 4392).
First quotation from:
Clause 4 of Defence Bill 1901.

On retention of the levy en masse:
Higgins proposed to have Clauses 33–34 struck out. The attitude of J.W. McCoy (CPD 3 : 3205 ff., 30 July 1901) is characteristic of those with reservations who did not support Higgins; newcomers to parliament, K. O'Malley and Senator Pearce, opposed the levy en masse fearing militarism. The measure generally accepted as an indispensable reserve power (e.g. Sydney Morning Herald, 2 August 1901).

On restricting the discretionary powers of commandants:
The deletion was moved by W.M. Hughes. For report of Labour support for Higgins on this and other measures see: Sydney Morning Herald, 27 July 1901.

On the limitation of the Executive’s power to declare an emergency:
Higgins intended to move a stronger amendment of Clause 48 requiring resolutions from both Houses of parliament; Forrest’s alteration was less specific.

On the limitation of volunteers for overseas service:
Higgins successfully moved the deletion of Clause 49 (the overseas service of permanent forces) and amendments of Clauses 48, 50. For these and other amendments allowed by Forrest see Amendments August 1901 and Amendments September 1901 cited in Note 34 above.
Quote from amendment to Clause 50 in Amendments September 1901.

On Hughes and the Bill:
CPD 3 : 3297, 31 July 1901.
With less vituperation and indignation the Sydney Morning Herald on 2 August 1901, agreed.

First quotation from:
Age, 12 July 1901.

On Barton’s justification of the Bill:
CPD 3 : 3599 ff., 9 August 1901.

On Forrest’s inclusion in Barton’s ministry:
Sawyer, op.cit., p.15.
Forrest to Barton, 8 March 1900 (Barton Papers : C.N.L.) wherein Forrest expressed the hope that Chamberlain would amend the Constitution Bill to ensure the continuation of existing tariffs in Western Australia for five years.
On Forrest's attitude to England:
"I have seen many countries in the Old and New World", he wrote of England in 1900, "but our island Home is the best."
Forrest to Barton, 8 March 1900 (Barton Papers : C.N.L.).

While Turner could look upon the Naval Agreement as a business agreement from which the Commonwealth prospered, Forrest saw it also as the means of upholding British naval strength. See below Chapter Seven.

43 See below Chapters Six and Seven.

44 The general treatment to follow is based on the following sources:


Statement by Asquith on 25 July 1912, concerning the structure and function of the Committee of Imperial Defence, reported and discussed in the Royal United Services Institute Journal, August 1912, pp. 1189 ff.


Various memoranda prepared by the Colonial Defence Committee, the Overseas Defence Committee and the Committee of Imperial Defence for Australian use. In particular:
Proposed Organization of the Military Forces of the Australasian Colonies ... Remarks by the Colonial Defence Committee, No. 4OR of the 16th of May 1890.

Colonial Defence - Memorandum by the Colonial Defence Committee, No. 90M of the 31st of December 1896.

New South Wales - Defence Scheme revised to September, 1896 - Remarks by the Colonial Defence Committee, Secret No. 159R of the 29th of April 1897.

New South Wales - Defence Scheme revised to September, 1898 - Remarks by the Colonial Defence Committee, Secret No. 204R of the 14th of January 1899.

Australia - Defence Forces and Defences - Memorandum by the Colonial Defence Committee, Confidential No. 254M of the 30th of March 1901.

Report of the Committee of Imperial Defence upon a General Scheme of Defence for Australia, in Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers (Ordered to be Printed, 15 August 1906).


45 On scale of attack prior to 1902:
   CDC No. 254M (of March 1901), p.8.
   CDC No. 195R (of April 1897), p.8.
   CDC No. 204R (of January 1899), p.2.

On scale of attack 1901-1906:
   CDC No. 254M (of March 1901), p.8.
   CID of 1906, pp.6-8.

On scale of attack after 1906:
   See below Chapter Eight.

46 On guerre de course:
   The French were more consistent in their interest in commerce
   destruction.
   e.g. Marder, British Naval Policy, Chapters 6, 13.
   Insofar as this affected Australian naval thought it will be
   treated below in Chapter Seven.

47 On changes in naval policy:
   In the first draft of this thesis considerable space was given
   to changes in naval architecture and policy to explain the
   departure by the Admiralty from localized coastal defence, its
   application by the French in the form of defense mobile, and
   the affect that this had on Australian thought. More technical
   considerations, both naval and military, have been omitted from
   the final draft to conform to the word limit. It is hoped that
   this truncated account will serve as sufficient background to
   understand – and correctly assess – navalist thought in
   Australia.

On the enunciation of the doctrine of fleet concentration:
   Minutes; Colonial Conference 1902, pp.18-26, but particularly
   Memorandum on Sea Power and the Principles Involved in it,
   June 1902, pp.213 ff.

48 This simplified account rests on:
   Marder, British Naval Policy, Chapters 24, 26, 27.
   Marder, From Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, Chapters 3, 6.

49 On value of fleet concentration to Australia:
   CID of 1906, p.7.
   It is clear from Marder and articles in Brassey's Naval Annual
   that lessons of importance were drawn from the Russo-Japanese
   War.
On the efficacy of blockade:

C/d of 1906, p. 7. The efficacy of blockade was not expounded in that memo; at the time the Admiralty was experimenting with distant rather than close blockade.

Hankey, op.cit., I, p.77.

50 On the alleged bogey of bombardment:
This represented a change in assessment of the efficacy of bombardment from the eighties and the early nineties. The Governor of Victoria, later Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence, and a correspondent of Deakin's, Sir George Sydenham Clarke, clearly made this point, inter alia, in a lecture, The Navy and the Nation, in Melbourne, 11 June 1903.

The difficulties of bombardment were suggested in C/d No. 40R (of May 1890) p.2; they were repeated in C/d No. 2541M (of March 1901) p.4; the most confident assertion appeared in C/d of 1906, p.6.

51 On the duties of the Commander on the China Station concerning commerce protection:


See also Chapter Eight below.

52 On the Dual Alliance:

Harmer, Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, p.40. (See also British Naval Policy, pp. 97, 162, 233, 104)

On Germany as naval antagonist:

Ibid., pp.40, 119, 122. (See also British Naval Policy, Chapter 24, pp.496 ff.)

On Japan:

Ibid., pp.40, 233, 237 ff. (See also Note 51 above)

On the U.S.A.:

Ibid., pp.124, 184. (See also British Naval Policy, pp.312, 442-450)

53 See below Chapter Nine.

54 On Australians as part of an Imperial reserve:

Minutes: Colonial Conference 1902, pp.81-85. Europe was excluded as an area of operation for colonial troops.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER FIVE

1. Age, 15 February 1901.

2. Barton's speech before a deputation led by Rentoul, 22 January 1901 (CAO: CP146, S2, 01/84/-).

3. On comments from the Age:
   7 January 1901.
   12 February 1901.

   On pledge for future commitment:
   Sydney Morning Herald, 10 January 1902.

   On comment by other Ministers:
   Age, 15 February 1901.
   Age, 7 March 1901.

4. CPD 3: 3107, 26 July 1901.

5. See above Chapter III.

6. On potential opposition of Labour members:
   From evidence presented in Chapter IV above:
   Thomas,
   Watkins,
   Bamford,
   McDonald,
   Ronald,
   could easily have maintained their opposition.

   On potential radical opposition:
   CPD 3: 3191-2, 30 July 1901.

7. On Elands River:
   See above Chapter III.

   On Lawson and Elands River:
   "That Pretty Girl in the Army", p.635.
On Request for service clasps:
Hopetown to Chamberlain, No. 49 of 1 August 1901.
Chamberlain to Hopetown, No. 89 of 1 November 1901.
CAO: CP78, S21, B45a.
Also CAO: CP146, System 2, 01/86/--.

8 Officially Beatson was to admit to anger but not public statement. Although only hearsay evidence, the probability is that Beatson used words very like those quoted.

Quotations from:
Report by Major McKnight prepared for the Prime Minister, c. 23 October 1901 (CAO: MP84, S2, 1901/3859).

9 The account of the affair has been shortened in the text.

On Sources:
McKnight report cited in Note 8 above.

On questions concerning the affair:
Arm report of incident quoted in the lower house - CPD 5: 6642.
Chapman - CPD 6: 7836.
Fowler - CPD 4: 5459.
Watson - CPD 5: 6811.

On Ministerial concern:
Memos by Forrest and Barton, 26 October 1901, 29 October 1901, on the McKnight Report cited in Note 8 above.

10 Chamberlain to Hopetown (telegram) received 7 November 1901 (CAO: CP78, S21, B45a).
11 On Barton's response:
CPD 5: 6643-4, 30 October 1901.
Hope town to Chamberlain, 29 November 1901 (Confidential Telegram)
Hope town to Barton, 27 November 1901 (Barton Papers).

On Beatson's denial:
CPD 5: 6642, 30 October 1901. In fact, Beatson was promoted to
the rank of Major-General and placed in command of operations
against the Boer leader, Scheepers, in the Cape Colony.
(Official History, 4: 242)
Chamberlain to Hope town (telegram) received 4 January 1902 —
CAO: CP78, S21, B45a.

12 On Omissions:
The Handcock and Morant affair has been shortened in the text.

On the Morant Affair:
F. Renar (Frank Fox of the Bulletin), Bushman and Buccaneer
(Sydney 1902: Dunn & Co.) for the first coherent attempt to link
the story with the legend. The pamphlet includes many letters
written by Morant and verbal evidence provided by Lenihan.

C.S. Jarvis, Half a Life (London 1943: John Murray) for
reminiscences on the action of the Bushveldt Carbineers.

G.R. Witton, Scapegoats of the Empire (Melbourne 1907: Patterson
& Co.) for a contemporary report of the only surviving Australian
involved in the affair. This embittered and rambling work
undoubtedly includes some of the proceedings of the court-martial;
internal evidence, careless dating of incidents, and conflict
with the few published sources make this work far more unreliable
than later journalists and publicists have admitted. Witton did,
however, have access to the papers of Major Thomas, the defending
counsel.

F.M. Cutlack, Breaker Morant (Sydney 1962: Ure Smith) for the
latest treatment of the case. Cutlack depends heavily upon
Witton and Fox without questioning their evidence. Significantly
he was one of the historians of the official history of the
Australian role in the Great War and like its editor, Dr. C.E.W.
Bean, was imbued with the Australian legend.

On the official documentation:
The few official documents — Kitchener's telegram and the findings
of the court-martial — are to be found in CAO: CP78, S21, B45b
(Misc. No. 78 of 1/4/02). The substance of these were later
et seq. (Ordered to be Printed, 15 April 1902).
The *Times History* and the official history of the South African War are silent on the affair. As we shall see, they are also silent on whether Kitchener proclaimed a general order that Boer prisoners caught wearing British uniforms were to be shot without a court-martial. The case presented here rests on the balance of probabilities, not on general statements made by writers like Edgar Holt, *The Boer War* (London 1958: Putnam) on whom Cutlack depends, especially statements in Chapter 22.

13 Other officers were involved — Lieutenant Picton, for instance — but here we are concerned primarily with the Australians.

14 CPP, Vol. II, 1902, pp. 137 ff. (Ordered to be Printed, 16 April 1902) for the official record of the charges.

15 Quotation from: Cutlack, *op. cit.*, p. 31 (letter Morant to Patterson, 3 August 1895).

16 This sketch of Morant's life rests upon information from Cutlack, Chapters II and III, which in turn rests heavily on Fox's account.

17 Cutlack, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
Fox also evokes considerable emotion from the mateship theme.


19 This interpretation is of considerable importance. The official precis of the findings makes no mention of recommendation for mercy in the case of the eight Boers. But in Witton's published statement of what he argues to be the true findings of the court, Morant is recommended to mercy. (*Witton, op. cit.*, pp. 158-161)

Witton's evidence is suspect on three counts:

1. The summing-up of the Judge-Advocate (pp. 133-134) would seem to leave little room for mercy; for he suggested that if provocation (i.e. Hunt's death) be considered an extenuating circumstance the finding should be manslaughter. Furthermore, he urged the court to consider the method of the criminal act, the probability of premeditation, and the time that lapsed between the provocation and the crime.

2. If Witton's statement be a "true" document, then it is hard to account for two mistakes in the dating of the confirmation of the sentences.
(3) Again, if Witton's document be authentic, it is difficult to account for the changes in format. In the first place, it differs from the format of the official and printed findings. In the second, it is inconsistent: those who number the reasons for the recommendation of mercy in one case are very likely to do so in a second (cf. the findings of the Visser Case with that of the Eight Boers Case). In the third, from the court-martial proceedings on other cases which I have perused, the format seems to be fixed by regulation. Witton's document is not in accord with this established practice. There is, therefore, a reasonable suspicion that the recommendation for mercy in Witton's account was interpolated.

20 Cutlack, _op.cit._, p.175.

21 On Barton's Statement:
CPD 9: 11250-1, 2 March 1902.

On Press Response:
Cutlack, _op.cit._, Chapter Eight.

On Correspondence with Kitchener:
Hopetoun to Kitchener, 27 March 1902.
Kitchener to Hopetoun, 1 April 1902.
Kitchener to Hopetoun, 6 April 1902.
(CAO : CP78, S21, B45b, Misc.78)
(CAO : CP78, S1, 1/382)

On the Printed Report:

22 On Requests for Clemency:
Tennyson to Chamberlain, 6 December 1902.
(CAO : CP78, S8, Vol.II, p.73)
Chamberlain to Tennyson (Confidential), 12 December 1902.
Correspondence May to July 1903.
Barton to Tennyson, 1 September 1903.
(CAO : CP78, S1, 316)

On Deakin's Actions:
Witton, _op.cit._, p.240.
Deakin to Tennyson, 18 February 1904.
Tennyson to Lyttleton, 7 April 1904.
Lyttleton to Tennyson, c. 22 June 1904.
(CAO : CP78, S1, 316)
See also Lenehan to Deakin, 5 February 1905.
(CAO : CP78, S1, 1/382)
On the Refusal of the War Office:
Lyttleton to Tennyson, 12 August 1904.
Lyttleton to Tennyson, 17 October 1903 — Enclosure from the War Office.
(CAO : CP78, S1, 316)

23 Material on the Lenehan case is copious. Here are but a few references:
N.S.W. P.P., 10 September 1902.
For discussion on the Commonwealth Defence Department 1902-1904:
D.D. 02/673 (A.W.M. 8/19).
For claims against the War Office 1902-1905:
CAO : CP78, S1, 1/382.
For 1907:
For 1911:
CAO : MP84, S1, 142/3/5.
See also:
Thomas to Forrest, 16 October 1903.
(D.D. 02/673 — A.W.M. 1/19)
Hutton to Chapman, 5 October 1903.
(D.D. 02/673 — A.W.M. 8/19)

24 Quotation from:
Chamberlain to Hopetown (telegram), 7 August 1901.
(CAO : CP146, System 2, 01/30/-)

On Requests for Aid:
Kitchener requested reinforcements of mounted troops in December 1900, and in March of the following year. (CAO : CP78, S21, B456, Miscellaneous S.A.) From most states no contingents or drafts were sent to South Africa after April 1901. Significantly, the exception was Queensland.

On Barton's Response:
CPD 2 : 1488, 25 June 1901.
CPD 3 : 3880, 16 August 1901.

On Supremacy of the Commonwealth:
Question by Crouch (CPD 3 : 2939, 24 July 1901). This affair stemmed from a report in the Age on the 18 July 1901.
(CAO : CP146, System 2, 01/30/-)
(D.D. 1901/1485)

On Other Issues:
Excluded from the text is the account of the attempt by the British government to transport Boer prisoners to Tasmania and the ministerial resistance to this. Also excluded is Barton's brief for the Colonial Conference concerning Australian supplies for British armed forces East of Suez.
(Notes Chapter Five : beginning 25)

25 On Forrest's problems:
   CAO : E/A, 02/25, 69, 100, 103, 141, 142.
   CAO : 146, System 2, 01/75/-.

On Barton's restraint:
   Though Barton deceived the House later on the dates on which the decision to send a Commonwealth contingent was reached there is no reason to doubt his explanation of motives for earlier inaction. It is fully consistent with other evidence.
   (CPD 7 : 8739 ff., 14 January 1902)
   See also the public address of Hopetoun reported (CPD 7 : 9477-8, 30 January 1902).

On Barton's demand that the British government request troops:
   Barton held this view consistently. See his memos:
   18 July 1901 (CAO : CP146, System 2, 01/30/-).
   3 August 1901 (CAO : CP146, System 2, 01/75/-).
   21 November 1901 (CAO : CP146, System 2, 01/75/-).
   CPD 7 : 8739-40, 14 January 1901.

26 Barton on financial and alleged constitutional difficulties:
   CAO : CP146, System 2, 01/75/- (E/A, 75/1, 01).

27 Quotation from:
   Sydney Morning Herald, 10 January 1902.
   Barton was skilfully evasive on the date of commitment and constantly returned to the same set of facts giving them a different emphasis each time.
   (CPD 7 : 8739-8744)

On the Henniker Heaton affair:
   Heaton to Chamberlain, 9 December 1901.
   Enclosure to despatch, Chamberlain to Hopetoun, 4 April 1901.
   (CAO : CP178, S21, B45a, S/S Cable 7 February 1902)
   Chamberlain denied any connection with Heaton and asserted that his despatch of 9 December 1901 to Barton was quite unrelated to Heaton's communication.
   Heaton's explanation - Advertiser, 4 March 1902.

28 On Chamberlain's enquiry:
   Chamberlain to Hopetoun (Secret telegram), 9 December 1901.
   (CAO : CP78, S1, B45a, S/S Cable 31 December 1901)

On Barton's commitment:
   Hopetoun to Barton, 10 December 1901.
   Barton's Confidential Minute, 10 December 1901.
   Hopetoun to Chamberlain, 11 December 1901.
   (CAO : CP146, System 2, 01/75/-, E/A, 75/01)
Hopetoun to Chamberlain, 15 December 1901.
Hopetoun to Chamberlain, 17 December 1901.
(CAO : CP78, S9, Vol.I, pp.102-3)
Hopetoun to Barton, 18 December 1901.
(Barton Papers : C.N.L.)

29 Hopetoun to Chamberlain, 11 December 1901.

30 On the request for justification:
Chamberlain to Hopetoun, 14 December 1901.
Chamberlain to Hopetoun, 21 December 1901.
(CAO : CP78, S21, B45a, S/S Cable, 31 December 1901)

On formal and official approval:
Hopetoun to Chamberlain, 22 December 1901.

31 Report of the Conference of Military Commandants ... on 28th September, 1899 ... in bound volumes of printed documents in library of the Defence Department (45, 30/12302).

32 Quotation from:
Advertiser, 4 January 1902.

33 On pressure from the States:
CAO : CP146, System 2, 01/75/- (E/A, 75/5, 01).

On Deakin's intervention:
Barton to Deakin, 26 December 1901.
(CAO : CP146, System 2, 01/75/-)
Only Barton's response is on record.

On Newspaper comment:
Advertiser, 9 January 1902.
Sydney Morning Herald, 1 January 1902.

34 On Barton's justification:
Sydney Morning Herald, 10 January 1902.

On rumours of Reid's actions:
Sydney Morning Herald, 16 January 1902.
Age, 14 January 1902.
35 Barton to Reid, 13 January 1902.
   (Barton Papers : C.N.L.)

36 *Loc. cit.*
   On Reid's response:
   Reid to Barton, 13 and 14 January 1902.
   (Barton Papers : C.N.L.)

37 On Barton's attitude in 1899:
   *N.S.W.P.D. 100* : 1495–1504, 19 October 1899.

   On Barton's resolution in 1902:
   CPD 7 : 8738 ff., 14 January 1902.

   **Note:** Unless otherwise indicated all speeches were made on 14 January 1902. Barton's resolutions were introduced on the first day of parliament after the Christmas recess.

   On the divisions in the House:
   CPD 7 : 8800.

   On the debate in the Senate:
   CPD 7 : 9007–30, 22 January 1902.

38 From this account the case for participation has been omitted because, given the limitations of space, it is deemed clear from attitudes presented in Chapters II and III above. Hereunder are samples of views expressed about the following propositions:

   On the war being just:
   W.A. Fowler (Labour) - CPD 7 : 8762–8769.
   Bruce Smith (Free-trade) - CPD 7 : 8787–8792.
   Barton - CPD 7 : 8795–9.

   On Pro-Boers encouraging resistance to the British cause:
   Barton - CPD 7 : 8795–6.
   Salmon (Protectionist) - CPD 7 : 8769–71.
   Quick (Protectionist) - CPD 7 : 8782–5.

   On Australia's interests lying in the preservation of the Cape Route:
   Barton - CPD 7 : 8741–2.

   On the inviolability of Empire:
   Barton - CPD 7 : 8740, 8744, 9383.
   Quick (Protectionist) - CPD 7 : 8782–5.

   On Australian security depending upon British power and prestige in the world and the Empire being a spear-head of civilization and good government:
   Barton - CPD 7 : 8798.
   Reid - CPD 7 : 8747–9.
(Notes Chapter Five • beginning 39)

Salmon (Protectionist) - CPD 7 : 8769-71.
Smith (Free-trade) - CPD 7 : 8792.

On general support for racial patriotism:
McGregor (Labour) - CPD 7 : 9013.
Pearce (Labour) - CPD 7 : 9026-7.

39 CPD 7 : 8954, 21 January 1902.

40 On Higgins:
Grimshaw, *Some Aspects of Australian Attitudes to the Imperial Connection 1900-1919*, pp.22-23.
CPD 7 : 8752-8762, 14 January 1902.
Age, 28 March 1901, p.8.

41 CPD 7 : 8752-8762, 14 January 1902. His points have been given a coherence they did not have in the long and rambling speech.

42 CPD 7 : 8757.

43 CPD 7 : 8753.

44 For sample views:
McDonald (Labour) - CPD 7 : 8771-8775, 14 January 1902.
Ronald (Labour) - CPD 7 : 9389-90, 29 January 1902.

45 CPD 7 : 9393, 29 January 1902.

46 For Labour's response in 1899 see Chapter III above.

47 CPD 7 : 9012, 21 January 1902.

48 Watson (Labour) - CPD 7 : 8749-52, 14 January 1902.
Pearce (Labour) - CPD 7 : 9026-29, 21 January 1902.

49 For discussion of the two notions:
CPD 7 : 9375 et seq., 29 January 1902.
CPD 7 : 9476 et seq., 30 January 1902.
Watson (Labour) - CPD 7: 8749-52, 9374-78, 9394-6, 9497 ff.

Loc. cit.

E.g. Barton - CPD 7: 8798-9, 14 January 1902.
Reid - CPD 7: 8750, 14 January 1902.

On the Contingents:

P.L. Murray, Official Record of the Australian Military Contingents in the South African War (Melbourne 1910: Government Printer ?).
Chamberlain to Hopetoun, 17 January 1902.
Chamberlain to Hopetoun, 18 March 1902.
(CAO: CP78, S21, B45a, S/S Cable, 31 December 1901)
CPD 7: 8944-5, 21 March 1902.
CPD 8: 11099, 20 March 1902.

On the lack of officers:
Hutton to Forrest, 16 April 1902.
D.D. 02/879 (A.W.M. 2/19).

Quotation from:
CPD 10: 12938, 28 May 1901.

See also:
CPD 10: 13146-7, 3 June 1901.

On Deakin and South Africa:
CPD 18: 718-19, 17 March 1904.
Jebb to Deakin, 18 June 1906.
(CAO: CP103, S10, 06/3694)

On Newspaper Response:

Advertiser, 14 January 1902, accuses Barton for not anticipating Chamberlain's wishes.
Advertiser, 16 January 1902, chides Barton for unduly stressing German provocation.
Age, 14 January 1902, calling for a contingent and parliamentary support for Barton's policy.
Age, 16 January 1902, praises the speeches of the more flamboyant of the Imperial loyalists, Fowler and McLean.
Sydney Morning Herald, 16 January 1902, blames Barton for hesitation and lack of appreciation of Imperial responsibilities.
On resolutions of support for Chamberlain:
These were passed on to Chamberlain by Hopetoun. Samples:

On pro-British fervour:
Advertiser, 30 January 1902, p.5.

On opposition to participation:
Bulletin, 20 December 1901 (editorial), and 28 December 1901 (editorial).
Grimshaw, op.cit., Chapter II.

CAO : CP146, System 2, 02/137, January 1902.
CAO : CP78, S1, 1/317, 1902 to 1907.
CAO : CP78, S21, B45a (S/S Cable 31 December 1901), 1901 to 1907.

58 On the Heaton affair:
Hopetoun to Chamberlain, No.15 of 7 February 1902.
(CAO : CP78, S8, Vol. I of 1902, p.355)
Chamberlain to Hopetoun, No.116 of 27 December 1901.
Chamberlain to Hopetoun (Confidential), 4 April 1902.
(CAO : CP78, S21, B45a, S/S Despatch of 7 February 1902)
Much speculation occurred in parliament on the roles of Heaton and Chamberlain, e.g. CPD 7 : 9031 ff., 21 January 1902.

59 On Chamberlain's position in the winter of 1901:

60 Quotation from Amery:
Amery, Union and Strength, p.15.

Quotation from Hodern:
United Service Magazine, April 1904, p.119.

On Captain Mahan:

On Lord Brassey:
Grimshaw, op.cit., p.6.

61 Jebb, Colonial Nationalism, p.84.

62 Grimshaw, op.cit., p.96.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER SIX

1 Colonial Defence Committee No. 226 M (of 30 July 1901) "... Organization of the Defence Department and the Constitution of Head-Quarters Staff", p. 15.

2 Chamberlain to Hopetoun, 13 November 1901.
See also Despatch of 1 December 1901 (CAO : CP78, S1, 1/55, Cable 1 June 1901).

3 Ibid., Chamberlain to Hopetoun, 29 May 1902 (Enclosure War Office to Colonial Office, No. 108 of 1902).

4 The material on the selection of a General Officer is copious. As the account is reduced in the text, citation will also be restricted.

On Correspondence with the Colonial Office:
CAO : CP78, S9, VI, pp. 51, 55.
CAO : CP78, S9, VI, PP. 67, 75-78, 89, 90, 91.
CAO : CP78, S1, 1/55, Cable of 1 June 1901 (Despatches plus enclosures).
Hopetoun to Barton, 2 August 1901, 1 December 1901 (Barton Papers : C.N.L.).
COC No. 226 M.

On the Australian response:
CAO : MP84, S2, 01/2488.
The Argus, 23 September 1901.
CPD 4 : 5219, 26 September 1901.
Sydney Morning Herald, 5 February 1902.
CPD 6 : 8064-5, 2 December 1901.
Sydney Morning Herald, 10 January 1902.

5 Apart from the official material used and yet to be quoted — and far too profuse to be cited here — this sketch of Hutton draws heavily upon the following sources.

The works of Major Warren Perry:
Warren Perry, Military Reforms of General Sir Edward Hutton ..., cited above.

While Perry has carefully collected a great deal of material for a short biography of Hutton – and other military officers – which I have used freely, and has kindly spoken and corresponded with me on Australian military subjects, the interpretation of Hutton offered here is my own.

The unofficial writings of Hutton:

E.T.H. Hutton, _The Tactical and Strategical Power of Mounted Troops in War..._ (read at the United Service Institute of N.S.W., 28 August 1894).


E.T.H. Hutton, _A Cooperative System for the Defence of the Empire_ (read at the Royal Colonial Institute, 19 April 1898).

The last two addresses were given to audiences which included Sir Charles Dilke, the Duke of Connaught, Sir John Colomb, H.O. Arnold Forster. All three were presented to Barton with sections on Imperial cooperation heavily scored as a form of Brief for the Colonial Conference 1902 (CAO : CP103, S12, B4).


Other sources:


_Army List_ of 1904, 1906, 1908, 1910.

See also Hutton's views on the British Territorials in addresses and discussion reported in the _Royal United Services Institute Journal_.

HEREAFTER : RUSIJ.

Before the National Defence Association, May 1908 : RUSIJ November 1908, pp.1585 ff.

Discussion after lecture by Baden-Powell on the Territorials, RUSIJ, November 1908, pp.1487 ff.

6 RUSIJ, November 1908, quotation from p.1586; see also pp.1585 ff.

7 In general terms this was Hutton's teaching as it finally evolved based upon his official and unofficial writing. See also _Instruction Book of Training of Imperial Yeomanry_ (War Office : 1900?), A.W.M. 11/19.
8 Quotation from:
Hutton to Chapman, 15 March 1904.
CAO: MP84, S2, 1904/1539.

See also:
RUSIJ, November 1908, p.1585.

9 On the elaboration of the function of the mounted rifles:
Hutton's remarks on the manoeuvres of the 3rd and 4th Australian
Light Horse - issued with General Order No.104 of 4 May 1904.
CAO: MP84, S2, 1904/2709.

On the lessons of South Africa:
See his reply to criticism in the Age, 7 November 1903.
CAO: MP84, S2, 1903/6166.

10 Deakin to Barton, 17 June 1902 (Barton Papers : C.N.L.).
Sir George Turner suspected that Hutton had been juggling the estimates
to prevent the reduction of £132,000 promised by Forrest.

11 Hutton to Chapman, 14 March 1904.
CAO: MP84, S2, 1904/1539.


13 See Note 5 above.

14 Lord Brassey, Papers & Addresses ... Imperial Federation and Colonization
from 1880 to 1894 (London 1895 : Longmans, Green) particularly pp.
144-146, 211, 264-266.

15 Quotation from Daily Mail, 30 June 1897: cutting of paper in Fragmentary
History of Records of Second Australian Light Horse Regiment (Mounted

16 Colonial Defence Committee Secret No.126M (of February 1899) -
"Australia; Mounted Rifles for Imperial Service in War".
CDC Memo No.254M, p.10.
Quotation from: Parliamentary Papers 1904, XL (Cd.1789) p.89.

For statements by British Ministers of State 1900-1901:

CDC Memo No.254, pp.10-11.

Other Sources:

P.A. Silburn, A Plea for an Imperial Army in the United Services
Magazine, August 1903, pp.470 ff.
J.W. Creed, "A Colonist's Views on Army Reform" in the Contemporary
Lt.Col. E.S. May, Principles & Problems of Imperial Defence
(London 1903 : Swann, Sonnenheim).

Annual Report upon the Military Forces of the Commonwealth by
Major-General Sir Edward Hutton ... 1st May, 1903.
CPP 1903, Vol.II, pp.57 et seq. (Ordered to be Printed 6 August 1903)
- p.23 of the report.

HUTTON : Commonwealth Military Report 1903.


Subservience to the Commonwealth was subject to a proviso which, on
present evidence, can only remain a doubt. There is no way of
discovering in Australia the nature of Hutton's instructions from the
War Office - supposing any existed. It is likely that British authori-
ties wanted the way left open for some kind of Imperial reserve.
Moreover, like other General Officers Commanding Hutton possessed a
secret cypher with which he could make confidential reports to the
War Office. See below in this Chapter.

See below Chapter VIII.

In this attempt to present a fundamental difference between Hutton and
Australian Cabinets, I have distilled from his remarks and recommenda-
tions the manner in which he appears to have conceived policy should
be made. In fact, he was often not as articulate as this summary
suggests. The advantage of the summary is that it lends a cogent
pattern to his complaints and his difficulties.

Moreover, it was standard practice, indeed part of the King's Regula-
tions, that military planning be compiled resting on answers to all
these questions - or approval by Cabinet to answers given by military
staff. The resulting document, in Australia at least, was known as
a Defence Scheme; it was supposed to begin with considerations in
strategy and policy and end with detailed plans for mobilization.
Bridges was more persistent and clearer in his argument partly because Hutton had already laid the foundations of military policy and partly because one minister for Defence, T.T. Ewing, was more acute than his predecessors.

21 On the request of Forrest and Barton: Commonwealth Military Report 1903, p.5.

On Hutton's Strategic Assessment and Military Policy:
The method of exposition here will be to take the Defence Minute April 1902 as a basis and include the later recommendations, most of which found their way into printed parliamentary papers in some form or another. They were summarized for the first time in Chapter I of the first proof of the Defence Scheme for the Commonwealth of Australia of July 1904 which was prepared for approval by the Colonial Defence Committee. Hutton himself explained that this blue-print was merely an amplification of the basic minute of April 1902.
CAO : MP84, S2, 1904/1185: Meeting of the Commonwealth Defence Committee, p.4.

The most important sources will be:
Correspondence on the Formation of Head-Quarters Staff, Feb.-April 1902 and April 1904.
D.D. - 02/124, 02/393, 02/147 (A.W.M.).
CAO : MP84, S2, B56, 1904/1616.
HEREAFTER : Correspondence on H.Q. Staff.

Minute Upon the Defence of Australia by Major-General Sir Edward Hutton ... 7th April 1902 in CPP, Vol.II of 1902.
HEREAFTER : Defence Minute April 1902.

Recommendations on Fixed Defences 1902-1905.
CAO : MP84, S2, 1972/2/261.
CAO : CP290, S15, B1, Secretary of State Cable, 23 June 1904.
HEREAFTER : Hutton on Fixed Defences.

Correspondence on the Defence Act 1903, May-Oct. 1903.
D.D. - 03/341 (A.W.M.).
HEREAFTER : Hutton on Defence Act 1903.

Hutton to Forrest, 14 May 1903, on Transcontinental Railway.
CAO : MP84, S1, 1957/2/43, Printed in part in Parliamentary Paper (Ordered to be Printed 23 July 1903).

Hutton to Dawson, 23 June 1904.
CAO : MP84, S2, 1904/184 and 1904/1496.

Commonwealth Military Report 1903.
Pacific and the corresponding rise of Japan. Secondly, he made the following reference to the Defence Act in an amendment of a sentence already quoted: "It may be assumed, therefore, that although Australia under the conditions of the new Defence Act, confines her military forces to action upon Australian soil, she will in the near future determine ... also to defend those vast interests beyond her soil ..."

Commonwealth Defence Scheme July 1904, p. 2.

The area of possible conflict involving Australia included, in Hutton’s estimation: China, the Northern Pacific, the South-West Pacific, India, and the Indian Ocean.

27 On the primacy of the field force:
CAO : MP84, S2, 03/7403.

On the cadre principle:
A Cadre - a term often to be used in this Chapter - is the permanent establishment of a military unit forming a nucleus for expansion in war. For instance, the establishment for an infantry unit proposed in 1902 was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regiment of Infantry</th>
<th>Officers</th>
<th>Warrant Officers</th>
<th>Sergeants</th>
<th>Rank &amp; File</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peace</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>929</td>
<td>1010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On Organization:
For the most vehement expression of this, see his statement of colonial experience as he related it to the British Territories. RUSIJ, op. cit., Nov. 1908, pp. 1487 ff., 1585 ff.

On the Estimates:
Defence Minute April 1902, p. 7.
Commonwealth Military Report 1903, pp. 5 and 16.
Statement by the Minister of State for Defence on the Estimates of the Defence Department for the Financial Year 1903-4, 30 July 1903. - CPP, Vol. II of 1903 (Ordered to be Printed 30 July 1903).

28 Quotation from:
Hutton to Dawson, 26 April 1904.
CAO : MP84, S2, 1904/1616.

See also:
Commonwealth Military Report 1903, pp. 5-7.
Correspondence on H.Q. Staff, Feb.-April 1902.
29 Hutton to Forrest, 17 Feb. 1902.
Correspondence on H.Q. Staff.

Hutton assumed the duties of Chief of Staff with the help of a military secretary though his burden was partly lightened as the Deputy Adjutant-General, Colonel J.C. Road, was also made Chief Staff Officer.

30 Much of the technical and administrative detail has been omitted from the final draft of the text, on the grounds that the military aspects of the thesis should not clutter the story of policy. (For a table showing lines of responsibility see Chapter VIII below) The following brief comments may, however, help:

(1) The fountainhead of all power inside the military scheme lay with Hutton. The officers on his staff held essentially executive positions; even then he was reluctant to delegate authority.

(2) The District Staffs would be responsible to the central body charged with the formulation and direction of military policy. Staff Officers appointed to District Staff while under the command of the District Commandant, were also responsible to Head-Quarters. Even the training of the field force would come under centralized rather than district control.

(3) In addition Hutton wished to have direct influence over Warrant Officers, Staff Sergeants, and Staff Officers who might for a time be allotted to militia regiments. Thus in addition to their responsibility to militia officers and to the District Staffs, they would be responsible to Head-Quarters. This involved a degree of centralization many found stifling.

A Staff Officer was to (a) assist and supervise administration of militia regiments as the Officer in Command desired, (b) instruct the Acting Adjutants of the regiment, (c) instruct officers and non-commissioned officers especially by lectures, yet (d) be available for general staff duties as Head-Quarters desired.

(4) The two key positions on the staff were those of the Deputy Adjutant-General and the Deputy Quarter-Master-General. Hutton had to do without the services of both before his reforms were complete. The position of Assistant Quarter-Master-General, held by Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges, was also important.

(5) As far as I can ascertain the Staff Officers on duty in October 1904 numbered only five: Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges (Chief Staff Officer and Assistant Quarter-Master-General); Lieutenant-Colonel Le Mesurier (Assistant Adjutant-General for Artillery); Captain Buckley (Assistant Adjutant-General for Engineers); Major Sandford (Assistant Director for Artillery); Colonel Williams (Director of Medical Staff).
(6) On Sources:

Appendix to Memo Hutton to Forrest, 18 April 1902, Correspondence on H.Q. Staff (CDG Memo No. 266/1 of July 1901).


D.D., 02/1889, 22 July 1902 (A.W.M.).

D.D., 04/1342, 02/2103, 03/556 (A.W.M.).

CAO : MP84, S2, 1904/1185.


T.T. Ewing (?) to Deakin, c. August 1906. "Notwithstanding to adverse opinion obtained from Major-General Hutton (on the Board System), all the officers appointed to the Military Board were ex-members of his staff and Major-General Finn was appointed Inspector-General."

CAO : MP178, S1, 1905/111305.

List of officers holding the positions mentioned is in the above file — see also D.D., 02/173, February 1902 — October 1903 (A.W.M.).

On Bridges' staff in 1914 was Major C.B.B. White who had assisted him earlier when he was Chief of Intelligence. White became Hutton's aide-de-camp in 1904 and was to be deeply impressed by the man, his work, and his aims. Yet he was too junior an officer to influence affairs immediately after Hutton's departure. Others, including Major H. Le Mesurier, Lieutenant-Colonel H.G. Chauvel, Major R. Wallace, and Major V.C.M. Sellheim, were more senior. Brigadier-General H. Finn, the Commandant in New South Wales, also understood and approved Hutton's reforms. Permanent officers were the main, but not the sole, beneficiaries. Those militia officers of established regiments, especially from the Light Horse, who had served well in South Africa were appointed as aides-de-camp to the State Governors and the Governor-General. To different degrees these men were influenced by the General Officer Commanding. To different degrees they were willing to carry on his work after 1904. Finn, Bridges and Le Mesurier were more prepared than most.

32 Quotation from:


See also the Introduction of Bean, Two Men I Knew, for comments which could have been directed at J.C. Hoad or J.M. Gordon.

33 This impression of Hoad's lack of professional ability is based upon careful analysis of his memoranda. This is not to deny that Hoad possessed certain administrative skill; his later work on the formation of the Commonwealth Section of the Imperial General Staff demonstrated that ability.
Warren Perry and Professor J. La Nauze, in conversation, added to my knowledge of him, but the responsibility for the judgements given is clearly my own.

The selection of Hoad as Inspector General and Chief of General Staff was, as we shall see, a matter of principle. During the nineties successive ministries were under pressure from the A.N.A. to ensure that all future staff positions would be filled by Australians. Hoad was among those selected for overseas training as part of the grooming for higher promotion. It is therefore not so surprising that Hoad should prosper under Deakin ministries.


For a brief resume of his career see:


For the selection of an observer to the Russo-Japanese War see:

CAO : MP84, S2, 32/04, 1904/6970, 1904/6165.

For Deakin's espousal of Hoad's desire to be both a professional soldier and president of the Prahan Branch of the A.N.A. see:


For parliamentary discussion of Hoad's appointment and his soliciting of support see:

CPD 3 : 838 ff., 840-1, 844-5, 856-7, 857-9, 890-1.

Also the answers to questions in the House assembled in


34 On Bridges' position under Hutton;

Initially Bridges was under Colonel Taunton, the Deputy Assistant Quarter-Master-General, whose duties were more broad but close to those of the Assistant Quarter-Master-General drafted by the Colonial Defence Committee in 1901. However, intelligence, organization, and mobilization schemes were always in Bridges' hands. After Taunton's retirement Bridges assumed his duties but still with nominal position of Assistant Quarter-Master-General.

On Bridges in 1914:

It might well have been that Bridges' recommendation was merely a gesture since he would have suspected that Cabinet would not accept Hutton as leader of the A.I.F. Nevertheless, this gesture speaks of a respect for Hutton on which all remaining documentary evidence is silent.

On Sources:

Bean, *Two Men I Knew*, Part I.


My reading of Bridges' memoranda convinces me that C.E.W. Bean's assessment of his astute caution and professional zeal is correct.
35 Hutton to Forrest, 1 April 1902 (Correspondence on H.Q. Staff).

36 Ibid., Hutton to Forrest, 18 April 1902.

37 On Salary Range:
The Military Committee which drafted the first Defence Bill recommended that the salary range for a colonelcy be £700–900, in itself a substantial increase on that paid in many colonies. Hutton recommended a starting salary of £1,000 for a colonel who held the position of Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General. Cabinet reduced this to £800.

On Parliament:
The parliamentary attack upon salaries was general, deeply affecting most government departments. Two points here. First, neither Cabinet nor parliament was predisposed to understand Hutton's case before rejection. Secondly, Cabinet did allow substantial increases to some officers.

On Sources:
Forrest to Hutton, 17 April 1902 (Correspondence on H.Q. Staff).
See also statement by Sir William Lyne in parliament (CPD 12: 16431, 3 October 1902.

38 On Strength in 1901:
The total of all forces, permanent and citizen, stood at 29,751. Defence Minute April 1902, p.3.

On Previous Function:
For details of the functions of the various arms to meet the various methods of attack available to enemy raiders:
Queensland - Scheme of Defence (Revised to 1 December 1900).
Defence Scheme for the State of New South Wales (Revised to 30 September 1901).
CAO: MP153, S16.

39 On Garrison Forces:
Hutton used the term "sedentary" for garrison troops since they would not be expected to operate out of their immediate locale. As well as operating against large landing parties anywhere on the coast, the field forces were to meet the various threats previously countered by the mobile sections of the colonial forces.

On Fixed Defences:
CAO: MP84, S2, 03/7403.
HEREAFTER: Hutton On Fixed Defences 1904.
(Notes Chapter Six : beginning 40)

On Omissions:
The tactical principles and the armament of the garrison forces is omitted from this account. Sufficient here to suggest that these forces if equipped as Hutton suggested could deter any raider.

40 On Protected Ports:
Hutton to AAG/Artillery, 8 April 1902.
Le Mesurier (Chief of Ordnance) to Playford, October 1905.
CAO : MP84, S2, 03/1963.

On Albany:
Later doubts were to be raised about the need to defend Townsville and Albany. Hutton believed that the defences of Townsville, Brisbane, and Newcastle had been given too much importance because the sea approaches were difficult enough to help deter raiders. He did not, however, make any changes.

Hutton on Fixed Defences 1904.
Hutton on Fixed Defences 1902-3.
CAO : MP84, S2, 1972/2/261.
Defence of Torres Straits 1903-5.
CAO : CP290, S15, B1, S/S Cable, 23 June 1904.

41 On Conditions in Great Britain:
There was a similar profusion of obsolete and obsolescent weapons used in coastal defence in Great Britain. In 1899 a conference on Coast Defence decided to sweep away much of the existing armament and depend on a lesser number of modern, powerful, high-velocity, quick-firing guns. The 6" B.L. Mark VII quick-firing gun was in part result of this change.

On Conditions in Australia:
A few samples of conditions in Australia must suffice. Most of the weapons overlooking Hobart had been purchased between 1882 and 1885. During the Russian scare in 1885 the South Australian government purchased two 9.2" B.L. Guns of no recognizable War Office pattern without control gear or hydro-pneumatic mountings which were never utilized; the existing 10" B.L. guns were aging and of extremely low velocity, and by 1902 were useless. In Sydney there were some 9.2" B.L. Mark VI guns with control gear but no mountings purchased in haste in the eighties but not used; when examined in 1903 Australian military authorities were uncertain whether the weapons fell under Mark I, Mark II, or Mark III of the War Office Ordnance List. In Melbourne, little had been done about the fixed defences since 1887.

On Strength of Fixed Defences:
In the opinion of the Colonial Defence Committee: "The B.L. armament of Sydney is greater than that of any port in England, with the exception of the fortresses of Portsmouth, Plymouth,
and the Thames, and as great as that of any defended port abroad, except Gibraltar, Malta, Aden, and Bombay."

CDC (Revision of Defence Scheme for N.S.W.) No. 159R of April 29, 1897.

On Naval Cooperation:
It may be added here that in late 1904 Hutton allowed a meeting of members of his staff and officers of the local naval forces to draw up recommendations for cooperative measures to control harbour shipping in wartime; to examine harbour facilities and foreign shipping at anchor; and to ensure harbour defence generally. The conference was not very fruitful.

See Appendix to Meeting of the Commonwealth Defence Committee, 31 October 1904.
CAO : MP84, S2, 1904/1185.

On Sources:
Hutton on Fixed Defences 1904.
Hutton on Fixed Defences 1902-3.
Queensland - Scheme of Defence (1900); Defences of Tasmania - Report by the Defence Committee (1898); Defence Scheme for the State of New South Wales (1901).
CAO : MP153, S16.

On Omissions:
A full list of armament and an assessment of the capability of the fixed defences has been omitted from this account.

42 On Queensland Alarms:
Andrew Fisher, the future Labour Prime Minister, was approached by the Chamber of Commerce at Brisbane, Townsville, Cairns, and Maryborough between July and October 1904.
CAO : MP84, S2, 1972/2/261.
For the naval aspect of this agitation see the next Chapter, VII.

On Passages through Torres Straits:
Though there were other channels - and some uncharted near the coast of New Guinea - through which alarmists argued cruisers could pass, the most commonly used were Prince of Wales Channel and Endeavour Straits. Thursday Island was surrounded by larger islands which masked these passages from the batteries and even from observation posts.

On Use and Fortification of Thursday Island:
CAO : CP290, S15, B1, S/S Cable 23 June 1904 contains many of the various recommendations.
See also CAO : MP84, S2, 1972/2/261.
Before the Colonial Conference of 1887 a scheme was mooted to fortify the group of islands of which Thursday Island was one.
(Notes Chapter Six : beginning 43)

At the conference it was decided to restrict work to Thursday Island. Coal was then needed for the light cruisers of Australian Auxiliary Squadron for sustained operations in northern waters; the scrapping of light cruisers by Lord Fisher and the increase in range of heavier cruisers made a coal depot at Thursday Island redundant.

The Admiralty eventually decided that a moveable hulk bearing coal - much like the one Burns, Philp & Co. kept at Goode Island - should be taken to Thursday Island in time of war. Admiral Fanshawe to Northcote, 12th December 1904.

Lieutenant-Colonel Owen (AAG/Engineers) and Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges (AQMG) recommended the installation of 2 - 6" Mark VII Q.F. guns on Goode Island.

Hutton, after a tour of the area July to August 1903 suggested that the permanent garrison be increased. In October 1905 there were still only 28 non-commissioned officers and men in the garrison. He also recommended that the existing armament be augmented. Yet in 1908 the armament was the same as that in 1904.

On Omissions:
Consideration of the technical, strategic, political and imperial aspects of the complex problems arising out of Thursday Island fortifications has been omitted from the text.

43 On Reductions:
The numbers in the R.A.A. were drastically reduced in 1902-1904. Commonwealth Military Report 1903, p.8 - numbers of permanent soldiers allowed for in Estimates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Officers</th>
<th>Other Ranks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 1902</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced in 1902</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902-3 Estimates</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903-4 Estimates</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>714</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See also Hutton to Lyne, 27 October 1902 (Uncategorized D.D. File in A.W.M.).

On Corps d'Elite:
This is not to suggest the R.A.A. achieved this standard, as we shall see. Hutton took many opportunities to enthrone officers and men and to elevate their status.

Defence Minute April 1902, p.6.

On Permanent Garrison Forces:

Permanent Garrisons at some strength were maintained at the points of importance to the Royal Navy: Sydney; Thursday Island; Albany. At the harbours of refuge smaller garrisons were to be augmented by the citizen artillerymen and engineers of the garrison forces: Townsville; Brisbane; Newcastle; Melbourne; Hobart; Adelaide; and Fremantle.


For the instruction and coordination of garrison troops see Hutton's Minute of 22 September 1904 - D.D. 04/1626 (A.W.M.).

On Garrison Forces (Citizen-Soldiery) as Projected:

Originally Hutton intended numbers in the Garrison Force in excess of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Mounted Troops</th>
<th>Artillery</th>
<th>Infantry</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Field Guns</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N.S.W.</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>845</td>
<td>3,048</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4,912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vic.</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>1,313</td>
<td>1,456</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3,193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queens.</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>1,678</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2,679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.A.</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>937</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1,509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tas.</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>1,426</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,108</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,445</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,385</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,532</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
<td><strong>15,470</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Defence Minute April 1902, p.4.

On Garrison Forces as Planned:

By 1904 he had to accept 11,752 men and 26 guns.

Commonwealth Military Report 1904, pp.7-9, Appendix A.

On Mobilization of Garrison Forces:

Garrison Troops were to be augmented by District Reserves. They were thus detailed to the following points in times of danger - Townsville; Rockhampton; Brisbane; Newcastle (+ Lismore + Richmond); Sydney; Wollongong; Melbourne; Hobart; Launceston; Adelaide; Perth; Fremantle.

Ibid., Appendix A.

Quotation from:

Defence Minute April 1902, p.3.

On Strength of the Field Force:

Despite retrenchment over the period and small changes in proposed organization the strength of the planned field force remained substantially unchanged, with this exception. Initially Hutton hoped to see a peace establishment of 14,100 troops. Retrenchment and difficulties of converting units to the field force resulted in a peace establishment of 11,831. In short, wherever possible Hutton attempted to shift the difficulties of reorganiza-
tion onto the volunteer units of the garrison forces rather than endanger his field forces.

On the Allotment of Field Forces:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Light Horse</th>
<th>Infantry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On Combined Strength of the Commonwealth Forces:

Combining the proposals for the field force and the garrison force the Commonwealth would command, therefore, 27,500 troops and 86 guns in peace and 38,654 troops and 117 guns in war as well as about a thousand permanent troops (excluding fixed defences). All the troops (garrison, field and permanent) would be allotted as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artillery</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mounted Field</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artillery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Artillery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artillery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artillery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artillery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infantry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancillary Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace 6,108</td>
<td>25,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War 11,352</td>
<td>39,622</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


On Hutton and the Field Force:

Hutton took every opportunity to expound the principles of the field forces. The following are the more complete from published sources:

- Defence Minute April 1902, pp.3–5 and Appendix B.
- Sydney Morning Herald, 6 December 1902.
- Commonwealth Military Report 1904, pp.7–9, 31–32, and Appendices.

46 On the Reserve Problem:

For an appreciation in 1896 which shows how difficult it was to entice men into a reserve and how men drifted in and out of the Victorian forces and from colony to colony:

Commandant (Victoria) to Premier, 29 May 1896.

CAO: MP153, 96/2638.
Hutton on rifle clubs and the "leavening" of men of South African experience:
Defense Minute April 1902, p.6.
Sydney Morning Herald, 6 February 1902, p.8.

Hutton's hopes that men of military experience would join rifle clubs though marginal to his scheme was still ill-founded. In 1909 of 57,855 members of rifle clubs only 3,624 had served for 2 years or more in the militia.
CAO : MF84, S1, 1974/1/75.

On the levy en masse:
See above Chapter IV.
Part IV of the Defence Act (No.20 of 1903).

47 CID Memo of 1906, p.10.

48 On Rifle Clubs:
   CDC No. 40R of June 1890, p.4.
   CDC No. 119R of November 1895, p.3.
   CDC No. 90M of December 1896, p.5.
   CDC No. 254M of April 1901, p.6.
   CID Memo of 1906, pp.10-11.

On Reserves:
A number of CDC Memos between 1901 and 1905 which levelled these criticisms were destroyed. However, from comments in departmental files, it seems that the principles were forcefully expressed in:
   CDC No. 301R of 22 October 1902.
   CDC No. 330M of February 1905.


The 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th Australian Commonwealth Horse were, as closely as possible, organized so that a battalion was drawn from one state (i.e. military district), a squadron from a district locality, and a troop from one district area.

51 Perry, Military Reforms of General Sir Edward Hutton, op.cit., p.9.
52 Quotation from:
Hutton to McCay, 6 September 1904.
D.D. 04/1531 (A.W.M.).

See also:
The Instructional cadre system was to be variously applied to
the Corps of Australian Engineers; Australian Army Medical
Corps; and the Australian Army Service Corps.

53 Hutton to Lyne, 27 October 1902.
D.D. (unnumbered) - (A.W.M.).

54 Quotation from:
Hutton to Forrest, 6 July 1903.
Hutton on the Defence Act.
D.D. 03/341 (A.W.M.).

On Social Background of Regiments:
In some established Light Horse regiments officers had long been
drawn from those with commercial or pastoral interests. The 1st
Light Horse Regiment, for instance, had squadrons in Sydney,
Parramatta, Richmond, and Windsor; while the 2nd Light Horse
Regiment was drawn from Goulburn, Bungendore, Cooma, Gundagai
and Bega. Both were to be part of the 1st Light Horse Brigade.

Selection and promotion of officers in South Australia and
Western Australia indicated most came from country districts,
were known as men of "means" or "independent means" and were
drawn, in the case of urban areas, from the professions. A
successful businessman or secretary of a building society was
thought to be, for that fact, good officer material.
D.D. 03/247, February 1903 (A.W.M.).
D.D. 03/506, September 1902 - March 1903 (A.W.M.).

Application forms for promotion in the Light Horse regiments of
Eastern States almost invariably showed occupation as "gentleman"
or "public servant".

55 Quotation from:
The inference that Perry appears to draw - that the scheme was
to be wholly a Militia one - is not correct.

On Qualifications to Command:
Bridges and others agreed and resisted attempts by various
ministers to open the avenues of promotion to rankers and citizen-
officers so long as professional competence was endangered. The
struggle continued until after 1908.
CAO: MP84, S1, 1811/1/7 (1903-1909).
Defence Minute April 1902, p.5.

56 Quotation from:
Hutton to Forrest, 6 July 1903.
Correspondence on the Defence Act.
D.D. 03/341 (A.W.M.).
See also: Commonwealth Military Report 1903, p.30.

On Disparate Pay:
The units in Tasmania and South Australia were, for instance, nominally volunteer or unpaid units. In fact they received capitation grants and special duty pay. Even so, they were poorly paid and were clearly awaiting the Commonwealth to improve their lot.

The militia in Victoria and N.S.W. were better treated. A militia private in N.S.W. received 8/- per day for 16 days training and an efficiency allowance, a sum totalling £7/8/-; in Victoria the equivalent pay for 18\(\frac{3}{4}\) days training was £7/10/-.

On Hutton's recommendations for Uniform Pay:
Artillery and Engineers:
Equivalent of 20 full days a year at 8/- per day, with deductions for non-attendance: total £8/-/- per annum.

New Recruits and Young Soldiers (Under 2 years service):
Equivalent of 24 days a year of drill and instruction, with deductions for non-efficiency at a rate of 6/- per day: total £7/4/- per annum.

All others:
From 16 to 20 days service a year at 6/- a day for a sum not exceeding total £6/8/-.

On Cabinet's Decision:
Cabinet decided that 8/- a day (that is a sum uniform with the amount paid in N.S.W.) was a just wage, to be paid half-yearly. Thus Hutton saw neither a pay suitable for cooperation with the Imperial Army nor the payment on a retainer system.

Approved Rates of Uniform Pay (by 1904):
£6/8/- a year, for 16 days service at 8/- a day plus an initial £2 allowance for clothing and incidental expenses.

On Sources:
Hutton to Lyne, July 1902 - D.D. 02/1243 (A.W.M.).
Hutton to Forrest, 18 June 1902 - D.D. 02/2954, 02/1967 (A.W.M.).
57 On Size of the Field Force:
See above Chapter II.

Field Force on War Footing:
Bevan Edwards (1889) - 30,000 to 40,000.
Federal Military Conference (1896) - 12,200.
Hutton (1902-4) - 27,553.

On Parliamentarian Views:
See above Chapter IV.

On Spirit of Hutton's Reform:
The terms were used in a letter Hutton to Deakin, 24 January 1906 (Deakin Papers) for which reference and others in the Deakin Papers I am indebted to Professor La Nauze of Melbourne.

58 See table of ministries in the federalist era, above in Chapter IV.

59 Salmon (Protectionist and A.N.A. radical) - CPD 12 : 16930, 2 October 1902.

60 J.W. McCoy (Free-trade) - CPD 9 : 12116, 30 April 1902.

61 Page (Labour) - CPD 12 : 16127, 25 September 1902.

For samples of attack upon Head-Quarters Staff:
Page (Labour) - CPD 12 : 16126, 25 September 1902.
Daily Herald of Melbourne, 18 March 1903.

62 G.B. Edwards (Free-Trade) - CPD 9 : 12123, 30 April 1902.

63 There is little point in taking the reader through the various debates and parliamentary questions when most of the influential views have been summarized in Chapters IV and V above. The substance of parliamentary attitudes and the influence of the radicals can be fairly quickly gathered from the following sources:

On Discussion of Supplementary Estimates 1902-3 in Committee of Supply:
CPD 9 : 12090-12144, 12199-12213, 30 April to 1 May 1903.

On Discussion of the Budget 1902-3 in Committee of Supply:
CPD 12 : 15939-41, 15952-54, 16121-16128, 16352-16430, September-October 1902.
Minutes : Colonial Conference 1902, pp. 87-90.
On Discussion of the Defence Bill of 1903:

On Forrest and the Estimates:
Statement by the Minister of Defence on Estimates 1903-4.

64 H.B. Higgins - CPD 12: 16376, 2 October 1902.

65 On McCay and the Radicals:
CPD 9: 12110 et seq., 30 April 1902.
CPD 12: 16364 et seq., 2 October 1902.
CPD 14: 2538 et seq., 23 July 1903.

On McCay's Views:
CPD 15: 3036, 5 August 1903. See also pp. 3086 et seq., in which McCay is less guarded in expressing his suspicions of the instructional cadres. Clause 28 of the Bill was amended to restrict the permanent forces in the fashion he desired.

This resume of McCay's views is based not only on parliamentary debates. It is also founded upon his work as Minister for Defence in particular on his address and discussion in the (Commonwealth) Council of Defence in the first quarter of 1905. See below Chapter VII.

66 Clause 49 - Defence Act (No. 20 of 1903).

67 On Forrest and the Bill:
The drafting process can be seen from Defence Act of 1903 (File in Attorney-General's Department, Canberra).

On Hutton and the Bill:
In substance, the struggle between Forrest and parliament was duplicated on this occasion between Forrest and Hutton.

From Hutton's minutes of the 25 May, 6 July, 13 October and the Defence Act (No. 20 of 1903), it is clear that against his advice, the following measures, amongst others, were passed:

Preference to men who had served in the ranks for 3 years on first applying for a commission (Clause 11).

The institution of a joint naval and military college (Clause 29).

The use of permanent troops in the event of civil disturbance only by consultation between State and Federal Governments (Clause 51) and not by local magistrates acting on their own initiative.
The organized units of both permanent and militia forces restricted to service within Australian territory (Clauses 49 and 50).

Modifications to Army Act for both peacetime and wartime service (Clause 55).

A Board of Advice to be appointed to "advise on all matters relating to the Defence Force submitted to it by the Minister" (Clauses 28, also 124a).

On Sources:
Hutton on the Defence Act (cited in Note 21 above).

68 The substance of the material on which the foregoing analysis of Hutton's beliefs is to be found in the brief for Colonial Conference. Barton's habit of lightly underlining in lead pencil as he read indicates that only the Minute was perused.
CAO : CP103, S12 (Unnumbered).

69 On the Colonial Conference:
The summary is taken from Minutes of the Colonial Conference 1902.
Chamberlain's views, pp.1-9.
Seddon's views, pp.90-95.
St. John Brodrick's views (the Secretary of State for War), pp.80-85.
War Office Memorandum.
The Organization of Colonial Troops for Imperial Service (November 1901), pp.206-211.
New Zealand was to contribute 4,500 troops. Canada was to contribute 3,000 troops.
Barton's views, pp.87-90.

70 Ibid., p.89.

71 Lyne to Hutton, 6 August 1902 - CAO : MP84, S2, 02/5015 (emphasis added).

72 On Request for full approval:

On Hutton's Response:
Lyne to Hutton, 6 August 1902 - CAO : MP84, S2, 02/5015.
See also CPD 12 : 16020, 24 September 1902.
73 Quotation from:
Forrest to Hutton, c. 3 July 1903.
CAO : MP84, S2, 02/2688.

On the views of Colonial Defence Committee:
Though the relevant reports of the Colonial Defence Committee
were apparently destroyed, the argument was built up from
fragments of:
CDC Memo No. 301 R (October 1902 ?).
CDC Memo No. 281 M (November 1901).

On other comment:
Hutton to Forrest, c. 4 June 1903.
Correspondence dealing with Estimates 1903-1904.
D.D. 03/677 (A.W.M.).

74 Hutton to Minister, 14 May - On the Transcontinental Railway.
CAO : MP84, S1, 1957/2/43.
See also CPP, Vol.II of 1903 (Ordered to be Printed, 23 July 1903).

75 Commonwealth Military Report 1903, p.31.
See also Hutton on the Defence Act.
Hutton to Minister, 6 July 1903, where he is also offering the argument
that an offensive-defensive militia force was necessary.

76 See below Chapter VIII.

77 The six key documents from which I have drawn are:
On the Estimates (Supplementary) 1902 - CAO : MP84, S2, B56,
1902/2811.
On the Estimates 1902-3 - D.D. 02/2594 (A.W.M.).
On the Estimates 1903-4 - D.D. 03/677 (A.W.M.).
On the Estimates of Equipment 1903-4 - D.D. 03/624 and 03/677
(A.W.M.).

78 On Reduction in Numbers of Men:
Commonwealth Military Report 1903.

On Correspondence on the Friction caused by implementing the Scheme:
Addenda to D.D. 03/677 (A.W.M.).
D.D. 03/715, August 1903 (A.W.M.).
D.D. 03/1348, September 1903 (A.W.M.).
D.D. 1583, October 1903 (A.W.M.).
D.D. 1680, October 1903 (A.W.M.).
CAO : MP84, S2, 1903/4489, August 1903.
79 This is a complex subject to which we shall return in Chapter VII below.

On Sources:
- Hutton on the Defence Act 1903.

On the Council of Defence:
At Deakin's suggestion, Forrest elicited the advice of Sir George Clarke and was duly told on 26 June 1904 that centralization of authority was too great for Australia. Nevertheless, the proposed reform suggested by Clarke was not as decentralized nor was civilian interference as possible as that in the scheme suggested by a Senate Select Committee led by Senator Dawson.

In any event, J.W. McCay was the painstaking author of the reform of January 1905 which called for a Council of Defence (including representatives of the army and navy, presided over by the Minister for Defence and the Treasurer) to formulate policy and a Military Board and a Naval Board for general administration and execution of policy laid down by the Council. These bodies were to advise the Minister instead of a G.O.C. He submitted the proposal to Cabinet and gained its approval 15 September 1904.

Hutton proposed a Council of permanent soldiers (and local naval officers) with no civilian representatives under the presidency of the General Officer Commanding who would report to the Minister. One attempt was made to use such a scheme. It failed. Hutton dominated proceedings and stifled criticism and suggestions. Moreover, he rambled on justifying himself and his proposals until it was clear that he tolerated the body under sufferance only insofar as it was an instrument for perpetuating his scheme. Commonwealth Defence Committee October 1904.

One other consideration: until the board system was inaugurated the local naval officers had little say in the direction of policy. After January 1905 Captain Creswell had much to say.

The introduction of this reform seems to have been influenced by:
- Friction with Hutton.
- Dawson's Committee.
- Changes in the control of defence in Britain after 1903.
- Appeal to republican traditions of U.S.A. and Switzerland.

The aims of McCay were:
- To remove the G.O.C. and ensure civilian control.
- To acquaint statesmen with the demands of defence policy.
- To diminish the influence of permanent soldiers.
- To introduce citizen-soldiers into the councils of state.
- To ensure that only Australian officers would hold top positions in the forces.
80 Quotation from:

81 On the Secret Cypher Case:
Watson, after a long interview with Hutton, made a statement to the House in which the precise *causus belli* was not revealed, only the general conditions.
CPD 19 : 1673-1676, 31 May 1904.

Hutton claimed he could not reveal the contents because the cypher would then be broken. It is probable therefore that the contents of the telegram (and others if there were any) will not be known until government files in London are examined. There were, however, two issues between Dawson and Hutton which could have been the subject of the latter's appeal to the Army Council:

a. The intention of Dawson to abolish the position of G.O.C.
b. The refusal of Dawson to approve the arming of the Light Horse with .45 calibre pistol on the grounds that it was not of standard Imperial pattern.

Of course, it is conceivable that the telegram included the attempt to alter the reports of Colonial Defence Committee in his favour.

Relations between Hutton and Dawson were acrimonious and according to one acute historian of the Labour Party "deteriorating relations between the two men might well have led to a crisis in the defence administration". At one stage Dawson cancelled a regulation ordering personnel in uniform to exchange salutes and another requiring citizen-soldiers to consider themselves on duty whether in or out of uniform.


On Sources:
CAO : MP84, S1, 1904/5207.
D.D. 02/2594 (A.W.M.).

82 Robert Collins to J.W. McCay, ? May and ? June 1905 (Deakin Papers). This was but one of many affairs not presented here.

83 Forrest to Hutton, 19 June 1903 - D.D. 03/624 (A.W.M.).

84 See Note 77 above for sources of information on the various estimates. See also Commonwealth Military Report 1903 and Commonwealth Military Report 1904.
On State of the Forces in December 1904:
This summary is, in the main, drawn from the text and footnotes above.

On Recruiting:
Possibly the only explanation required concerns recruiting and establishments. Recruiting ceased in May 1902 when Forrest first promised to reduce the estimates. It was allowed again for a brief period in 1903, stopped in June 1903, allowed again in October 1903. Among other things, this meant that it was difficult for unit commanders to recruit men returning from South Africa or to take advantage of the martial enthusiasm 1901-1903. Recruiting started only when the hangover of giddy Imperialism was being felt. Moreover, though recruiting was periodically allowed, most militia units had to maintain their establishment as at May 1902 or at June 1903. Thus commanders could not bring their units up to strength.

On Morale and Status in the public eye:
Ironically it was Lieutenant-Colonel J.C. Neild – Hutton's sworn enemy – in his capacity as Senator who made this assessment in March 1904.
CAO : MP84, S2, 1902/2688.

It was not, however, an isolated judgement as an enquiry by officers in Queensland indicated.
CAO : MP84, S2, 1906/1604.

Commonwealth Military Report 1904 for the state of the scheme of reorganization generally. See Appendices for Establishments - figures taken from Appendix K of the document, p.69.

Commonwealth Defence Committee October 1904, p.4. Hutton's rambling monologue at this meeting indicated not only his fear of criticism and his limitations as a public speaker, but what seems to be profound exhaustion.

Hutton to Deakin, 24 January 1906 (Deakin Papers).

Hutton to Senator Pearce, 26 January 1911 (Pearce Papers : A.W.M.).
1 On "lines of defence":
Reid in 1897 - Minutes: Colonial Conference 1897, pp. 60-62; see above Chapter Three.
Hughes in 1903 - CPD 14: 2313, 21 July 1903.
McCay in 1905 - Minutes: Council of Defence, 12 May 1905 (Defence Department, Canberra); see below Chapter Eight.
Deakin's Defence Policy of December 1907 - CPD 42: 7509 ff, 13 December 1907.

2 Note on Official Sources:
Some of the files used are lodged with the Commonwealth Archives Offices in Canberra and Melbourne and are cited with the usual prefix CAO.

Others have been opened to me with the permission and generous assistance of officers of the Archives Branch, Navy Office, Victoria Barracks in Melbourne. They are cited with the prefix RANA (i.e. Royal Australian Navy: Archives).

3 On previous examination of the Imperial Squadron:
See above Chapters One, Three and Four.

On cooperation with the China Squadron to increase British strength in the Far East from 1898:
Marder, British Naval Policy, p. 304.

On the limited value of the Squadron on the Australian Station:
"No other European Flag is permanently shown in those distant waters ... For political reasons it is desirable to keep up an effective squadron for Australasia. It is a link with the mother country and a reserve for the China Squadron."
Naval Annual 1903, p. xix.

On details of strength and capabilities of the Squadron:
Naval Annual 1903, p. 65.

4 On previous examination of the Australian Auxiliary Squadron:
See above Chapters One and Two.

On Katoomba Class cruisers:
Brassey and Beaumont independently recommended second-class protected cruisers of about 5,000 tons for Australian service, as well as first-class cruisers to replace the old third-class cruisers.
On the expiration of the 1887 Agreement:
The date on which the Agreement was deemed to expire is obscure. If taken from the date of ratification it would have been 1899; if from the arrival of the Australian Auxiliary Squadron it would have been 1901. The point is of little consequence. After discussion at the Colonial Conference of 1897 it was clear the Agreement would continue until 1901 and thereafter as long as the three parties (Australia, New Zealand, and Great Britain) were agreeable.

5 On previous examination:
See above Chapter One.

On establishment in 1901:
CAO : MP178, S1, 1901/4627.
Marine Establishment of the Commonwealth on 30 June 1901:
\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{Paid} & 195 \\
\text{Naval Militia} & 1,644 \\
\text{Volunteers} & 424 \\
\hline
\text{Total} & 2,305
\end{array}
\]

On the vessels:
Apart from the Cerberus, Protector, Gayundah, and Paluma there were nine vessels of lesser capability than the torpedo boat Countess of Hopetoun.
See above Chapter One and below in this Chapter.

6 Age, 20 December 1901.

7 Quotation from:
Age, 17 November 1902.
See also:
Sydney Morning Herald, 26 February 1903, 20 April 1903.

8 Age, 17 November 1902.

9 Quotation from:
Captain W.R. Creswell to Sir John Forrest, 11 May 1901.
(CAO : MP160, S1, 1901/640)
Other editorials in the Age:
Age, 17 November 1902.
Age, 27 February 1903.
Age, 23 April 1903.
See also:

Register, 4 December 1899.
Brisbane Courier, 16 July 1902.
Register, 19 February 1903.
Bulletin, 6 June 1903.

On general summary of press and parliamentary opinion in this Chapter:

A perusal of parliamentary debates, newspaper files - the Age in particular - and British service journals, 1899-1904.

Clippings from Australian and London newspapers 1898-1904 in the Naval Archives (RANA : 1851 - Part a).

Grimshaw, Some Aspects of Australian Attitudes to the Imperial Connection.

Hall, Australia and England.


10 Argus, 18 December 1901, 22 May 1902, 7 November 1902, 3 March 1903.
Sydney Morning Herald, 7 August 1899, 22 August 1899, 5 September 1899, 20 December 1901, 1 July 1902, 12 November 1902, 12 January 1903.

11 On Cabinet's attitude to the navalist press and issues:
Deakin to Barton, 29 August 1900 (Barton Papers : C.N.L.).

As the story progresses it will be clear that Barton, while prepared to keep the issue alive, argued that a navy worthy of the name would prove exorbitantly expensive; Kingston - the one minister to have openly challenged the Agreement in 1897 - was absorbed with the problems of arbitration and conciliation; Turner dismissed navalist aspirations because of cost; Lyne's public attitudes were ambiguous but he was ready to support renewal of the 1887 Agreement.

On the attitude of Alfred Deakin:
See above Chapter One, and below Chapters Nine and Ten.
Deakin to Barton (undated but probably July 1902) - CAO : CP103, S12, B5.
Grimshaw, op. cit., pp.143 ff.
Deakin to Clarke, 8 January 1906 (Deakin Papers).
From an article in the Morning Post (presumed to be written anonymously by Deakin early in 1902) quoted in "Australian Loyalty and the British Navy" by Norman Young in USM, February 1903, p.452.
On warships as symbols:

This is in the main deduction and inference. However see Deakin's policy speech of December 1907 examined in Chapter Ten below.


13 On Hughes:

CPD 14 : 2313 ff., 21 July 1903.


14 On qualifications of officers:

The nine officers, given here the highest rank they attained in the period 1898-1904, were:

Captain W. Drake (Lieutenant R.N. - retired) of the Queensland Naval Forces.

Captain R.N. Collins (Lieutenant R.N. - retired) of the Victorian Defence Department.

Captain W.R. Creswell (Lieutenant R.N. - retired) of the South Australian Naval Forces, from 1900 of the Queensland Naval Forces, then from 1905 Director of Naval Forces.

Captain C.J. Clare (ex - Merchant Service) of the South Australian Naval Forces.

Captain F. Tickell (ex - Merchant Service) of the Victorian Naval Forces.

Commander W.J. Colquhoun, D.S.O. (ex - Merchant Service; Masters Certificate) of the Victorian Naval Forces. Colquhoun won his D.S.O. during land fighting at the Boer War (?). 

Engineer-Commander W. Clarkson (Engineer Officer, R.N. - retired) of the Victorian Naval Forces.

Captain F. Hixson (Master, R.N. - retired; ex - Merchant Service) of the New South Wales Naval Forces.

Commander F.H.C. Brownlow (ex - Merchant Service; Second Mates Ticket) later of the New South Wales Naval Forces.

There were, of course, others. But from the sources available it seems that none of these affected policy.
On their enforced silence:
Forrest's ruling was similar to that applied to military officers, citizen and regular. Captain Clare of the South Australian Forces and Lieutenant Biddlecomb of the Victorian Forces were forced to obey this ruling. No censure of Creswell exists in the official files.

15 On Creswell's roles in the Commonwealth 1901–1904:
During 1904 Creswell's roles were fourfold: he was Naval Commandant in Queensland; recruiting officer for men enlisting for service in the Royal Navy under the Naval Agreement; Naval Officer Commanding the Commonwealth Naval Forces - i.e. an executive commander of the naval forces; and Director of the Commonwealth Naval Forces.

From 1905 his roles were clearer and twofold: Naval Commandant in Victoria (1904–1907) and Director of the Naval Board of Administration (1905–1911).

In this narrative Director of the Commonwealth Naval Forces will be used for brevity and clarity.

(CAO : MP178, S1, 1904/5180)

On contemporary assessments of Creswell as navalist:
Plaudits from the Register - cutting in (RAHA : 3T).

See also:
Brisbane Courier, 16 July 1902.

On the biographical sketch of Creswell:
For this portrait of Creswell, I must take full responsibility. It is essentially an interpretation based on inference from, among other things, the following biographical sources:

Peakes, op.cit., pp.103-113. Peakes' testimony in other places is valuable for he knew Creswell and his struggles well.


Biographical Sketch and collected obituaries in (RAHA : 3T).

The Creswell Papers are held by a relation of his in Healesville, Victoria; other papers were sent on to his surviving daughter in South Africa to make the basis of a book. From correspondence, and other sources, it appears that these papers in Australia are primarily concerned with Creswell's attempt at an autobiography.
Significantly, he did not get much further than his days in the Royal Navy and makes much play of the excitement of small expeditionary activities.

Conversation and assistance from Mr. G.L. Macandie, C.B.E., has proved invaluable. He worked under Creswell in Queensland (1900-1904) and came with him to Melbourne. He was therefore with Creswell from 1900-1919 and remembers aspects of the struggles during the years 1900-1910 well. His compilation of documents, *The Genesis of the Royal Australian Navy*, is in a sense Creswell's memorial.

16 On the Creswellian argument for local naval forces:

This summary of the Creswellian brief omits all changes, confusions, and side arguments. Essentially it is more clearly the stand taken in 1906 than 1899. It is drawn from the following:

   Almost complete it was printed as a parliamentary paper – *CPP*: 1902, Vol. 2 (Ordered to be Printed 7 February 1902).
7. And also on the strategical arguments of other reports and recommendations 1905-1909 to be cited later in this work.

17 Like the summary of Creswell's strategic arguments, the sketch of his indignant claims is drawn from many sources quoted in this and other Chapters.
18 On the proposal for a Naval Reserve in 1897:
   See above Chapter Three.
   Minutes: Colonial Conference 1897, pp.122-124, 146-147, 148.
   Robert Collins' (of Victorian Defence Department) minute of
   11 October 1898 (RANA: 1851 - Part a).

19 Macandie, op.cit., pp.65-68.
   Naval Annual 1898, pp.110-115.
   1899, pp.3-15.
   1900, p.23.
   1901, p.31.
   1902, Brasseys introduction, pp.68-70, 77 ff.
   1903, pp. xxxi ff.

Labour men like W.M. Hughes and Senator Pearce became sharply aware of
the problem of alien seamen when struggling for (a) mail contracts
only for those shipping lines with all white crews and (b) navigation
laws which would allow the application of Australian arbitration acts
and the immigration acts to coast-wise shipping.

20 Quotation from:
   Macandie, op.cit., p.64.

21 On Collins' views:
   Collins' views are to be found in various submissions between
   1890 and 1899 in Macandie, op.cit., pp.53, 61-64, and in a
   collection of documents in the file (RANA: 1851 - Part a).

On the Colonial Naval Defence Act:
   See above Chapter One.

22 On the Conference of 1899:
   A full report is to be found in (RANA: 1851 - Part a).

23 On the Australian response to the 1899 Conference:
   Age, 6 September 1898, 19 September 1898, 23 August 1899.
   Sydney Morning Herald, 7 August 1899, 22 August 1899, 5 September
   1899.
   Register, 23 August 1899.
   Brisbane Courier, 26 August 1899.
   Daily Telegraph, 23 August 1899.
25 The Times, 6 October 1899.

26 Quotation from:
Macandie, op.cit., p.64.

See also:
Collins' letter to The Times, 20 November 1899.

27 On the impact of the South African War:
The Times, 13 January 1900.

On letters to The Times:
Robert Collins, 20 November 1899.
William Creswell, 22 November 1899.
H. D'Egville, Secretary for the Imperial Federation (Defence) League, 12 January 1900.
Lord Brassey, 7 February 1900.

On the commentary in Australia:
Register, 4 December 1899.
Age, 6 December 1899.
Brisbane Courier, 6 December 1899.

On replies from London:
The Times, 6 October 1899, 13 January 1900.
The Army and Navy Gazette, 20 January 1900.
British Empire Review, February 1900.
Naval Annual 1902, pp.78 ff.
1903, p. xxxii.

28 Quotation from:
Creswell to Forrest, 11 May 1901 (CAO : MP160, S1, 1901/640).

See also:
Captain Clare to Forrest, May 1901 (CAO : MP160, S1, 1901/440).

29 Macandie, op.cit., p.93.

30 See sources cited above in Note 16, Parts (2) and (3).
31 On the press response to Creswell's 1901 scheme:

- *Argus*, 18 December 1901, 22 May 1902.
- *Age*, 20 December 1901, 2 August 1902.
- *Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 December 1901, 1 July 1902.
- *Brisbane Courier*, 10 July 1902.

32 On Forrest's contribution to policy:

It can be established from the papers cited in the subsequent note that Forrest was personally responsible for seeking a revision of the 1887 Agreement after a thorough investigation of the issues. Not even the Secretary of the Department of Defence, Robert Collins, appears to have taken a hand in drawing up the submissions Forrest presented.

On Forrest's policy:

There is little point in describing in detail the manner in which Forrest arrived at his policy. The following shortened account rests upon the following:

1. Debate upon the first Defence Bill (see above Chapter Four).

   Extracts are to be seen in CPP : 1902, Vol. II (No. 22 of 28 August 1901).
   Macandie, *op.cit.*, pp. 77-81.


4. Barton to Hopetoun, 1 August 1901.
   Hopetoun to Barton, 2 August 1901.
   (Barton Papers : C.N.L.)

   This was published as a Parliamentary Paper on 7 February 1902. But it is suggested in unnumbered official files that Forrest received a sketch of the "general idea" between July and September and the report after September 1901. The report was released to the press in December.


7. Forrest's draft submission presented to Barton, 5 October 1901 (CAO : MP160, S1, B5, Unnumbered).
(8) Beaumont's comments on the draft submission - Beaumont to Forrest, October 1902 (RANA : 185i - Part a).

(9) Results of a conference between Barton, Forrest, and Beaumont at Victoria Barracks (Melbourne), 7 November 1901. Macandie, *op.cit.*, pp.79-81.

(10) Forrest's second draft submission on naval defence presented to Barton, 2 December 1901 (RANA : 185i - Part a).


It is clear from papers in the Attorney-General's Department (Canberra) on the Defence Bills and Acts (1901-1904) that this submission was distributed to all ministers.

33 CPD 3: 3598 ff., August 1901.

34 Beaumont's views are compressed in the text and - like those of Forrest - are not presented exactly as they evolved in chronological order.

35 Beaumont to Forrest, October (?) 1901 (RANA : 185i - Part a).

36 Beaumont to Hopetoun, 22 July 1901 (RANA : 185i - Part a).

The italics have been added.

37 Forrest to Barton, 2 December 1901 (RANA : 185i - Part a).

38 Forrest to Barton, 5 October 1901 (CAO : MP160, S1, B5, unnumbered).

39 *Loc. cit.*

40 This last point was important, and in a difficult situation Beaumont kept the notion of a sea-going squadron alive.

41 Forrest to Barton, 5 October 1901 (CAO : MP160, S1, B5, Unnumbered).

42 Quotation from: *Brisbane Courier*, 7 November 1902.

For approval of Forrest:

*Argus*, 7 November 1902.
Quotations from:
Minute by Sir John Forrest written on 15 March 1902 cited in Note 32, part (11) above.

On Naval Defence at the Conference:
Minutes: Colonial Conference 1902:
Barton's views, pp. 29-32, particularly 30-31. Chamberlain's views, pp. 1-9; quotation from p. 3; naval affairs, pp. 4-5. New Zealand's Motion, p. a2; see also pp. 21-27.

On Barton and the Conference:
For a resume of Barton's possible attitude to the Conference see article in The British Empire Review, December 1902, pp. 164 ff.

Barton's attitude is also drawn from the manner of his speeches and the interchange of correspondence with Deakin during this period.
(Barton Papers: C.N.L.)
(CA0: CP103, S12, many unnumbered files)

Quotation from:
Minutes: Colonial Conference 1902, p. 214.

See also:

Appendix IV, "Detailed Proposals Relative to Australia and New Zealand", June 1902, Minutes: Colonial Conference 1902, pp. 223-229.

Quotations from:
Deakin to Barton, undated but probably before 22 July 1902 (CA0: CP103, S12, B5).

See also:
Deakin to Barton, 4 July 1902 (CA0: CP103, S12, B5).
Barton to Deakin, 22 July 1902 (CA0: CP103, S12, B5).

Quotation from:
Minutes: Colonial Conference 1902, Draft Agreement, pp. 268-271, Clause II.

See also:
Creswell to Playford, 7 February 1906: Report on the Australasian Naval Squadron (CA0: MP178, S2, 2115/3/172).
Until official files are examined in London, this clearly tentative but credible case for the Admiralty rests upon the printed sources available in Australia:

On the Anglo-Japanese Alliance:

Warder, British Naval Policy, pp.427-434, 449-455; quotation from p.430 (Warder's italics).
British Documents (Gooch & Temперley) Vol.II, pp.103-105, 110.

On Fisher and the Australian Station:

Only one Australian radical in the House seems to have guessed the connection between the Agreement and the Anglo-Japanese Treaty. He was soon to become an ardent propagandist on Japanese threats to Australia.

R.A. Crouch (CPD 14 : 1814, 7 July 1903).

The following are samples of responses to the Agreement on which the ensuing commentary is founded:

On Australian parliamentary attitudes:
Debate on the Naval Agreement Bill, 7 to 22 July 1903, in the House. In particular:
Barton (CPD 14 : 1772 ff., 2437 ff.).
Crouch (CPD 14 : 1802 ff.).
Quick (CPD 14 : 1905 ff.).
Reid (CPD 14 : 1969 ff.).
Forrest (CPD 14 : 1992 ff.).
Higgins (CPD 14 : 1996 ff.).
Watson (CPD 14 : 2045 ff.).
McCay (CPD 14 : 2131 ff.).
Hughes (CPD 14 : 2313 ff.).
See also Grimshaw, op.cit., pp.133 ff., for an excellent summary of attitudes.

On Australian press opinion:
Register, 13 March 1902.
Brisbane Courier, 16 July 1902, 7 November 1902, 10 January 1902
Age, 2 August 1902, 17 November 1902, 17 February 1902, 27 February 1902, 3 April 1903, 23 April 1903.
Argus, 22 May 1902, 7 November 1902, 10 January 1903, 3 March 1903, 6 April 1903.
Sydney Morning Herald, 1 July 1902, 18 July 1902, 7 November 1902, 17 November 1902, 12 January 1903, 26 February 1903, 20 March 1903, 31 March 1903, 1 April 1903.
On The Times:
The Times, 2 July 1902 (on Mahan),
10 January 1903 (A summary of previous arguments
and the Conference),
2 February 1903 (in reply to the Age and Register),
12 June 1903 (Reply continued).

On British commentary in favour of the navalists:
Spectator, 5 July 1902.
Admiral C.C. Penrose-Fitzgerald (Tryon's biographer), "Colonial
Responsibilities", USM, November 1902, from p.111.

51 This criticism is based on the testimonies of Quick and Matheson,
Reid and Watson, and Higgins, Hughes and Crouch, cited above.

52 On Ewing and the Agreement:
Argus, 28 February 1902, 8 April 1903.
The Times, 12 June 1903.

53 On other Australian views in favour of the Agreement:
Sydney Morning Herald, 12 November 1902, 26 February 1903,
20 March 1903, 31 March 1903.
Advertiser (Adelaide), 19 February 1903.
Argus, 3 March 1903, 6 April 1903.

54 Quotations from:
Chapman to Creswell, 22 March 1904.
Creswell to Chapman, 22 March 1904.
(CAO : MP178, S1, 04/1435)

55 Forrest to Barton, March 1903 (CAO : MP178, S1, 1902/245).

56 This resume of the condition of the Commonwealth Naval Forces is
drawn from:

On Organization:
Forrest to all Naval Commandants, 1 March 1901 (CAO : MP160,
S5, 1901/1688).
Creswell to Forrest, (undated) 1903 (CAO : MP178, S2, 445/03).
Creswell to Dawson, 5 May 1904 (CAO : MP178, S1, 1904/3436).

On Finance:
Forrest to Collins, 2 May 1902 (CAO : MP84, S2, 1902/2811).
Commonwealth Year Book, No.12, p.1017.
On the Vessels, Materiel and Personnel:

On the views of Colonial Defence Committee:
CDC Memo 254/M, 3 April 1901, p.9.
CDC Memo 321/M, 23 June 1903.

On Concerted Action:
Peakes, White Ensign — Southern Cross, pp.106–107. Peakes' evidence and that of the quickly perused reports on the later bi-annual exercises suggests:
(a) If all the vessels could be kept together, the speed of the force was that of the slowest vessels (9–11 knots).
(b) As a force it was subject to the vagaries of wind and weather, particularly in Bass Strait.
(c) Of all the vessels only the two torpedo boats in Port Phillip the Countess of Hopetoun and the Childers could be classed as deterrents. They could conceivably operate from the range of coastal batteries against (unarmoured) merchant auxiliaries at night. The efficacy diminished quickly in inverse proportion to size of the raider. Against second-class cruisers they would stand far less chance unless a surprise and coordinated attack were carried out, at night. But they were only two in number. And as the bi-annual exercises demonstrated they could not pursue their quarry in all seasons.
(d) The much-vaunted Protector was not only insufficiently armoured but too slow. She could only be used effectively against the (unarmoured) merchant auxiliaries attached to the Russian Navy some of which had speeds ranging from 12 to 14 knots. Creswell always emphasized the one unique feature of the Protector, the weight of the salvo her guns could deliver, to the exclusion of all else.

57 Sydney Morning Herald, 31 March 1903.

58 On the Naval Militia, 30 June 1901 (CAO : MP178, S1, 1901/4627):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Naval Militia</th>
<th>Volunteers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>719</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,644</strong></td>
<td><strong>424</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On Sir John Forrest on the Naval Militia:
e.g. Forrest to Barton, 21 December 1901 (RANA : 185i - Part a).
See also all other memoranda by Forrest cited in Note 32 above.

Quotation from:

59 Quotation from:
Fanshawe to Forrest (via Governor-General), 29 April 1903
(RANA : 185i - Part a).
See also:
All memoranda by Forrest cited in Note 32 above.
Forrest to Barton, March 1903 (CAO : MP178, S1, 1902/245).

60 On Barton and radial port defence:
CPD 14 : 1773 ff., 7 July 1903.
CPD 14 : 2437 ff., 22 July 1903.

61 (Unnecessary note placed in text)

62 Creswell to Chapman, 4 September 1903 (CAO : MP84, S2, 1903/5016).
CDC Memo 321M, 23 June 1903.
Creswell to Chapman, March 1904.
Hutton to Dawson, 26 August 1904.
(CAO : MP84, S1, 1972/2/261)
See also Creswell's clashes with Hutton over the responsibility for
port defence.
"Meeting of the Commonwealth Defence Committee 31 October 1904",
(CAO : MP84, S2, 1904/1185)

63 Chapman to Creswell, 3 March 1904 (CAO : MP178, S1, 1904/5180).
Creswell to McCay, December 1904 (CAO : MP84, S2, 1904/1198).
In all Creswell received £1,050 a year, more than any soldier on
Head-Quarter's Staff except Hutton.

64 All relevant papers are to be found in (CAO : MP178, S1, Unnumbered);
the quotations are taken from memoranda in that file, i.e. Creswell
to Chapman, March 1904.

65 See note above.
66 On petitions from Queensland:

CAO : MP84, S2, 1972/2/261.

67 Quotations from:

Creswell to Dawson, 5 May 1904 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1904/3436).

68 Quotation from:

Dawson to Watson, 8 August 1904 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1904/3436).

See also:

Northcote to C.O., c. 20 June 1904.
C.O., to Northcote, 19 May 1904.

(CAO : MP84, S1, 1904/3436)
1 On the changes in and the operation of the new administration:

CAO : MP84, S2, 1901/6516; 1903/3006; 1904/184; 1904/1496.
CAO : MP84, S2, 1904/1185.
DD 03/341 (A.W.M.)
Memoranda by Forrest, Chapman, Dawson, McCay, and Clarke, 1903-1905 - DD 04/62; 05/14-51 (A.W.M.).
Memoranda by McCay, January 1905 - DD 04/184 (A.W.M.).
Administration of Military and Naval Forces (Memorandum by Senate Committee convened by Senator Dawson)
CPP : 1905, Vol.II (Ordered to be Printed, 16 August 1904).
Administration and Control of the Military Forces by a Board (Memorandum by the Inspector-General)

On the Tables:
The Tables (A to D) were constructed from information in the above sources, plus the direction of correspondence taken from official files to be listed here.

On the role of the Minister in the new system:
For a sample of McCay's use of the new administration to develop policy and free the commandants and citizen-soldiers from the control of Head-Quarters:
Minute Book : Council of Defence (Defence Department, Canberra).
CAO : MP84, S2, 1905/1678.

2 On the General Staff:
We shall return later, in another context, to the formation of the Imperial General Staff, Commonwealth Section.

3 Quotation from:
Bridges to Ewing, 7 November 1907 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1849/2/13).

4 Quotation from:
Loc. cit.
5 On the Australian Intelligence Corps:
CAO : MP84, S1, 1902/7/47a; 1902/7/137; 1902/7/153.

On reports from New Guinea:
CAO : MP84, S1, 2022/1/53; 2022/1/66; 2022/1/63.

On businessmen's report:
CAO : MP84, S1, 1877/4/1.

On proposed counterespionage:
CAO : MP84, S1, 1877/5/5.

On interchange of Intelligence Diaries:
CAO : MP84, S1, 1929/2/1237-11.

On British Handbooks:
CAO : MP84, S1, 1912/1/27; 1912/1/31; 1912/1/37; 1954/1/6.

On Admiralty lists:
CAO : MP84, S1, 2215/6/64; 2310/1/69.

On combined Intelligence:
CAO : MP160, S1, 1/14/3681.

On military intelligence 1911-1913:
Kirkpatrick to Pearce, 17 March 1911 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1902/7/137)
White to Pearce, 7 December 1912 (CAO : MP84, S1, 2021/1/14).
The potential for collecting and collating useful intelligence in areas of probable external operations can be seen from a competent report on the Cocos-Keeling (July 1909 - CAO : MP84, S1, 2021/1/10).

6 On the Japanese in Australia in 1908:
CAO : MP84, S1, 1887/5/1; 1887/5/4.

On Japanese in Sydney in 1911:
Police Report for 1911 (CAO : MP84, S2, 1877/1/2).

On Japanese in Western Australia:
Intelligence Corps report 1913 (CAO : MP84, S2, 1877/5/23B).

On Japanese-European activity in the South-Western Pacific 1913:
CAO : MP84, S1, 2021/1/14.
CAO : MP84, S1, 1856/1/99.

7 On the working of the Council of Defence:
Minute Book : Council of Defence.

On disorganization at staff level and the working of the Military Board:
CAO : MP84, S1, 1828/2/46; 1828/2/50; 1828/2/52; 1828/2/104.
CAO : MP84, S1, 1856/4/4.

On Bridges' criticisms of the system:
From June 1907 - CAO : MP84, S1, 1856/4/5; 1856/4/75.
From June 1909 - CAO : MP84, S1, 1804/2/81.
8 Quotation from:
CAC : MP84, S1, 1856/5/69.
Ewing's uneasy explanation in the House, 11 March 1908.

9 These and other generalizations about political behaviour and attitudes are based upon examination of the defence debates of the period to be quoted in subsequent chapters and the works of general historians quoted elsewhere in this work.

10 Quotation from:
Pearce to Hughes, 14 January 1911 (RANA : Part 1851, Section b).

11 On the New Hebrides issue and Alfred Deakin:


Minutes : Imperial Conference 1907 (C.O. Miscellaneous No.203 - Confidential) pp.117 ff., 201 ff., 205 ff.

On W.M. Hughes:
Deputation of Members of the Presbyterian Church to Minister for External Affairs (Sydney Morning Herald, 9 August 1904).
Minutes : Navigation Conference 1907.

12 Quotation from:
An address, 3 September 1908 (USM, October 1908, p.99).

See also:
Article to the Morning Post, 14 April 1908.

13 On Reid:

On Cook:
CPD 35 : 5695 ff., 28 September 1906.

On McCoy:
CPD 3 : 3205 ff., 30 July 1903.
Minutes : Council of Defence, 12 May 1905.
Meeting of Imperial Federation League, 18 May 1908 (USM, November 1908, pp.214-215).
On Ewing:
Argus, 28 February 1902.
The Times, 8 April 1903.
CPD 35: 5691, 28 September 1906.
Meeting of the Imperial Federation League, 18 May 1908.

14 On Hughes' Imperialism:
See also:
Hughes to Richard Jebb, 23 September 1907 (Jebb Papers : C.N.L.).

15 Quotation from:
Review of Reviews, July 1911.

16 Fisher on peace and arbitration:
Before a delegation from the Society of Friends objecting to universal service, 18 August 1910 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1802/2/221).

Fisher on self-reliance:
Newspaper interview (The Times, 16 May 1911).
Before Kier Hardie (The Times, 19 May 1911).
Before Lloyd George (The Times, 29 May 1911).

Fisher on Empire:
The Times, 25 July 1911, 27 July 1911, 29 July 1911, 9 August 1911.
Crishaw, Some Aspects of Australian Attitudes to the Imperial, pp. 28-30.

On Hughes' repudiation of Fisher's reported views:
Sydney Morning Herald, 31 July 1911.

On another view of Fisher's stand:
The Worker, 28 July 1911.

17 Quotation from:
Deakin to Jebb, 4 June 1908 (Jebb Papers : C.N.L.).

For sample of attack upon Labour's naval policy:
Advance Australia (organ of the Australian Natives Association), September 1905.
18 On Hughes and Deakin and national aspirations:
Proceedings of the Royal Colonial Institute, 1906-7, pp. 239 ff.
Quoted in part in Grimshaw, op. cit., pp. 31-32.
The lecturer's points have here been elaborated in some respects
to make a complex point briefly.

19 On Deakin and role of the Commonwealth:
Deakin to Northcote, 31 October 1906 (CAO : CP103, S12, Brief
for 1907 Conference).
Sir George Clarke to Deakin, 1 June 1906 (Deakin Papers).
On Ewing's forthright agreement:
Memorandum on Defence, 12 November 1908 (CPP : 1907-8,
Miscellaneous, p. 237).

On Hughes and the paramount powers of the central government:
Hughes to State Premiers, 23 April 1909 (CAO : MP84, S1, MP
1856/4/135).

Each was concerned with establishing the authority and the interests
of the Commonwealth over the varying policies of the States.

After 1909, once the Liberal-Labour alliance had fulfilled its
usefulness and collapsed, Labour wished to give the Commonwealth
greater powers than Deakin, as a federalist, thought proper. This
is evident not only in the referenda of the later period but in Hughes' struggles in the High Court.

20 On national aspirations and White Australia:
There was a tendency for many radicals and Labour men to equate
White Australia with other reform. R. Gollan sums up the
view thus:
"The defence policy of the Labour Party was closely
related to its policy on White Australia; involved
in it was the concept of the white democratic,
Australian nation."
(Radical and Working Class Politics, p. 196).

On a conscious equation of immigration with radical policy — all to be
protected from the Yellow Peril — in the minds of contemporaries, see
the following of which the first and last are the most succinct and
passionate:

R.A. Crouch (Radical-Liberal), "An Australian View of the War"
in the Contemporary Review, August 1904, pp. 178 ff.

Dr. Maloney (Labour), Flashlights on Japan and the Far East
(Melbourne 1905).

W.M. Hughes (Labour), CPD 32 : 2582, 9 August 1906.
Reply to Deputation from the N.S.W. Political Labor League, c. August 1912 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1939/3/245).
See also:
D.C.S. Sissons, Attitudes to Japan and Defence 1890–1923, in three volumes (M.A. Thesis, Melbourne: unpublished). Much of the information on Australian attitudes to Japan has been gleaned from this work.

21 For the view of the Admiralty on this transformation see Harder, British Naval Policy, pp. 435–455.
One Admiralty minute read: "Tsushima is the equivalent to Trafalgar".

22 Quotation from:
Sydney Morning Herald, 2 October 1905.
Quoted in Grimshaw, op. cit., p. 139.

23 Quotation from:
The Worker, 15 March 1905.
Quoted in Grimshaw, op. cit., p. 141.

24 Quotation from:
The Call, November 1906, p. 4.
On the Australian National Defence League:
A survey of the Call from August 1905 until March 1910 reveals that Japan was discussed as a possible, often the probable, enemy in every issue but two. References were made to European complications between 1906 and 1907. Germany was alluded to throughout 1908 but not specified as a great threat until May 1908, though by design or accident it could assist Japanese ambitions in the Far East. By March 1910, Germany, Japan, and China were considered the probable foes.

On the Call and threats to Australia:
President's inaugural address, August 1906.
Unnamed Article, November 1906.
J.H. Catts, February 1907. Catts was a Labour parliamentarian.
"The Menace of Asia", February 1907.
"The United States and Japan", November 1907.
"The Japanese in Northern Australia", February 1908.
Experts on Asian invasion, August 1908. Views of the following were quoted and often misused: Captain Mahan; Admiral Dewey; L.S. Amery; Colonel Hepington; Lieutenant Dewar.
"An Asiatic Bridge in Peace and War", November 1908.
"The Tragedy of Korea", February 1908.

25 Quotation from:
Hail, Australia and England, p.258. See also his Chapter X.
See also:
Sissons, op.cit., pp.21-76.

26 On Labour and defence innovation:
See below Chapters Nine and Ten.

27 Quotation from:
Morning Post, 6 October 1906.

28 Quotation from:
Deakin to Jebb, 4 June 1908 (Jebb Papers : C.N.L.).

On Deakin's Opinions:
Newspaper interview of June 1905 reprinted in ... Statement ... by
Alfred Deakin ..., CPP : 1905, Vol. II (Ordered to be Printed,
31 August 1905).
CPD 35 : 5564 ff., 26 September 1906.
Policy Speech, December 1907 (see below Chapter Ten).

On Ewing's Opinions:
Sissons, op.cit., p.8, concerning Asian fears in the nineties.
CPD 14 : 2056-7, 14 July 1903.
CPD 35 : 5691, 28 September 1906.
CPD 38 : 2239 ff., 22 August 1907.
CPD 47 : 437 ff., 29 September 1908.
During this period Ewing was closer to Deakin than any other
minister and discussed many issues including defence informally
at the Prime Minister's home. Deakin was to attribute most of
the responsibility for introducing universal service to Ewing.

29 For a thorough survey:
Sissons, op.cit., pp.35 ff., particularly pp.60-68.
On the Alliance:


Rumours reported in the National Review 1906, Vol. 47, pp.1-3, 2.
The Call, February 1907, p.2.

On the loss of the Two Power Standard and naval strength in the Far East:

Deakin in 1907-8 – Undated Drafts of a Public Address (Deakin Papers).
The Call, November 1906, pp.13-14.
Creswell to Deakin, 6 March 1907 (CAO : CP103, S12).
The Call, May 1908, pp.16-17.
The Courier, 24 August 1908.
The Advertiser, 2 September 1908.
The Call, May 1909, pp.4-6.

On racial disturbances and survival of the white races:

Hughes, CPD 32 : 2530 ff., August 1907.

On Korea:

J.C. Fearnley, "The Tragedy of Korea – A Warning to Australia" in the Call, February 1909, pp.9-10.

On the U.S. Fleet:

The Call, May 1908, pp.16-17.
The Register, 5 September 1908.

On novels, plays, etc., concerning invasion:

A.H. Adams, The Day the Big Shells Came (Sydney : 1909).
F.R.C. Hopkins, Reaping the Whirlwind (Sydney : 1909).

On articles concerning defence, invasion, and the Asian threat:

J.C. Watson, "The Defence of Australia", August 1907.
L. Essen, A series on Japan, August–December 1908.
'Veronica', "Guarding Our Northern Gate", August 1909.
E. Cable, "First Blood", May 1911.
A. White, "The Defence of Australia", November 1911.
(All the above articles from the Lone Hand)
See also:
The *Sun* (Sydney), 12 January 1911, 31 March 1913.

Though the *Bulletin* sustained fears of alien attack by comment and imaginative articles from 1905, its monthly magazine, the *Lone Hand*, was far more concerned with invasion after 1909. On this and defence, articles were to increase in number 1909-1914.

* 

The *Call* draws attention to evidence which demonstrates how tentative conclusions must be. In 1907 and 1908 it insisted that interest in security and defence was insufficient and latent. In early 1909 one alarmist noted in exasperation:

"(To) the average citizen of Sydney, in common with the rest of Australia, the idea of his country being invaded ... is too preposterous to be taken seriously."

*The Call*, May 1909, p. 16.

30 On lack of assessments about Japanese intent:
Sissons, *op.cit.*, pp. 60-84.

31 On the Commonwealth and the Treaty of 1896:
The attitude of Australians and their governments to the Alliance and the complicating aspects of the Queensland Protocol — a subject overlooked by most historians — deserves a monograph. The desire for trade preference without reciprocal immigration rights; a tussle for authority by the Commonwealth over the States; disagreement with Imperial authorities about Australian status by virtue of federation — these and many other issues are involved.

On the complexities of the 1896 Treaty:
CAO : CP103, S12, B5.
CAO : CP78, S8, Vol.I.
CAO : CP78, S9, Vol.II.
CAO : CP78, S1, 1/65.
CAO : CP717, S1, No. 23.

On hostility to the Alliance prior to 1911:
*The Times*, 13 July 1911, 15 July 1911, 18 July 1911.
Particularly — W.M. Hughes (*Argus*, 18 July 1911).

The Alliance as a shield after 1911:
Deakin (*The Times*, 17 July 1911).
*Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 July 1911.
*The Call*, 6 September 1911, p. 2.
32 Quotation from:
Hansard, 21 September 1909.

33 Quotation from:
W.M. Hughes, CPD 36: 1282, 1 August 1907.

34 The factual material for these distinctions lies in the sources already cited.

35 Australian commercial interests and the Pacific:
"Australia in the Far East" in the USM, January 1909, pp.373 ff.
Burns Philp & Co. to Joseph Cook, June 1909 (CAO: MP84, S1, 1877/4/1).

On the Entente:
Daily Telegraph, 11 April 1904.

On experience in London:
Undated Notes 1907-1908 (Deakin Papers).
See below Chapter Ten.

36 On fear of French bases in the New Hebrides:
Lyttleton to Northcote, 18 August 1905 (CAO: CP78, S21, B34a, Unnumbered).

On fear of German secret bases in the New Hebrides:
Creswell to Deakin, 6 March 1904 (CAO: CP103, S12, Unnumbered).
Captain Rason to High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, 25 August 1906 (CAO: CP717, S1, V4).
Vice-Admiral Fawkes to Northcote, 26 August 1906 (Ibid.).
Northcote to Elgin, 18 September 1906 (Ibid.).
Wilson to Deakin, 20 October 1906 (Ibid.).

37 Quotation from:
Clarke to Deakin, 14 February 1906 (Deakin Papers).

38 See below Chapter Nine on the report of the Committee of Imperial Defence.

39 Quotation from:
On renewal of the Alliance and Hong Kong:
Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, pp.237-8.

Quotation from:
ODC Memo No.429 Secret (24 February 1911).

On requests for advice from Australia:
Deakin to Dudley, 15 September 1909.
Crewe to Dudley, 2 October 1909.
Crewe to Dudley, 7 July 1911.
(CAO : CP290, S15, Unnumbered)

After Labour accession in 1910, Pearce became impatient with the lack of response and requested Fisher to enquire about the scale of attack at the Imperial Conference of 1911. This was not done. (CAO : MP84, S1, 1888/1/20)

On the Overseas Defence Committee:
The most exhaustive search has not uncovered the relevant memoranda from the Overseas Defence Committee. From evidence in departmental files too scattered and numerous to list here, the likely contents of each are:

ODC Memo No.414M (of December 1909):
That 9.2-inch B.L. Mark X guns are used for the defence of British and Imperial ports against armoured cruiser attack. No recommendation was apparently made for Australian fixed defences.

ODC Memo No.417 (of July 1910):
Contents unknown. It may well have been a commentary on Kitchener's recommendations, particularly on fixed defences (submitted to the Fusion government, 12 February 1910). There is very flimsy evidence to suggest that it dealt with fixed defences during a national emergency in the Pacific when the Japanese Alliance had been terminated and the British sea inferiority in the Pacific might be protracted. (CAO : MP84, S1, 2002/1/310)

ODC Memo No.429 Secret (of 24 February 1911):
On the scale of attack to which Australasia might be subject. The general argument seems to have been extended in later documents. In this document appears the warning quoted in the text to the effect that once the Alliance ended the strategic position of Australia would be gravely changed. Then a reassessment of the scale of attack would be essential.

ODC Memo No.438 Secret (of 26 May 1911):
On the scale of attack to which ports might be subject – particularly Sydney and Thursday Island. Phrases in this document indicated what might be done if the Alliance was not renewed. Probably it also alluded to German cruiser activity for it referred to the defences necessary should the Alliance be.
renewed on terms which the British fleet would not be able to count on Japanese support.

**ODC Memo No. 442 Secret (of 3 May 1911):**

Contents unknown. This appears to have been a crucial document dealing with "Strategic Situation in the Event of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance being terminated". Other evidence suggests that the Committee argued that, while British sea superiority was inferior, "an Eastern Power" might conduct large numbers of raiding operations which the Commonwealth could deter by raising armed strength for garrison duties and for a "mobile expeditionary force. Invasion appears not to have been countenanced.

43 On Road's Committee of 1906:

...Report of Committee of Officers ... Organization etc.,

September 1906 (CAO: CP290, S15, Item 9).

44 Quotation from:


From the handwriting it would appear that Playford drafted the proposals for military defence; marginal comments and material on the naval forces were possibly made by Ewing.

45 On the Deakin ministry and universal training:

See below Chapter Nine.

46 On Bridges' strategic assumptions 1906–1909:

Bridges to Ewing, 29 January 1907 (CAO: MP84, S1, 1843/1/52).

Bridges to Ewing, 5 July 1907 (Defence Department: Uncategorized).

Papers for Schools of Instruction 1908 (CAO: MP84, S1, 1856/4/105)

Japan and America were excluded from most assessments. This left Germany as the most probable enemy.

47 On the U.S. Fleet and the test of coastal communications:

CAO: MP178, S2, 2173/4; 2173/16; 2173/17; 2173/110; 2173/263.

CAO: MP84, S1, 1997/8/–.

48 Quotations from:

Bridges to Ewing, 9 October 1908 (CAO: MP84, S1, 1856/1/2).

Ewing to Bridges, 13 April 1907 (CAO: MP84, S1, 1856/4/4).
(Notes Chapter Eight : beginning 49)

49 On Bridges' differences with Ewing:
   Bridges to Ewing, 20 October 1908 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1856/1/4).
   Bridges to Ewing, 3 August 1908 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1856/4/75).

50 On Creswell and Invasion 1905–1907:
   Macandie, Genesis of the R.A.N., pp. 131-133, 143-167.

51 Quotations from:
   Creswell to Deakin, 6 March 1907 (CAO : CP103, S12, Unnumbered).

52 On the limitations of Creswell's torpedo craft:
   Colonel Foster who held the Chair of Military Science at the
   University of Sydney attacked Creswell's views vigorously
   (Argus, 24 October 1908).
   See also other critics mentioned below in Chapter Ten.

53 Note number appears in the text by error.

54 Quotation from:
   Hoad to Cook, 26 July 1909 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1804/2/81).
   This memo was referred to the Military Board and was the subject
   of the first request from Whitehall for a strategic assessment.

55 Hoad to Cook, 14 October 1909 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1997/2/36).

56 Ibid.

57 On Committee to investigate wireless telegraphy:

58 Minute by Creswell on Naval Board Memo 27 August 1912 (CAO : MP472,
   28/8/1912).

59 Ibid. 
   Minute of 26 August 1912 by the Inspector-General (CAO : MP84, S1,
   1999/2/2).

60 Note number appears in the text by error.
On Road and Kitchener's visit:
Road to Cook, 3 September 1909 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1856/4/163).
On Deakin's correspondence with Kitchener before his arrival:
CAO : MP84, S1, 1901/13/16.

Minute Book : Council of Defence (Defence Department : Canberra) pp.1-28
Macandie, op.cit., pp.117-123.

On Mahan and Australian naval defence:
A.T. Mahan, "Considerations Governing the Dispositions of Navies"
in the National Review, July 1902, pp.701 ff.
The Times, 2 July 1902.

It must be noted that Mahan's words were ambiguous. The Spectator (5 July 1902) construed them as Creswell did, while The Times took them to be an exhortation for naval contributions. For an uneasy compromise between these two views by an Imperialist see:
L.H. Hodorn, "Colonial Responsibilities" in USM, October 1902, pp.1-10.

Quotation from:

Quotation from:

Quotation from:
Ibid., p.8.
The report of the meeting is written sometimes in the direct and sometimes in indirect speech. Here the words are presented in the direct speech with appropriate punctuation added.

Loc. cit.

Ibid., pp.10-11.


Ibid., p.28.
Macandie, op.cit., p.123.
70 Minute Book: Council of Defence, p.21.


72 Ibid., p.15.

73 Ibid., pp.16-21.
On federalist (military) legislation:
Drafts of the Defence Bills of 1901 and 1903 were distributed individually to Cabinet members. Though others made comment, Deakin does not appear to have done so.
(Papers on the Defence Bill No. 31 of 1903: Attorney-General's Department, Canberra)

On Hutton's military scheme:
Deakin to Clarke, 3 October 1905.
Deakin to Clarke, 8 January 1906.
Clarke to Deakin, 4 February 1906.
Clarke to Deakin, (?) April 1906.
(Deakin Papers)

On a consistent national scheme:
Deakin anticipated this before the fall of the Reid ministry in a newspaper interview, 12 June 1905.
Defence of Australia: Statement by ... Alfred Deakin ...
CPP: 1905, Vol. II (Ordered to be Printed, 31 August 1905)

7 Deakin to Northcote, 28 August 1905.
The Naval Agreement with Australia and New Zealand ...
CPP: 1906, Vol. II (Ordered to be Printed, 10 October 1906) Clause 5.
HEREAFTER: On Revision of the Agreement 1905.

8 Deakin to Clarke, 3 October 1905 (Deakin Papers).

9 Deakin to Northcote, 28 August 1905.
On Revision of the Agreement 1905, Clause 3.

10 On Deakin's suggestion:
Deakin to Clarke, 8 January 1906.
The reference to the 1865 Act is implied. Compare, Murdoch, op.cit., p.273.

On Robert Collins and the 1865 Act:
See above Chapter Seven.
See above Chapter One.

On revision, not abrogation, of the Agreement:
Deakin to Jebb, 4 June 1908 (Jebb Papers: C.N.L.).

On the general distinction made between naval cooperation and local naval defence:
In his correspondence with Clarke and Jebb, Deakin keeps these issues separate. The distinction, moreover, is the only means on interpreting the three aspects of his policy speech, CPD 42: 7509 ff., 13 December 1907, and his lack of concern over the kind of craft for a local naval force.
Quotation from:
Deakin's speech before the Imperial Federation League in 1905, cited by Grimshaw, op.cit., p.150.

CPD 42 : 7513, 13 December 1907.

Comment on this presentation of Deakin's Imperial policy:
In this section of the Chapter I have interpreted the speeches and actions of Deakin primarily from the point of view of defence policy. Statements are made with greater confidence because of independent study of the Commonwealth's response to the New Hebrides affair. Though no claim is made here either for a well-balanced interpretation or general and authoritative comment, it is hoped that Deakin's attitude as seen through defence will help clarify much else about him.

On Imperial reorganization:
The difference between Ewing, who wanted Australian defences completed before integration in larger schemes of Imperial defence, and Deakin, who desired that Imperial issues be settled first, is starkly brought out at a meeting of the Imperial Federation League, 18 May 1908 (reported in UNSW, November 1908, p.214).

It is also very probable that Deakin had not decided what executive functions the Imperial Council and its Permanent Secretariat should possess. This may well have been another occasion when Deakin was hoping that the general idea and the grand scheme would provoke others to clarify the issues, for his speech on reorganization before the Imperial Conference of 1907 was remarkably inept. In part he was presenting the substance of the Lyttleton Despatch written two years earlier with the approval of a Conservative government. He was encouraged in this by men like L.S. Amery. At the Conference, however, he was addressing his remarks to a Liberal government with quite different notions of Empire.

On Sources:
Minutes of Proceedings of Colonial Conference, 1907 ... (Command 3524 and 3523 in House of Commons, Accounts and Papers, Volume 55) pp.7-10, 26-29, 41-44, 611-621.
HERBERT : Colonial Conference 1907.

Correspondence Jebb to Deakin (CAO : CP103, S12, Unnumbered).
Correspondence on the Lyttleton Despatch (CAO : CP103, S12, Unnumbered).
On request of Whitehall for encouragement for navalist plans:
Deakin to Northcote, 29 December 1906 (CAO : CP290, S15, B6, Unnumbered).

On Deakin and local naval defence:
Defence of Australia : Statement by ... Alfred Deakin ..., cited in Note 6 above.
Deakin to Clarke, 3 October 1905 (Deakin Papers).
Deakin to Clarke, 8 January 1906 (Deakin Papers).
CPD 35 : 5563 ff., 26 September 1906.

On Deakin and Labour policy:
Deakin to Jebb, 4 June 1908 (Jebb Papers : C.N.L.).

On eventual formation of a sea-going navy (implied reference only):
Ibid.
Deakin to Clarke, 8 January 1906. Extract from speech to U.S. Fleet, 1 September 1908 (Deakin Papers).

Deakin to Clarke, 3 October 1905 (Deakin Papers).

See also:
Clarke to Deakin, (?) April 1906 (Deakin Papers), wherein Clarke refers to previous conversations with Deakin concerning universal training as an instrument of building national spirit.

There is in Deakin despatches - and speeches - a repeated appeal to the emotions expressed during colonial participation in the Boer War. This may have been in part the result of observation during that war. It is also the result of Richard Jebb's work, Colonial Nationalism - widely read and praised by Deakin - wherein Jebb argued that response to war demonstrated the co-existence and mutual dependence of nationalist aspirations and Imperial sentiment. See above Chapter Three.

Quotation from:
A speech before National Service League in London.
The Times, 17 May 1907.

Quotation from:
CPD 42 : 7509, 13 December 1907.
20 Quotation from:
Deakin to Clarke, 11 November 1905 (CAO : CP290, S15, Unnumbered).

See also:
Deakin to Northcote, 29 December 1905 (CAO : CP290, S15, Unnumbered).
Playford to Bridges, 21 December 1905 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1856/2/13).

21 Quotation from:
Deakin to Playford, 6 February 1906.

22 Quotation from:
Deakin to Clarke, 8 January 1906.

See also:
Bridges to Playford, 11 December 1905.
Playford to Bridges, 21 December 1905.
(CAO : MP84, S1, 1856/2/13).

23 Quotation from:
Playford to Bridges, 21 December 1905 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1856/2/13).

24 On Deakin's view of Creswell and Bridges:
Deakin to Playford, 6 February 1906 (Deakin Papers).

See also:
Playford to Deakin, 7 February 1906 (Deakin Papers).
Correspondence Deakin - Clarke, January-February 1906 (CAO : MP178, S2, 2286/3/6; 2286/3/13).

25 On Creswell in England:
Report on the Director of Naval Forces on his Visit to England, CPP : 1906, Vol.II (Ordered to be Printed, 21 September 1906).
Creswell to Playford, 21 September 1906 (RANA : 1851, Part a, Items 6 & 7).

26 On approval given to full report of the scheme of defence:
Elgin to Northcote, 1 June 1906 (CAO : CP290, S15, Unnumbered).
The report was considered and approved by the Committee of Imperial Defence which included: Campbell-Bannerman; Asquith; Grey; Tweedmouth; Haldane; Morley; Elgin; Esher; Fisher; the Chief of the General Staff; and the Directors of Naval Intelligence and Military Operations.
On Clarke's commentary on the drafting of the scheme:
Clarke to Deakin, 8 January 1906.
14 February 1906.
15 February 1906.
30 March 1906.
1 June 1906. (Deakin Papers)

On the report of the Committee of Imperial Defence:
HEREAFTER: *CID Report 1906.*

27 On Clarke:
Clarke to Deakin, 1 June 1906 (Deakin Papers).

28 *CID Report 1906*, p.3.


30 On Imperial Reserve:
Clarke to Deakin, 4 February 1904.

31 On parliamentary comment:
Questions in the House, 11, 13, 17 July 1906, 15, 16 August 1906.

On formal Australian Committees:
*Report of Committee ... Organization ...*  
(Hoad Committee) September 1906.
*Report of Committee ... Coastal Defences ...*  
(Gordon Committee) September 1906.
*Report of Committee ... Naval Defence ...*  
(Creswell Committee) September 1906.  
(CAO : CP29, S15, Unnumbered)

On ministerial consideration of the reports:
Playford to Deakin, c. September 1906.
Ewing to Deakin, c. September 1906.  
(CAO : MP84, S2, 02/2688)
Ewing's Minutes, 24 November 1907 (D/D : 1843/1/56).
Ewing's Minutes, 16 February 1907 (D/D : 1843/1/51).
Creswell to Playford, 30 July 1906 (D/D : 1843/1/2).
On ministerial decision about military defences:
Playford's minute, 18 September 1906 (D/D : 1843/1/45).

On Bridges' analysis and criticism of the Australian Reports:
Correspondence Bridges – Ewing, February–July 1907 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1856/4/4).

On Bridges' explanation of the CID Report:
Bridges to Playford, 5 July 1906 (Unnumbered File from Defence Department).

Note on Deakin's Procedure:
Deakin decided that Creswell should organize a committee to criticize the report and Bridges should not. Accordingly, Creswell returned post haste from London. Not even Bridges' memorandum, written while he remained overseas, were presented to the local committees.

32 On Creswell and destroyer defence:
See below Chapter Ten.

33 On reorganization of Imperial Squadron:
Lyttleton to Northcote, 14 January 1905.
Reid to Northcote, 23 January 1905.
Reid to Northcote, 3 February 1905.
(CAO : CP290, S15, S/S 6 February 1903)

On the cost:
(CAO : MP178, S2, 2115/3/172)

34 On absorption of local forces into Imperial Squadron:
Correspondence of 1904 (CAO : MP178, S1, 04/1435).
Creswell to Playford, 10 September 1905 (Deakin Papers).

See also:
Chapter Seven above.
Chapter Ten below.

On Admiralty cooperation for navalist plans:
Fawkes to Northcote, 18 February 1907 (CAO : MP178, S2, 2115/1/46).

35 Quotation from:
Fanshawe to Tennyson, 31 March 1903 (CAO : CP290, S15, S/S 6 February 1903).
36 On discipline on the Imperial Squadron:
  Report cited above in Note 35.
  Parliamentary questions collected in (CAO : MP178, S1, 10468).

37 On use of vessels provided under the Agreement:
  Parliamentary questions 1905 in (CAO : MP178, S1, 05/4063).
  Quarterly returns in (CAO : MP178, S2, 2115/3/172).
  Admiralty apology of September 1906 in (CAO : CP290, S15,
  S/S 6 February 1903).

38 On Creswell and cadets:
  Creswell to Ewing, 24 March 1908 (CAO : MP178, S2, 2254/3/3).
  On Fanshawe and new recruiting schemes:
    Correspondence 1906–1907 (CAO : CP103, S12, B6 - "Defence
    Matters").

39 On response to new recruiting provisions:
  Figures were compiles from lengthy returns in (CAO : MP178,
  S2, 2115/3/172).
  In particular:
    I am indebted to Mr. Ware of the Archives Branch of the
    Department of the Navy for a comprehensive list of annual
    strengths; and for clarifying a number of issues for me.

40 Quotation from:
  Creswell to Playford, 22 August 1905 (CAO : MP178, S1,
  1905/11047).

41 On the powerful issue:
  Questions in the House.
  Correspondence: Departmental; Imperial.
  Creswell's Memoranda 1906 (all from July 1905).
  Colquhoun's Memoranda 1906.
  (CAO : MP178, S2, 2115/3/172)
  Admiralty to Colonial Office (Enclosure).
  Lyttleton to Northcote, 29 December 1905.
  (CAO : CP290, S12, S/S 6 February 1903).
  Age, 8 February 1906.
42 Quotation from:
Creswell to Playford, 7 February 1906 (CAO : MG178, S2, 2115/3/172).

43 On Deakin's attack on the Agreement 1906 and quotation from:
Deakin to Northcote, 26 April 1906 (CAO : CP290, S15, S/S 6 February 1903).

44 On Admiralty rebuttal:
Admiralty to Colonial Office No. 163 of 1906.
Enclosure in Elgin to Northcote, 14 September 1906.
(CAO : CP290, S15, S/S 6 February 1903).

45 On Lord Tweedmouth:
Speech of March 1906 (USM, March 1906, p.708).
Speech of February 1907 (USM, June 1907, pp.327-328).

46 Quotation from:
Minute by Ewing on projected reserve system, 30 September 1907
(CAO : MG84, S1, 1856/4/24).

On the state of the forces:
Detailed evidence has been culled from departmental files 1905-1912. Such an extensive investigation was necessary to
discover the fate of Hutton's military scheme and the truth
beneath charge and countercharge in the House. However, for
the purposes of this work, only those aspects which relate to
the introduction of universal training are examined here.

SELECT SOURCES (All departmental files from CAO : MG84, S1):

(1) On defence schemes and state of forces generally:
Correspondence Ewing-Bridges 1907-1908: 1856/1/4; 1856/4/55;
1856/4/4.

(2) On the problem of reserves:
Correspondence Ewing - Wallack 1907-1909: 1856/4/24. Also
1974/1/74.

(3) On general reports 1905-1910:
1901/13/29; 1002/1/2 et seq.

(4) On annual state reports from commandants and field commanders:
South Australia: 1002/2/11 et seq.
Queensland: 768/2/40 et seq.; 702/2/2 et seq.
Western Australia: 1302/2/1 et seq.
New South Wales: 168/2/37 et seq.
Tasmania: 1856/5/65.
(5) Reports to Parliament:

Report on the Department of Defence
CPP: 1906, Vol. II (Ordered to be Printed, 18 September 1906).

Military Board: Report ... 1905
CPP: 1906, Vol. II (Ordered to be Printed, 30 July 1906).

Annual Report for ... 1905 ... Inspector-General
CPP: 1906, Vol. II (Ordered to be Printed, 30 July 1906).

Report by the Inspector-General ... 1906
CPP: 1906, Vol. II (Ordered to be Printed, 14 September 1906).

Report by the Military Board ... 1906
CPP: 1907-1908, Vol. II (Ordered to be Printed, 10 July 1907).

Annual Report ... 1907 ... Inspector-General
CPP: 1907-1908, Vol. II (Ordered to be Printed, 2 April 1908).

(6) On plight of Volunteer Regiments:
1902/1/10; 1071/7/11.

(7) On the cadets:
1832/8/80.

(8) On resistance of volunteers to absorption into the militia:
1937/1/21.

(9) On calibre of officers:
1952/1/33; 2002/3/11; 1901/13/29; 430/2/1-40; 130/3/12;

(10) On standard of instruction:
1856/5/94; 1862/7/37.

(11) On administrative defects:
1828/2/46 et seq.

(12) On ordnance:
1990/4/7; 1968/3/4; 1879/1/4.

(13) On surveys and maps:
1856/1/43.

(14) On tactical mobility (horses and vehicles):
1894/5/103; 1902/7/67; 2004/1/23; 2004/1/3-26; 1893/1/36;
1893/1/-; 2004/1/23.

(15) On railways:
457/1/26-79; 1957/2/43.

47 On conflict between Bridges and Ewing:
Sources in Note 46 (1) above.
Also see Chapter Eight above.
48 On condition of the militia:

Sources in Note 46 (2-6) above.
In particular - conferences of commandants and commanders 1907-1909 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1937/1/21).

Quotation from:
Lyster to Military Board, June 1907 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1937/1/21).

49 See below Chapter Ten, part two.

50 On mobility:
Argument rests on sources in Note 46 (14 and 15) above.

51 On cadet movement:
Reports from all states on the cadet movement 1906-1910 (CAO : MP84, S1, 183/1/296).
NOTES FOR CHAPTER TEN

1 On Ewing:
   CPD 35 : 5691, 28 September 1906.

2 On Watson:
   The Call, 8 August 1906, p.6.
   CPD 35 : 5575 ff., 26 September 1906.

3 On Playford:
   "Summary of Proposals for Future Defence", c. September 1906
   (CAO : MP84, S2, 02/2688).

   On Lyne:
   United Services Magazine, August 1907, p.566.

   On Victorians and Voluntary Service:
   The Call, August 1906.
   Deputation to Deakin, 4-7 November 1906 (CAO : MP84, S2,
   1856/6/3).

4 On the Press:
   This general statement rests on a survey of the Sydney Morning
   Herald, the Daily Telegraph, and the Argus: October 1905;
   December 1907; September 1908; February-April 1909; September
   1909.

   On W.H. Kelly (Free-trade defence critic):
   Kelly on Hughes - CPD 32 : 2590 ff., 9 August 1906.

   On Reid:
   CPD 47 : 839 ff., 7 October 1908.

5 On Deakin's anticipation of new measures:
   CPD 35 : 5563 ff., 26 September 1906.

   On Deakin's evasion concerning universal training:
   Attlee Hunt to Campbell, 14 November 1906 (CAO : MP84, S2,
   1856/6/3).

   On Deakin and the vessels for the Australian Naval Force:
   Deakin to Jebb, 4 June 1908 (Jebb Papers : C.N.L.).

6 See above Chapters Two and Six.
7 On Clarke and Destroyers in 1905:
Clarke to Collins, Collins to McCay, May–June 1905 (Deakin Papers).
At the time McCay was examining Creswell's schemes which he submitted before and after the Council of Defence meeting in 1905. See above Chapter Eight.

8 On Churchill and Destroyers:

On changing naval technology:
Much of the source material for the sketch of developments in destroyer and submarine construction – and relevant theories of coastal defence – overlaps with sources for other technical change mentioned elsewhere in this work. All relevant sources are listed here.

I have drawn much from many items and articles, too numerous to cite in full, which appear in Brassey's Naval Annual (from 1897 to 1917), in the United Services Magazine (i.e. USM, from 1896 to 1922), in the Royal United Services Institute Journal (i.e. RUSIJ, from 1896 to 1914), and in the Transactions of the Institute of Naval Architects (i.e. TINA, from 1900 to 1927) and in Jane's Fighting Ships (1900–1930).

These surveys were necessary because there was some secrecy, a good deal of evasion, and much confusion about the types of vessels and their functions in ministerial, parliamentary and editorial discussion of naval projects after 1906.

On specific sources for naval architecture:
Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge, "Fifty Years of Architectural Expression of Tactical Ideas", TINA, Vol. LIII, Part II, 1911.

On the failure of Destroyers prior to 1906:

HEREAFTER: Fisher Papers.
Naval Annual 1901, pp.112 ff.
1902, pp.94 ff.
1905, pp.97 ff.
Also 1908, pp.152 ff.

On Admiralty Sub-Committee on Designs:
Fisher to Selborne, May 1904 (Fisher Papers) pp.xxi, xxvii.
Specifications and Comment (Fisher Papers) pp.2, 22 ff., 41 ff., 221 ff.
Fisher to Churchill, March 1912 (Marder, Fear God and Dreadnought, Vol. II, pp.436 ff.).

On Australian Assessments and work of Professor Biles:
Biles to Collins, 16 March 1910 (CAO: MP472, 16/12/490).
Colquhoun to Ewing, 4 July 1907 (CAO: MP178, S2, 2286/3/35).
Colquhoun to Ewing, 4 November 1907 (CAO: MP178, S2, 2286/3/60).
Creswell to Ewing, 24 March 1908 (CAO: MP178, S2, 2254/3/3).
Correspondence in (CAO: CP178, S2, 2215/3/54).
Builders' Specifications for various destroyers (RANA: 1851, Part a, item 11).
Macandie, Genesis of the R.A.N., pp.196-207.
See also below in this Chapter.

On soliciting by private builders in Australia:
Thornycroft to Collins, 9 February 1900.
Thornycroft & Co. to Forrest, 19 December 1901.
Collins to Thornycroft, 14 February 1902.
(CAO: MP178, S1, 1902/694)
See also files for 1883-1892 in (CAO: MP160, S1).

On naval architecture and coastal defence:
Marder, Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, pp.328 ff.
P.K. Kemp, H.M. Destroyer (London 1956 : Herbert Jenkins) Chapters 1 to III.
(Notes Chapter Ten: beginning 9)

On theories of radial port defence:
R.H.S. Bacon, "Harbour Defence and the Blockade", Naval Annual
1900, pp.81 ff.

On the Changing capacities of British Submarines 1902–1908:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Displacement</th>
<th>Surface Speed</th>
<th>Underwater Speed</th>
<th>Radius on Surface</th>
<th>Radius Submerged</th>
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<tr>
<td>H1–H5 (1902)</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>A1–A4 (1903)</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5–A12 (1904–5)</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1–B (1905–6)</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>30–50</td>
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<tr>
<td>C1–C11 (1906–8)</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>1,350</td>
<td>50–70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A13 (1908)</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1,350</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 Creswell to Playford, 10 October 1905 - CPP: 1905, Vol.II (Ordered to be Printed, 12 December 1905).

10 Creswell to Pearce, 4 February 1909 (RANA: 185i, Part a, item 13).

See also:
Macandie, op.cit., p.226.

11 On Creswell's submissions in 1905:

Note also:
Most of these documents are to be found in official files but, in this instance, the deletions in Macandie's collection, are of no consequence.

12 Much of this paragraph is based upon inferences drawn from:
Clarke to Deakin, 14 February 1906.
Clarke to Deakin, 30 March 1906.
Clarke to Deakin, 1 June 1906.
Creswell to Playford, 1 June 1906.
(Deakin Papers)
Creswell to Playford, 6 August 1906 (RANA: 185i, Part a, Items 6 & 7).

13 On Creswell and Submarines:
Creswell to Ewing, 24 March 1908 (CAO: MP178, S2, 2254/3/3).

See also:
Correspondence Colquhoun to Ewing, cited in Note 8 above.
(Notes Chapter Ten : beginning 17)

1909, pp.11 ff.

"Admiralty or Admiralties?", *USM*, November 1906, pp.936 ff.
"On the Australian Destroyer Scheme", *USM*, February 1907, pp.461 ff.

Editor of *United Services Magazine*, "The Colonies and Imperial Defence", *USM*, January 1908, pp.341 ff.


See also:
Editorials in Australian press mentioned in Note 4 above.

Note also:
Ministerial questions and all of Creswell's answers are to be found scattered through memoranda cited in Notes 14 and 15 above.


19 Quotation from:
CPD 35 : 5577, 26 September 1906.

On Deakin and Defence 1906:
CPD 35 : 5564 ff., 26 September 1906.

20 Quotation from:
CPD 35 : 5578, 26 September 1906.

21 Quotation from:
Creswell to Ewing, 28 November 1907 (CAO : MP178, S1, 2215/3/66).

22 Quotation from:
Bruce Smith, CPD 46 : 11408, 22 May 1908.
On the destroyer project 1907-1908:

Voluminous correspondence by Playford, Creswell, Ewing, Colquhoun, Clarkson, Clarke, Watts, and Biles is to be found in: CAO: MP178, S2, 2215/3/54; 2215/3/66; 2215/3/95; 2286/3/34; 2286/3/39; 2286/3/52; 2286/3/54; 2286/3/60.

On parliamentary discussion:

CPD 35 : 5563 ff., 26 September 1906.
CPD 39 : 3288 ff., 13 September 1907.
CPD 39 : 3598 ff., 20 September 1907.
CPD 39 : 3615, 20 September 1907.
CPD 39 : 3677 ff., 24 September 1907.
CPD 46 : 11408 ff., 22 May 1908.
CPD 46 : 12076 ff., 4 June 1908.

See also:

Material on Australian assessments of destroyers and the work of Professor Biles in Note 8 above.

Quotation from:

Deakin to Jebb, 4 June 1908 (Jebb Papers : C.N.L.).

On Deakin's doubts about the destroyer for coastal defence:

CPD 35 : 5563 ff., 26 September 1906.
Minutes : Colonial Conference 1907, pp.474-475.

On control of Australian naval forces:

Deakin to Ewing, ? 1907 (Deakin Papers).
Deakin to Foxton, 19 September 1909 (Deakin Papers).
Correspondence 1906-1911 in Briefing Papers on Defence for Imperial Conference 1907 (CAO : MP153, S11).
Pearce to Denman, 4 May 1914 (Denman Papers : C.N.L.).

On ships of limited capability and the Colonial Naval Defence Act:

Until Admiralty and Colonial Office files are examined, the argument in this paragraph must rest largely on inference and conjecture. It does, however, solve a number of puzzles raised by the 1865 Act and the 1907 Conference.

B.A. Knox in a thorough and careful account of the 1865 Act shows that officials of the Colonial Office were more concerned about the status and control of colonial ships on the high seas than the Admiralty; he sees the Act as a major, if premature, move towards Imperial cooperation. The view of the Admiralty is the more explicable and his theme slightly less surprising if account is taken of the fact that the Cerberus was designed for harbour defence, and within a few years used only for that
pursue it. It would then be possible to see the 1865 Act as part of the long and sustained British campaign to encourage the colonies to provide for their own local and port defences—a process in which Victoria was to the fore—and not as an anticipation of naval cooperation.

Likewise, the stand taken by the Admiralty in 1907 is capable of a quite different interpretation than the usual when it is remembered that the submarine of the day was a port defence vessel.

On 24 April 1907 this interpretation of the Act was probably made clear to Deakin at a meeting at the Admiralty where he discussed submarine defence with the Director of Naval Intelligence and apparently discussed navalist projects with Admiral Sir John Fisher.

Later Admiralty despatches seem to imply that ocean-going destroyers raised problems outside the Act.

Other sources:


Resume of discussion on 24 April 1907 in unattached Admiralty despatch of 10 February 1908 (CAO : MP153, S11—Unnumbered—Naval Briefing Papers).

Colonial Office to Dudley, 18 August 1910 (RAN : 1851, Part b).

See below next Note for Deakin at the Admiralty 1907.

28 Naval Discussions at the Conference 1907.

On Campbell-Bannerman:
Minutes: Colonial Conference 1907, p.5.

On Lord Tweedmouth:
Ibid., pp.128-132, 147-151, 469-473.

On Deakin:
Ibid., pp.132-134, 473-476.

On Deakin's conversations with officials of the Admiralty:
Deakin to (Fisher?), Undated—probably late 1907 (Deakin Papers).
Re Submarine Force and discussion with Director of Naval Intelligence, Colonial Conference 1907, Confidential Papers ..., C.O. Misc. No.208 Confidential (CAO : CP103, S12, "Defence Matters"), pp.3-4, 10-12.
29 Quotation from:
Confidential Papers, cited above Note 28, p.3.

30 On Deakin's later explanations:
CPD 42 : 7509 ff., 13 December 1907.

31 Quotation from:
CPD 42 : 7528, 13 December 1907.
See also:
The Bulletin, 10 November 1904.

32 Quotation from:
Draft Report on the Progress of the Defence Forces - Senator
Pearce, 1 June 1913 (CAO : MP472, S1, C8, 1/11/4933).

33 On the campaign for compulsory military training:

What follows is essentially a short, interpretative essay.
Originally it was planned to present this aspect of nationalist
policy at greater length, and material was collected to that end
for a period ending 1915. For the purposes of this work, however,
the scale has been reduced, various complexities ignored, and
the role of various agents omitted for the sake of clarity.

The prime task has been to make the campaign and its various
arguments credible. To this end, William Morris Hughes is used
as a means of illuminating the varying motives of men who
supported universal training. As on each other occasion when
characters are introduced my concern has not been to give a
balanced portrait but a sketch which will illuminate the approach
of individuals to defence discussions.

Mr. Fitzhardinge of the Australian National University has much
to say about Hughes and defence in his forthcoming biography. As
my supervisor, he has directed me to valuable sources; and this
kindness has been reciprocated. My interpretation of Hughes,
however, differs substantially from Fitzhardinge's. It borrows
much from Manning Clarke's sketch in his Short History of
Australia but is based essentially on my own analysis of defence
debates throughout the period.

Because of the nature of this section, then, footnotes are
reduced to a minimum and the general sources are listed below.
Material from works already cited is not duplicated here. Nor
is detailed reference made to various speeches in the House
which demonstrate the assumptions of each group interested in
universal training.
On general sources:

(1) Survey and analysis of the Call (Organ of Australian National Defence League) 1906-1910.


(3) Survey of editorial opinion in the Age, the Argus, the Sydney Morning Herald, and the Daily Telegraph: October 1905; September-December 1906; December 1907; September 1908; February-May 1909; September 1909.

(4) The parliamentary campaign of W.M. Hughes:
The Bulletin, 16 February 1901.
CPD 3 : 3292 ff., 31 July 1901.
Proposed Amendments to the Defence Bill 1901 (Attorney-General's Department, Canberra).
CPD 15 : 3093 ff., 5 August 1903.
CPD 32 : 2580 ff., 9 August 1906.
CPD 37 : 1282 ff., 1 August 1907.
CPD 47 : 860 ff., 7 October 1908.
CPD 52 : 4472 ff., 13 October 1909.

See also:
Speech before the National Service League reported in The Times, 26 April 1907.
W.M. Hughes, The Day and After: War Speeches ... (London 1916 : Cassel).
W.M. Hughes, The Price of Peace (Sydney 1934 : Brooks).

Note Also: Mr. Fitzhardinge was generous enough to allow me to read the first drafts of his forthcoming biography.

(5) The parliamentary campaign of Senator Dobson:
CPD 16 : 4875 ff., 10 September 1903.
CPD 24 : 6384 ff., 14 December 1904.
CPD 32 : 2541 ff., 9 August 1906.
CPD 36 : 11 ff., 20 February 1907.
CPD 38 : 2873 ff., 5 September 1907.
CPD 41 : 5673 ff., 7 November 1907.

(6) The views of Major J.G. Legge:

(7) The views of Deakin, his followers, and opponents:
Deakin - See above Chapter Nine.
Speech before the National Service League reported in The Times, 17 May 1907.
CPD 42 : 7509 ff., 13 December 1907.
Ewing - CPD 47 : 437 ff., 29 September 1908.
Crouch - CPD 47 : 1008 ff., 9 October 1908.
Reid - CPD 47 : 839 ff., 7 October 1908.
Foxton - CPD 47 : 1047 ff., 13 October 1908.
Forrest - CPD 47 : 1129 ff., 14 October 1908.


(10) Military background: (Select Titles Only)

34 Quotation from:
Whyte, op.cit., p. 58.

35 Quotation from:
Ibid., p. 164.

36 Quotation from:
The Bulletin, 16 February 1901.
37 Quotation from:
CPD 32 : 2581, 9 August 1906.

38 Quotation from:
CPD 3 : 3296, 31 July 1901.

39 Quotation from:
CPD 15 : 3094, 5 August 1903.

40 Quotation from:
National Review, July 1907, p.733.

41 Quotation from:
National Review, July 1907, p.736.

42 Quotation from:
The Times, 26 April 1907.

43 Quotation from:
CPD 3 : 3298, 31 July 1901.

44 Quotation from:
CPD 32 : 2586, 9 August 1906.

45 Quotation from:
CPD 37 : 1285, 1 August 1907.

46 I.S. Bloch, Is War Now Impossible? ... (London 1899).
"Wars of the Future", in the Contemporary Review, September 1901, pp.305 ff.
"Militarism in Politics ...", in the Contemporary Review, December 1901, pp.761 ff.

Editorial discussion in the Age, the Bulletin, and the Call, and passing comment in the House indicated that some men at least were pitting Bloch against writers like Colmar von der Goltz and his The Nation in Arms.
Quotation from: 
Journals and Proceedings of the United Services Institute of New South Wales, 28 August 1899.

On attitudes from the eighties, including Labour and Liberal: 
Apart from sources and speeches already cited: 
The Bulletin, 1898-1904. 

Quotation from: 
Deakin's reply to the Victorian Defence League, November 1906 (CAO: MP84, S2, 1856/6/3).

Quotation from: 
Deakin to Campbell, 14 November 1906 (CAO: MP84, S2, 1856/6/3).

Quotation from: 
Senator McGregor (CPD 1: 132, 22 May 1901).

On Watson's Proposals of 1905: 
CAO: MP178, S1, 1905/10092. 
On Labour's view at the Triennial Conference 1905: 

Quotation from: 
G.R. Campbell, Australia's Defence (Sydney 1925) p.4.

On Hughes' calculation of success: 
Hughes to Jebb, 23 September 1907 (Jebb Papers: C.N.L.).

On Playford and Universal Training: 
CAO: MP84, S2, 02/2688.

On Deakin and the Defence Leagues: 
CAO: MP84, S1, 1856/6/3.
(Notes Chapter Ten: beginning 57)

57 On Bridges' report on the Swiss system:
   Bridges to Playford, 11 December 1905 (CAO: MP84, S1, 1865/2/13).

58 On formal military discussions in London:
   Minutes: Colonial Conference 1907, pp.94-99, 102-107, 114-121,
   123-128.

   See also attached papers:
   The Strategic Conditions of the Empire ..., Chief of the
   General Staff, March 1907.
   Possibility of Assimilating War Organization Throughout the
   Empire, Chief of the General Staff, March 1907.

59 Quotation from:
   Minutes: Colonial Conference 1907, p.96.

60 On the Proposed Imperial Reserve:
   CAO: MP84, S1, 1856/1/10.
   CAO: CP103, S12, B6, "Defence Matters".

   On the formation of the Imperial General Staff (Commonwealth Section):
   CAO: MP84, S1, 1894/5/45.
   1894/5/43.
   1894/5/59.

61 Quotation from:
   The Times, 17 May 1907.

62 On Deakin and the National Service League:
   Ibid.

63 Quotation from:
   T.R. & H.P.C. Ashworth, Proportional Representation Applied
   to Party Government (Melbourne 1900) p.209.

   This work, shot through with excerpts from popular Social-
   Darwinists, was often quoted in debates on electoral procedure.

   See also:
   1902 to 1918 (Seminar Paper, Institute of Advanced Studies,
   Australian National University).

64 Quotation from:
Quotation from:

Quotations from:
Brief and undated notes for a speech during 1908? (*Deakin Papers*).
See also:
*Deakin - Clarke correspondence 1905-1906* (*Deakin Papers*).

Quotation from:
See also:
A similar commentary of the affect on national and Imperial sentiment resulting from Hutton's scheme (*CPP : 1909, Miscellaneous, Vol.II*, p.125).

Quotation from:
Anonymous article in the *Call*, August 1906, p.13.
This article from both the style and content is clearly written by Hughes. The same metaphor - and argument - is used elsewhere by him.

A distinction has to be drawn in signed and unsigned articles of the *Call*. Unsigned articles were stop gaps often provided in haste by Hughes, Campbell, and their colleagues on the executive committee. Unlike signed articles, they were the expressions of editorial opinion. Hughes was joint secretary and joint editor.

For other commentaries on universal trainees as an informal Imperial Reserve, see the *Call*, February 1907, p.3; November 1908, p.6; February 1909, pp.6-7.

Quotation from:
The *Call*, November 1908, pp.5-6.
The arguments of this article are partly those of Hughes. From the style, however, it seems that it was written by another member of the executive committee, A.W. Jose. He was usually given the task of expounding Imperial issues.

*Whyte, *op.cit.*, p.130.*
On treatment of Deakin's speech:
The presentation of Deakin's proposals will be brief. Enough has been explained in the preceding pages to capture the spirit and intent of the speech.

On lack of consultation:
Deakin had not presented his proposals for comment to the inspector-General, the Military Board, or the Naval Board. The Council of Defence went unused. Fawkes, the Admiral on the Australian Station, was implicated but had not been consulted. The Admiralty had been approached indirectly by correspondence with Sir John Fisher. But Fisher rejected Deakin's proposed revision of the Agreement and interchangeability. These issues had not been, as Deakin claimed, discussed in London.

On the prime sources:
CPD 42 : 7509 ff., 13 December 1907.
Memorandum on the Proposed Organization of a National Guard ....
CPP : 1908, Vol.II (Ordered to be Printed, 31 January 1908).
CPD 47 : 437 ff., 29 September 1908.

Quotation from:
CPD 42 : 7511, 13 December 1907.

Quotation from:
CPD 42 : 7515, 13 December 1907.

On the revision of the Agreement, see also:
Deakin to Jebb, 4 June 1908 (Jebb Papers : C.N.L.).

Note also:
The request for cruisers from the Admiralty had been independently recommended by Fawkes and Creswell, the first in order to free vessels of the Imperial Squadron, and the second to get sea-going training ships with some potentiality for duties as flotilla leaders.

Fawkes to Deakin, 18 February 1907 (ibid., pp.168-175).
Deakin thought that Fisher might release the third-class cruisers from the Imperial Squadron for special Australian service, but also hoped more modern ones might be presented on the same terms as the Cerberus.

Quotation from:
CPD 42 : 7524, 13 December 1907.
76 Quotation from:
CPD 42 : 7518, 13 December 1907.

77 Quotation from:
Deakin to Fisher, c. October 1907 (Deakin Papers).

78 Quotation from:
Memorandum on ... (the) National Guard, Clause 18.

79 Quotation from:
CPD 42 : 7536, 13 December 1907.

80 Quotation from:
Ibid.

81 Quotation from:
Deakin to Jebb, 4 June 1908 (Jebb Papers : C.H.L.).

82 On the Admiralty's response:
Fisher to Tweedmouth, c. October 1907 (Marder, Fear God and
Dreadnought, p.139).
Command Paper - House of Commons - No.4325 of 1908.

83 On survey of newspapers:
See above Note 4.
Daily papers which took this view included the Sydney Morning
Herald, Daily Telegraph, Argus, Advertiser (Adelaide),
Mercury (Hobart).

84 On the navalist response:
The Age, 16 December 1907; 20 December 1907.
Creswell to Ewing (Confidential), 24 March 1908 (CAO : MF178,
S2, 2254/38).

85 Quotation from:
The Times, 24 March 1908.
86 Quotations from:
Bridges to Ewing, 8 September 1908 (CAO: MP84, S1, 1856/5/106).

See also:
Bridges to Ewing, 18 June 1908 (CAO: MP84, S1, 1856/5/94).
Bridges was apparently the only staff officer to criticize Deakin’s policy. Hood apparently complained he had not been consulted. The remaining officers bent with the winds of change.

87 On Hughes and the Deakin programme:
CPD 47: 860 ff., 7 October 1908.

On the Defence League:
The Call, February 1908, pp.3-4.

On Reid:
CPD 47: 839 ff., 7 October 1908.

88 Quotation from:
CAO: MP84, S1, 1856/5/27b.

89 Quotation from:
CAO: MP84, S1, 1856/4/174.

90 On the revolt of the militia officers:
Evidence of the response of the military to Deakin’s speech covers approximately three feet of archival space. Most strands can be discerned from correspondence in (CAO: MP84, S1, Bundles 26A and 27A).
There has been insufficient space to examine the response further. The attitude of the militia officers can, however, be discerned from the following files:
CAO: MP84, S1, 1856/5/27.
1856/1/30.
1856/5/40.
1856/5/51.
1856/5/54.
1856/5/64.
1856/5/79.
1856/4/174, Parts A and B.

See also:
Articles in the Daily Telegraph, 4 January to 13 January 1908; and the Call, November 1908, pp.22-23.
91 Quotations from:
Legge to Deakin (or Ewing?), Undated - but probably June-July 1908 (Deakin Papers).

92 On financial calculations in 1908:
The Finance Member to the Naval and Military Board was not consulted before the schemes were launched. He had therefore to work within the estimated expenses announced by Deakin (CAO : MP84, S1, 166/1/11).

On British estimates of universal training:

On cost in 1913:
Commonwealth Yearbook, No.7.

93 On Deakin and the press:
Sissons, op.cit., quotation from p.60.

94 On Deakin and the response to the National Guard:
By October 1908 the only groups who appear to have formally rejected universal training on principle and under any circumstances, were the Society of Friends, the Seventh Day Adventists, and the nucleus of the Peace Society which was later to flourish.

By then the Courier, the Evening Observer, the Register, the Age, the Sydney Morning Herald, the Advertiser, and the West Australian were prepared to accept some form of universal training in principle. More reserved were the Daily Telegraph and the Argus.

The Australian Natives Association and the Associated Chamber of Commerce of Australia, were among extra-parliamentary groups ready to support Deakin on this issue.

On sources:
CAO : MP84, S1, 1856/5/11.
    1856/5/96.
    1856/5/78.
    1856/5/153.
Sissons, op.cit., pp.60-63.

95 On the visit of the United States Fleet:
Official correspondence and newspaper coverage.
On the Australian response:
Sissons, op.cit., pp.61 ff.

On Deakin's motives:
Deakin to Jebb, 4 June 1908 (Jebb Papers: C.M.I.).
The Age, 1 September 1908.

96 On Labour and Universal Training:
Fourth Commonwealth Political Labor Conference, Brisbane,
The Call, February 1909, p.2.
Deputation from Australian Natives Association (of N.S.W.) to
Pearce, 7 May 1909 (CAO: MP84, S1, 1856/5/136).
Sissons, op.cit., pp.54-55.

97 On Labour's military policy:
The Call, May 1909, pp.6-9.
Pearce to Campbell, 5 May 1909 (CAO: MP84, S1, 1856/5/137).

98 On Labour's naval policy:
The Call, May 1909, pp.6-9.
Correspondence: Attlee Hunt; W.M. Hughes; Senator Pearce,
March-April 1909 (CAO: MP178, S2, 2152/1/9) and (CAO: MP178,
S2, 2310/9/317-412).
Pearce to Australian Natives Association (of N.S.W.), May
1909 (CAO: MP84, S1, 1856/5/136).
Creswell to Pearce, 4 February 1909; Creswell to Pearce, 13
February 1909 (RANA: 1851, Part a, Item 13).
Macandie, op.cit., pp.216-236.
Fisher to Collins, 5 February 1909 (Deakin Papers).
Fisher to Dudley, 26 March 1909 (CAO: CP290, S15, B1, S/S
Cable, 20 April 1909).
Conference .... Naval and Military Defence of the Empire 1909,
CPP: 1909, Vol.II (Ordered to be Printed, 17 November 1909)
pp.4-5.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER ELEVEN

1 Quotation from:
Major-General Kirkpatrick to Senator Pearce, c. November 1911
(CAO: CP290, S15, Unnumbered).
Kirkpatrick was employed to see the Kitchener scheme was
implemented and was privy to his intentions. As will be made
clear, it is not suggested that the new citizen army was created
for Imperial service. That was to be only one of its justifi-
cations.

2 Quotation from:
Colonel the Right Honourable Viscount Esher, "The Coordination
of the Naval and Military Services" - a lecture printed in

3 On the Dreadnought scare:
Marder, Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, pp.151-185.
Turner, The First Decade of the Australian Commonwealth,
pp.203-207.
Survey of editorial opinion, February to May 1909: Age, Argus,
Sydney Morning Herald, Daily Telegraph.

4 Quotations from:
The Age, 24 March 1909.

5 Quotations from:
Turner, op.cit., p.206.

6 Quotations from:
Bean, The Story of Anzac, p.15.

7 Quotation from:
Undated Memorandum, but probably Pearce to Denman, 1914
(Macandie, Genesis of the R.A.N., p.272).

8 Quotation from:
(Notes Chapter Eleven: beginning 15)

15 Quotation from:
Dudley to Crewe, 4 June 1909.
Conference... Naval and Military Defence of the Empire 1909,
CPP: 1909, Vol. II (Ordered to be Printed, 17 November 1909)
p.13.
HEREAFTER: Precis: Imperial Conference 1909.

16 On the Imperial Defence Conference of 1909:
Because the treatment of all aspects of policy in 1909 and after
must be of necessity brief, only direct quotations will be cited.
The narration of events and the summary of attitudes rests on
the sources listed below:

On the Conference:

(1) Precis: Imperial Conference 1909.

(2) Confidential Papers... Imperial Defence Conference 1909
(Dominions No.16 Secret - Imperial Conference Secretariat,
September 1909).
HEREAFTER: Confidential Papers: Imperial Conference 1909.

(3) Defence of the Empire 1909... Minutes of Proceedings (Dominions
No.15 Secret - Imperial Conference Secretariat, October 1909).
HEREAFTER: Confidential Minutes: Imperial Conference 1909.

(4) Defence of the Empire, 1909... Notes on the Proceedings of
Conferences at the Admiralty (Dominions No.17 Secret - Imperial
Conference Secretariat, October 1909).
HEREAFTER: Confidential Meetings at the Admiralty: Imperial
Conference 1909.

All the above documents can be found in (CAO: CP103, S12, B8).

On Australian military response:
Bridges to Foxton, September 1909 (Enclosure Foxton to Deakin,
3 September 1909: Deakin Papers).
Comments by Chief of the General Staff in Road to Pearce, 4 May
1910 (CAO: WP84, S1, 1902/2/4-15).

On Australian naval response:
Memoranda Creswell to Cook, November 1909 (RANA: 185i, Part a).
Creswell to Cook, 16 November 1909 (Macandie, op.cit., pp.250 ff.)

On Colonel Foxton's brief:
Fragmentary correspondence and papers of May-June 1909 (CAO:
CP103, S10, 9/2321).

On Deakin and the Conference:
Telegraphic communication Foxton to Deakin, Deakin to Foxton,
July-August 1909 (CAO: CP103, S10, 12/975).
Cables and Correspondence between Foxton and Deakin, August-
September 1909 (Deakin Papers).
Correspondence Premier Western Australia, Deakin, Foxton, August 1909 (CAO : CP103, S10, 18/3822).

On quotations in the paragraph:
Admiralty Memorandum, 20 July 1909.
Confidential Papers : Imperial Conference 1909, p.30.

17 Quotation from:
Sir John Fisher on naval defence (Confidential Meetings at the Admiralty : Imperial Conference 1909, p.6).

18 Quotation from:
Chief of the General Staff on military defence (Confidential Papers : Imperial Conference 1909, p.45).

19 Quotation from:
Secretary of State for the Colonies (Crewe) - (Confidential Minutes : Imperial Conference 1909, p.12).

20 Quotation from:
United Services Magazine, April 1909.

On Roberts and Australian troops:

21 Quotation from:
Fisher to Henderson, 10 February 1914 (Marder, Fear God and Dreadnought, p.327).

On the attitudes of McKenna and Fisher:
Many of the views explained in this paragraph are scattered throughout the naval discussions of 1909. The case can only be put with certainty after examination of government files in London.

On McKenna:
Marder, Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, pp.22-23.

On Fisher and Beresford:
Marder, Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, pp.186-207.

On anticipation of Commonwealth cruisers for an Eastern Fleet:
May 1909, p.2.
C.E.W. Bean, With the Flagship in the South (Sydney 1908).
On anticipation of Dominion cruisers in London:

Naval Annual 1909, pp.11 ff.
1910, pp.11 ff.

On Fisher and previous notions of a new Eastern Fleet:
See above Chapters Seven and Ten.
See also - Fisher to Selborne, May 1904 and October 1904 and November 1904 (Fisher Papers, pp.10, 38, 99).

Note also:
The role of Lord Hankey, the Victorian who was selected as secretary to the Committee of Imperial Defence, the work of that committee, and the briefs prepared by the Imperial Secretariat - a body instituted partly as a result of Deakin's advocacy at the Conference of 1907 - should not be overlooked in preparing the way for new naval and military policies in Whitehall.
See - Fisher to Mrs. McKenna, 18 May 1911 (Warder, Fear God and Dreadnought, p.871).

22 Quotation from:
Fisher to Yexley, 1 August 1909 (Warder, Fear God and Dreadnought, p.285).

23 Quotation from:
Fisher to Esher, 13 September 1909 (Warder, Fear God and Dreadnought, p.266).

See also:
Fisher to Fiennes, 14 April 1910 (Warder, Fear God and Dreadnought, p.321).
Fisher to Mrs. McKenna, 18 May 1911 (Warder, Fear God and Dreadnought, p.371).

24 Quotation from:

25 Quotation from:
Confidential Minutes: Imperial Conference 1909, p.32.

See also:
Foxton's readiness to support the motion - and his isolation (ibid., pp.86 ff.).

26 Quotation from:
Foxton to Deakin, 5 August 1909 (CAO : CP103, S10, 12/975).

28 On Foxton and Imperial wars: Ibid., pp.21-22.

29 Quotation from: Foxton to Deakin, 5 August 1909 (CAO: CP103, S10, 12/975).

30 Quotation from: Creswell to Cook, 16 November 1909 (Macandie, op.cit., p.253).

On Australian response to the Admiralty solution:
The Daily Telegraph, 15 September 1909.
The Age, 22 September 1909; 28 September 1909.

31 Quotation from: Jose, The Royal Australian Navy, p.xxix.

32 Quotation from: Deakin to Foxton, 19 September 1909 (Deakin Papers).

33 Quotation from: Foxton to Deakin, 3 September 1909 (Deakin Papers).

34 On the Fusion's military policy:
Cook's speech in Hansard, 21 September 1909.
Foxton to Deakin, 3 September 1909 (Deakin Papers).
Correspondence on the application of the Army Act 1908-1909
(CAO: CP290, S15, B1, Unnumbered)
(CAO: MP84, S2, 1856/5/138).

On Hutton and Fusion reforms:
The Call, May 1908, pp.5-6.

On 1909 Bill:
The Defence Act (No. 15 of 1909).

See also:
Other aspects, such as the creation of the Imperial General Staff, have been mentioned in Chapters above and the sources cited there.

35 On the Kitchener visit:
The treatment here will be brief - far shorter than originally contemplated - and is drawn from the following sources:
On Hoad and Kitchener:

Memorandum by C.G.S. ..., June 1910 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1894/5/43).

On invitation to Kitchener:

Deakin-Kitchener Correspondence, June-September 1909 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1901/13/16).

On brief for Kitchener:

Hoad to Cook, c. September 1909 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1856/4/163).

On Kitchener's appreciations:


On other relevant appreciations see also:

Kirkpatrick to Pearce, 30 May 1911 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1902/7/77). Kirkpatrick to Pearce, ? November 1911 (CAO : CP290, S12, B6, Unnumbered). Kirkpatrick to Pearce, 30 May 1912 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1902/2/15). Kirkpatrick to Pearce, 30 May 1913 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1902/2/15). Kirkpatrick to Gordon, January 1913 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1856/1/4).

On Legge and Hoad on the Kitchener Scheme for the benefit of Labour:

Hoad to Pearce, ? May 1910.
Hoad to Pearce, 4 May 1910.
Legge to Pearce, 13 May 1910.
Legge to Pearce, 14 May 1910.
(CAO : MP84, S1, 1902/2/-4/15).

On Fusion acceptance of Kitchener's Scheme and Kirkpatrick's supervision of its implementation:

Cook to Military Board, 24 March 1910 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1804/2/84).
Correspondence, February-March 1910 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1902/2/28).

36 Quotation from:

Deakin to Kitchener, ? September 1909 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1901/13/16).

37 Quotation from:

Deakin to Kitchener, 9 July 1909 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1901/13/16).

38 On Kitchener's role:

Much of this paragraph must remain conjectural. Sir Philip Magnus, Kitchener's biographer, informed D.C. Sissons that he could find no papers relevant to the Australian scheme. Kirkpatrick did often invoke Kitchener's advice to substantiate later recommendations. Legge and Hoad did claim to have drawn up sections of the famous Memorandum; Legge has a better claim than Hoad. Ward of New Zealand was, however, told that the strategic assessments for Australia were generally in line with War Office considerations.
In addition to above citations, see also:
Kitchener to Ward, 2 March 1910 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1929/2/1237-11).
Johnson, Defence by Committee, p. 107.

39 Quotations from:
Memorandum on the Defence of Australia, p. 5.

40 Quotations from:
Kirkpatrick to Pearce, November 1911 (CAO : CP290, S15, B6, Unnumbered).

41 On meeting the Asian invader:
Kirkpatrick anticipated these recommendations but did not press them until the new military reforms were well under way.
Kirkpatrick to Gordon, January 1913 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1856/1/4).

Note also:
It is assumed in writing this section that Kirkpatrick, as he often claimed to do, was not merely satisfying Australian alarmists but amplifying Kitchener's principles.

42 Quotation from:
Kirkpatrick to Pearce, November 1911 (CAO : CP290, S15, B6, Unnumbered).

43 On expeditionary forces and Kirkpatrick:
See memoranda cited in Notes 35, 41 and 42 above.

See also:

44 Quotation from:

45 Quotation from:

See also:
Command 5019 of 1910, and other papers (CAO : MP84, S1, 1894/7/31).
On the creation of the Imperial Strategic Reserve of 1914–1916:

Quotation from:
Magnus, *op.cit.*, p.244.

Quotation from:

Quotation from:
Minute by Pearce, 3 December 1912 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1939/1/33).

Quotation from:
Kirkpatrick to Pearce, 30 May 1913 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1902/2/15).

Quotation from:
Memorandum by Gordon, 2 July 1913 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1856/1/25).

Quotation from:

On Pre-War plans for an expeditionary force:
Memoranda by Kirkpatrick, 1911–1913, cited in Note 35 above.
"Military Co-operation between New Zealand and Australia", 2 July 1913 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1856/1/5).
Notes on Overseas Service, 30 November 1911 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1802/2/152).
Papers for Special Meeting of the Council of Defence – Defence of the Northern Littoral, 16 June 1913 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1855/1/11).

Quotation from:
"Military Considerations", June 1913 (CAO : MP84, S1, 1855/1/11).

Quotations from:
Pearce to Denman, 4 May 1914 (Denman Papers : C.N.L.).
See also:

56 Quotation from:
CPD 3 : 3107, 26 July 1901.

57 Quotation from:
Bean, The Story of Anzac, p.16.

58 Quotation from:
A.W. Jose in the Call, August 1906, p.10.

59 Quotation from:
W.M. Hughes, CPD 37 : 1288, 1 August 1907.

60 Quotation from:
W.M. Hughes, CPD 32 : 2583, 9 August 1908.

61 Quotation from:
A.W. Jose in The Times, 24 March 1908.

62 Quotation from:
The Times, 17 May 1907.

63 Quotation from:
CPD 7 : 8753, 21 January 1902.

64 Quotation from:
The Times, 20 April 1907.

65 Quotation from:
The Times, 17 May 1907.

66 Quotation from:
W.M. Hughes, The Day – And the Day After, pp.66-67.
(Notes Chapter Eleven: beginning 67)

67 Quotation from:
W.M. Hughes, *The Day — And the Day After*, pp. 78–79.

68 The *Call*, August 1906, p. 4.

APPENDIX B

THE IMPERIAL MILITARY RESERVE

It was possible for military cooperation between the citizen forces of Australia and those of Great Britain to take many different forms.

Men could volunteer individually for contingents raised to fight in particular Imperial wars as they had done in the Soudan and the Boer War. They then served in the British Army and were paid by the British government. The Australian government had little or no control over them once they had embarked.

Or they could volunteer individually to form a complete national expeditionary force paid and ultimately controlled by the Commonwealth but under the military command of the British staff. This they did in 1914. In both cases cooperation was marked by the hasty organization of often untrained men who had given no prior undertaking to serve abroad. Both cases involved the sudden utilization of the military potential of the Commonwealth.

Alternatively, forces could be trained — or trained and organized — for service abroad. Insofar as military cooperation was premeditated when Australian forces were being organized, they could be conceived as part of an Imperial reserve.

Crucial differences could lie, however, in the degrees of Australian control and of the formal obligation to serve overseas. At one extreme, militia units could be raised and trained in Australia, paid by the British government in peacetime for Imperial service in war. Such forces would constitute a formal Imperial reserve. At the other, men could be trained in the citizen forces to form a reservoir of skilled manpower from which expeditionary forces could be drawn by individual voluntary recruitment. Though encouraged to enlist, the men would not be committed for overseas service.

There was a compromise. Citizen forces could be organized in peace for operations at home or abroad with the British Army. They could be paid by the Australian government and still be ultimately responsible to it. Though primarily for home defence, units could elect to serve overseas, individual soldiers having then the right to resign from their units if they had no wish to go with them. Hutton favoured this last course.
These distinctions were far from academic as Haldane demonstrated with his military reforms after 1906. It was hoped that the British Territorials, though not liable for overseas service, would provide a reservoir of trained manpower for the front line regular regiments. Those militia units which accepted overseas service were eventually made part of Special Reserve for the regular forces; initially, the Imperial Yeomanry were allotted in the order-of-battle as second line cavalry.

By 1909 the position of the Territorials was ambiguous. Then the men could volunteer individually or in complete units — presumably at the request of their commanding officer — as part of the expeditionary force. In this spirit the Chief of the Imperial General Staff at the Imperial (Defence) Conference of 1909 wanted the Dominions to make similar provision for their citizen forces. His proposal read: "Legislation is, therefore, necessary to enable complete units, and not individuals, to volunteer for this (overseas) service."
APPENDIX C

AUSTRALIAN NAVAL DEFENCE: THE POSSIBILITIES

The concept of "lines of defence" and current notions of Imperial responsibilities opened, a priori, three courses for the Commonwealth: cooperation with the Royal Navy; the creation of an Australian naval force; or reliance - without obligation - on the Admiralty.

Cooperation with the Royal Navy?

Like the Cape Colony, Natal, and Newfoundland, the Commonwealth could have contributed directly to the maintenance of the British navy by annual payments to the Admiralty without making any specific demands upon the British government. Or it could finance a battleship for general service with the Royal Navy. Either would have involved a radical break with past practice.

To urge the Admiralty to reinforce the Imperial Squadron and to undertake an agreement similar to that of 1887 whereby the Auxiliary Squadron would be replaced would have been to preserve continuity of policy. There were, however, Australian objections to payments to the British government and dependence upon the Royal Navy. The indignity deeply felt by the opponents of the Agreement in the eighties had been kept alive by the advocates of an Australian navy. Cabinet could in part meet these by offering to train Australians aboard British vessels provided by the Royal Navy under an agreement instead of paying only a cash contribution. While this might be construed as a step towards developing trained manpower for a national navy, Australians meanwhile would be members of the Royal Navy or the Royal Naval Reserve liable to serve on His Majesty's ships in distant waters as well as on those allotted for local defence.

The advantages derived from such schemes would be the purchase of cheap defence and sufficient participation in Imperial defence to open the labyrinth that might lead to a voice in Imperial affairs. The disadvantages arose from complete dependence upon the Admiralty which would naturally desire to dispose of naval strength as it saw fit in time of war, the absence of Commonwealth control over its own defence and its own citizens serving in the Royal Navy, and a negative attitude to the creation of a national navy.

The Creation of an Australian Naval Force?

Between 1898 and 1909 there was a bewildering array of suggestions from Australian naval enthusiasts. No ship of war was left unconsidered. Each involved different degrees of Admiralty cooperation; each involved different assumptions about Australia's role in Imperial defence. The submarine of 1907, for instance, was designed for local
defence and could have been commissioned under the Colonial Naval Defence Act of 1865. It could not easily cooperate with the Royal Navy in distant waters. The converse was true of a battle-cruiser. It was only realizing its potential on the high seas; special legal arrangements would have to be made for its use outside of Australian waters; cooperation with the Royal Navy in an Imperial war was highly probable, if not certain. Politics, strategy, and weaponry were ever combined factors in the preparation for war.

Australian naval aspirations could therefore have taken one of many forms: a contribution of Commonwealth ships to the battle strength of the Empire; the formation of cruiser squadrons for commerce protection; the creation of a coastal defence force; or the replacement of existing port defence vessels. Decisive engagements with the King's enemies, cruiser warfare, coastal defence, or radial port defence - these were the possibilities.

To have purchased for Australia battleships and armoured cruisers would have established beyond doubt national status within the Empire. It would also have converted the relation with Great Britain to that of an alliance. Direct assistance would be given to maintain British supremacy upon the high seas while national aspirations would be fulfilled. A direct voice in the management of Empire might well have ensued. The difficulties in 1901 were clear. The Royal Navy was responsible for sea supremacy; Australia had no wish to be a world power; such a force would be foolishly excessive for local defence; its use would mean automatic involvement in Imperial wars; even the first steps towards such a navy seemed far beyond the slender resources available to the Commonwealth.

Less expensive would have been a sea-going squadron of first and second-class cruisers, which would assume the responsibilities of the Imperial Squadron. This could adequately protect interstate and overseas trade as well as serving as an impressive guarantee against invasion. Raiders would be running grave hazards in attempting to evade such a sea-going force. Though of use in local waters, it would best be fulfilling its functions primarily by cooperating with the Royal Navy in spheres distant from Australian ports. It would therefore give the Commonwealth a right to be represented in the Councils of Empire. To the young Commonwealth the initial disadvantages would, however, be considerable. A cruiser squadron would be too expensive while the Braddon Clause was in operation and the government was reluctant to raise tariffs or overseas loans for defence. Like a small battle fleet, it might involve Australians directly in Imperial wars. It would require the cooperation of the Admiralty, the permission of the British government, and a change in the legal status of colonial ships on the high seas. Though ensuring local defence, it would not remain within sight of the main ports. It would give - but not be seen to give - security. It would be a break with all precedent.

Nevertheless, an Australian force to replace the Imperial Squadron was in 1901 a conceivable - and even desirable - project for
the future. After 1907 it was an almost ideal solution. By then had emerged the fleet unit, a tactical unit, organized about a battle-cruiser with attendant lighter cruisers and destroyers. For the Australians this offered a compromise between the two courses so far examined. Alone the battle-cruiser could add to the battle strength of the Royal Navy. Operating as part of the fleet unit, it was an effective instrument for commerce protection. If the Commonwealth wished to possess a navy in the accepted sense of the word, it needed an homogeneous, sea-going force capable of offensive and defensive roles.

The naval forces the Commonwealth could have established under the Colonial Naval Defence Act of 1865 were not capable of effectively playing both roles. The vessels for coastal or radial port defence were cheap, would be restricted to Australian waters, and would be seen to protect shipping and harbours. But they would, in sea warfare, be the weapons of a strategically passive posture. Neither force would be created primarily to fight in distant seas. Neither need have involved Australians in Imperial wars. Neither involved the right to a voice in the conduct of Imperial affairs.

It was quite feasible to contemplate a naval force to replace the Australian Auxiliary Squadron. The Commonwealth would thus maintain the third "line of defence", the protection of coastal shipping. For coastal defence there were available three comparatively cheap vessels: the third-class cruiser of 2,500 tons, or less; a light cruiser of special design; and the destroyer. Depending upon size and design, these cruisers could conceivably cooperate with the Royal Navy in distant waters should the Commonwealth so desire. Yet, having been built for local defence and operations in coastal waters, their presence overseas would be token of political support in an Imperial war rather than an addition to fighting strength. The greater disadvantage was that the third-class and special service cruisers were fast becoming obsolescent weapons in the Admiralty's armoury. On the other hand, the destroyer was in the process of experimental development. Every attempt was being made to produce a destroyer capable of acting with the battle fleets. It therefore had considerable potential for coastal patrols. Even so its original and primary role was to destroy torpedo boats, not to engage heavier vessels. From 1901, therefore, its strategical and tactical use, no less than its sea-going capabilities, had to be proven. The efficacy of coastal patrols without the support of cruiser squadrons was always in doubt.

There remained the defence of major ports and coastal cities. From the sixties floating gun platforms, like the Monitor, or turret ships, like the Cerberus, were used for this purpose. From the turn of the century the French found other means. Combining coastal with port defence, they organized a defense mobile using the submarine, the torpedo boat, and lighter classes of destroyers, vessels of limited radius of action and sea-going capabilities. These were to act radially from the range of coastal batteries. They were far more lethal than the privateers in the days of sail. They would prey on merchantmen, prevent close blockade, render bombardment impossible, and even deter invaders intent on using
port facilities. Even so, they had to be used en masse from many bases. The disadvantages for the Commonwealth arose from the expensive waste involved, a proliferation of naval energies upon a passive deterrent untried in war against well-screened raiders, and the demand for specialist but not sea-going training. Nevertheless, radial port defence was within the future means of the Commonwealth.

Such then were the possibilities. The limitations set by domestic considerations have been suggested. Those imposed by the attitude of the British government were no less important. Any course but the creation of naval forces for port defence required its approval, or at least its consideration.

Reliance Upon the Royal Navy?

As seen from Whitehall the separation of Australian security into five "lines of defence" involved strategical heresy and poor Imperial politics. Once the theory of fleet concentration became orthodox previous views - especially those that condoned coastal defence - were held to be no longer tenable. The traditional role of the Royal Navy was reasserted in all its purity. There were no "lines of defence". Either the British navy would be strong enough to be victorious over the King's enemies in decisive engagements on the high seas or it would not. If victorious, invasion of Australia was not to be feared; if not, each Australian "line of defence" would crumble. The supremacy of expensive and essential Imperial battle fleets must be assured. Modern commerce marauders with increased speed and armament would no longer be deterred by small and vigilant vessels distributed along the coast. Nor would they be met by naval forces bound to stations throughout the world. They must be actively sought, hunted, and destroyed by sea-going cruiser squadrons. All the naval effort of the Empire must henceforward be directed to the offensive under firm Admiralty control. Thus it was more prudent for the Commonwealth to contribute to the supremacy of the Royal Navy and so demonstrate the unity of the Empire than to seek arrangements for local security or to waste its energies on a proliferation of defences of dubious efficacy, of no benefit to the victory of the British in decisive engagements, and of little use against enemy raiders. No longer, it seemed in 1902, was there a weapon, a strategic doctrine, or a political justification for local defence. Neither an Australian Auxiliary Squadron nor an Australian equivalent would suffice.
APPENDIX D

MINUTE ON THE DEFENCE OF AUSTRALIA MAY 1905
(Drawn up by J.W. McCay for consideration by the Council of Defence, 12 May 1905)

In discussing the problem of developing the defences of the Commonwealth of Australia, it is necessary to consider the form which any attack upon our shores is likely to take, so far as can be judged by the present circumstances of the world, and then to consider the way in which, having regard to Australian circumstances, this probable danger may best be met.

Regard must be had to the following facts:

(1) That Australia forms an integral part of the British Empire.
(2) That Australia is geographically remote from most of the military and naval powers of the world.
(3) That the population of Australia is less than four millions, and is distributed over a great area and a long coast line of 8,000 miles.
(4) That the funds available for defence purposes are necessarily limited in amount.
(5) That the development of Australian defence has followed more or less defined lines in the past, which must not be ignored in making plans for the future.

While the fact of our forming a portion of the British Empire may on occasions involve us in quarrels with which we would otherwise have no direct concern, this disadvantage is far outweighed by the immense protection afforded to us from the power of the British Navy in all the seas; and it must always be borne in mind that Australia is comparatively safe while that navy retains its power.

This fact, combined with our remoteness from most of the great warlike Powers, renders it extremely unlikely that, under present conditions, any hostile occupation of Australia, or of any portion thereof will take place; and the most probable danger to be feared is an hostile raid either upon our coastal shipping only, or (which is more likely) upon our great commercial centres, nearly all of which are on or close to the coast, and can be reached without much difficulty by attacks from the sea or by land, or by a combination of these.

It is against such dangers as those referred to, therefore, that for the immediate future Australian defence should prepare. It would obviously be desirable to make ourselves safe against both dangers, but it is more than doubtful whether financial limitations would permit of this; and we have therefore to consider which safeguard must be left to the last.
On this matter there are two schools of thought, the one alleging that we should begin by the immediate development of Australia as a naval power in order to meet our enemy as far as possible from the centres of national life; the other school alleges that we should begin by making safe that which is most vital — our own homes and commercial centres.

The policy of Defence pursued in the various States for the last thirty or forty years has, consciously or unconsciously, accepted this latter view, has been content with making us secure against attacks directed at the land, and has for the time being left our coastal trade apparently unprotected.

In view of the fact that the Imperial Navy, under even the most unfavourable circumstances, is likely to give us more protection than we can provide for ourselves on the water for many years to come, and that we are not likely to get any assistance from beyond our own shores in protecting our homes and commercial centres; the policy hitherto pursued appears to be the correct one, and Naval development should await the completion of land protection.

In this view of the case, our duty is to complete in their order those forces which will protect (1) our homes, (2) our cities against land attack, (3) our cities against bombardment and sea attack, and (4) our coastal trade. The first and second are provided against by the raising and maintenance of a Field and a Garrison Force of soldiers; the third is provided against by fixed defences and floating harbour defences; and the fourth by the establishment of a sufficient number of ships of proper types, to guard our coastal trade.

The Field and Garrison Forces are approaching a satisfactory condition; the fixed defences of some cities are satisfactory, but in others they require to be renewed, the city of Melbourne coming within the latter class. The addition possibly of Torpedo Boat Destroyers or Submarines or Submersibles, or the increase of our Torpedo Boat service is necessary in order to complete our harbour protection; and until this is attended to we are not justified in creating a fleet for coastal protection.

Criticisms are sometimes directed against what is called the excessive size of our land forces in view of the little likelihood there is of a strong invasion, but it must be remembered that the forces must be sufficient to promptly meet in preponderating force a landing wherever made; and this requires that we should have as far as possible near each important seaport, a force sufficient for its local defence; and should also have mobile forces which can be quickly removed to support local troops. This is necessary in each District, and consequently requires the maintenance of a force much larger than would be necessary if the whole force could be concentrated promptly at threatened ports.
APPENDIX E

STRATEGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR THE AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES, POST 1911

The following memorandum was drawn up by Major-General Kirkpatrick, for comment by Senator Pearce, late in 1911. It was based on Kitchener's advice, and memoranda from the Overseas Defence Committee, mentioned in Chapter Eight. Though explicit ministerial decision was deferred, this strategical assessment was incorporated in all formal Defence Schemes of the Australian Military Forces from 1912 until the outbreak of war. The document is taken from CAO: CP290, S15, B6, Item 16.

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SCHEME OF DEFENCE

MOBILE FORCES FOR AUSTRALIA: STRATEGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. It is laid down as an axiom of the British Government that the Empire's existence depends primarily on the maintenance of adequate and efficient naval forces. As long as this condition is fulfilled, and as long as British superiority at sea is assured, then it is an accepted principle that no British dominion can be successfully and permanently conquered by an organized invader from overseas.

2. But in applying this principle to Australia considerations of time and space cannot be disregarded. The conduct of a great war depends upon the calculated and proper combination of naval, military, and diplomatic forces; and it is quite conceivable that in the future, as in the past, national considerations may require the concentration of British naval forces in one or other theatre of operations. It follows that, in seas remote from such concentration, the British naval forces may find themselves for the moment inferior in force to an actual or potential enemy. In such a situation although the Empire's ultimate superiority at sea might not be a matter of doubt, some time might elapse before such command of the sea was definitely assured in Australian waters.
3. In considering the scale and nature of overseas attack that the temporary possession of the local command of the Pacific would enable an Eastern Power to bring to bear on Australia, it is necessary to draw a clear distinction between large operations, the success of which will depend on the power of the Foreign fleet to keep open overseas communications with its bases for an indefinite period and hasty raids dependent for success rather on surprise and rapidity of execution than upon the number of troops employed.

For the success of raiding operations the maintenance of open oversea communication is not an essential condition. During the period that the local command of the Pacific rested with an Eastern Power the despatch of a raiding force across the sea against British possessions in that region would be a practical operation of war for that Power.

4. The probability of such raids being undertaken will vary inversely as the strength and efficiency of the local naval and military forces maintained in Australia. Upon an estimate of such strength and efficiency will an enemy determine whether the probable result of an attempt by a raiding force to effect serious damage before being destroyed or compelled to surrender would be commensurate with the risks incurred in the enterprise.

5. In estimating the strength of the land forces necessary to meet a raiding attack such as that above mentioned, three principal factors must be considered:—

(i) the ocean distances which lie between Australia and the territory of any possible enemies,
(ii) the armed strength and power of transportation oversea of any conceivably hostile nation,
(iii) the vast extent of the Australian continent, its existing railway communications and its territory not connected by such communications.

Further, it must be borne in mind, as suggested in Overseas Defence Committee in 429 of 24th February 1911, that "should the Anglo-Japanese Alliance be determined changes in the strategic situation would ensue which might have far reaching effects upon the position of Australia and necessitate a reconsideration of the scale of probable attack".

6. Consideration of these factors induces the belief that the land forces required must not be less than 100,000 men. Of this number a proportion varying according to individual requirements is needed to secure the naval bases and auxiliary harbours from attack and to maintain public confidence and national credit. The remainder
must be left free to form a field army capable of acting as a mobile expeditionary force. In view of the fact that railway communication does not at present exist with Western Australia and the Northern Territory, such an expeditionary force must be organized and equipped so as to enable it to be despatched overseas with the least possible delay.

7. A defensive attitude of a purely passive nature is, however, as is well known, the most ineffectual method of employing an army as an instrument of policy. As far as the organization and administration of the Australian Forces are concerned this has been realized and the whole of the Australian military forces are in consequence being uniformly enrolled, organized, and equipped in order that any sub-division thereof may be able to assume the offensive.

8. But the time has now arrived when provision must be made for giving wider effect to the policy of active offence. Two new factors have arisen which affect the basis upon which plans of operation for the mobile forces of Australia must be prepared:

(i) At the Imperial Conference of 1909 the representatives of the self-governing dominions signified their general concurrence in the proposition "That each part of the Empire is willing to make its preparations on such lines as will enable it, should it so desire, to take its share in the general defence of the Empire".

(ii) The establishment of the Royal Australian Navy under the Naval Agreement of June 1911 imbued with the same spirit of active offence as the Royal Navy, marks an increase in the responsibilities of Australia.

As regards (ii) the present limits of the Australian Naval Station do not include any foreign territory, yet they approach so closely the French possessions of New Caledonia and the German and Dutch possessions in the Bismarck Archipelago, New Guinea, the Java and Flores Seas, that war preparations must include plans for the occupation, if necessary, of probable hostile bases in these localities.

9. For the fulfilment of these obligations as well as to provide efficiently for the needs of home defence, it is incumbent therefore, that plans of operations should contemplate the employment, overseas, of such portion of the Australian forces, as may from time to time be deemed necessary and is voluntarily agreeable so to serve.
10. (i) The question of the scale of probable attack by warships on Australian ports has been decided by the Overseas Defence Committee in their memo 438 M, dated 26th May 1911, where it is laid down that as a naval base the value of Sydney as a strategic objective will be considerably enhanced and that in determining the standard of defences there the contingency of attack by armoured cruisers must now be taken into consideration.

(ii) The only form of naval attack that need be provided against at other Australian ports is, however, raiding attack by unarmoured cruisers.
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