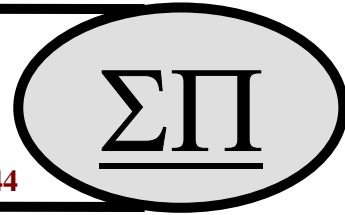


# SMITHSON PLANNING

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Our Ref : WSP-CISA  
Your Ref : 02 ASPI

Dr Elsina Wainwright  
Program Director Strategy & International  
Australian Strategic Policy Institute  
40 Macquarie Street (Arts House Level 2)  
BARTON ACT 2600

16 August 2002

Dear Dr Wainwright

## Australia's Defence after September 11 – ASPI Occasional Paper 02

Thank you for your presentation in Perth on Thursday 8 August 2002.

I offer you and the institute my congratulations on the content of the Occasional Paper and your endeavour to involve public participation in consideration of the issues.

I would suggest that on this particular occasion, the audience was limited in number and clearly intelligent and informed on the matters of debate. Regrettably the vast majority of Australians will never have the opportunity to appreciate or understand the implications of your research, or just exactly what 911 means to their future or perhaps more importantly, how Australian security forces respond to the challenge.

In much the same way as George Negus of the ABC took the 'regional development' debate to rural Australia in 2001 just prior to the federal election, I believe there is a role for the federal government to facilitate ordinary Australians with the aid of an expert panel to discuss questions of concern they may have about 911.

I would suggest that there is a role for both CISA & ASPI in that process, and a commercial opportunity to work in with a commercial television network to take that debate to the people of Australia.

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In response to your occasional paper, I offer the following remarks :

War & Terrorism are fundamentally different security risks – they require different response plans – and where as our military have several hundred years of learning about war on which to base the national response strategy (proactive or reactive), I would suggest that there is very little learning in relation to terrorism.

To acquire that learning will require investment and sacrifice on behalf of all Australians, but that is essential to maintain Australia's standing in the global community as a free and open western democracy.

I do not consider War to be an event of the past – such major altercations between national entities will occur from time to time, and as either a coalition participant or a UN peace-keeping appointment, the Australian Defence Forces will have a role to play in such matters.

I would suggest that War in the future will be more difficult to promulgate (global watch); more difficult to perpetuate (media scrutiny); an expensive pursuit relative to other national interests (opportunity cost and asset maintenance); but an essential consideration for defense preparedness relative to any nation's statehood.

I believe that with investment in technology (which should comprise both asset acquisition and intellectual property development), the defence response strategy of the future will tend to be more efficient in terms of achieving expeditious outcome, but at a high human toll particularly of refugee status persons.

I consider it essential that Australia's defence policy and response strategy reflects on the motivation behind an engagement (war or terrorism), and that necessarily reviews religious, political and financial reasons as a foundation for reviewing Australia's involvement in any action.

While terrorism is not new to Australia, I would suggest that 911 was and will remain significant for the :

- ❖ Magnitude of the event (global media coverage)
- ❖ Consequent impact on core industrial areas of the global economy
- ❖ Patience with which terrorism approached their target
- ❖ Long-term investment strategies concealed within western society required for delivery of outcome
- ❖ Paucible lack of intelligence knowledge in relation to terrorism activities
- ❖ Globalisation of terrorism – ability to strike anywhere / anytime
- ❖ Financial backing associated with delivery of the action.

I consider there to be a unique set of skills associated with Australia's elite defence forces that is appropriately (and in all probability), proactively and covertly best used in an offensive manner against terrorist activities for intelligence gathering – this means putting people in harms way, and for which the compensation needs to be reconsidered in the event of an unexpected outcome.

While every organisation has its internal development problems, as a whole I consider that ADF human resources exhibit a high standard of ethical behaviour in the field without compromising their team or personal safety.

I think the ADF has an evolution status to its Military development (steeped in tradition which is good), but I question the ability of the ADF management structure to respond rapidly to changing circumstances of engagement by enemies of state who hold no known diplomatic identity – hence the feeling of inadequacy associated with the United States pursuit of terrorist elements into Afghanistan without achieving all key result areas.

I would suggest that there is an appropriate and evolving role for the development of the ADF Reserves into a US style National Guard, and that this transition requires both legislative and practical training support to define the future role of such security forces in an Australian / overseas theatre of operations.

Weapons of Mass Destruction are a significant issue for Australia because of our coastal disposition and concentration of predominantly urban population – ultimately after threat / bluff of retaliation, defence is a numbers game – and Australia is not well populated.

Australia could easily be targeted for WMD strikes without significantly altering the capacity of mineralisation and agricultural production areas as the major wealth generating assets in a global economic context, which is ultimately why we are here, and why anyone else would want to assume control of our asset.

I think you can look at Australia's defence in the context of an event (war or terrorism) or as a continuum of our societal structure, and I find it interesting to contrast the attitudes displayed by Australians at the moment in response to the possible involvement of Australian interests in an action against Iraq, et.al.

I can understand the knowledge of our past involvement in War and the reluctance to participate at the expense of Australia's youth (an elderly viewpoint perhaps), but I contrast that attitude with the ambivalence of our youth toward the defence of our realm as though like a lot of other things, we take it for granted that it will continue to be there for us at our beck and call.

I consider there to be a number of valid reasons for adopting a National Service training program as part of a work for the dole scheme in order to instill a greater sense of national identity, loyalty, discipline and readiness.

I have advocated same as part of the employment policy associated with Rainbow 2000<sup>®</sup> – a Regional Planning Strategy for Albany & the Great Southern.

Rainbow 2000<sup>®</sup> in itself is a National Investment Growth Path contributing financial investment by the private sector and providing taxation funding through regional economic growth, which I also consider to be a part of the wider response strategy to Australian defence.

There are a number of specific defense asset initiatives identified under Rainbow 2000<sup>®</sup> such as an Airforce base facility, Naval base facility, Officer training facility and Armed Corp facility, along with a commitment to defence training exercises using regional land / sea assets.

I think the field of human conflict can take many forms in different locations (particularly cultural variation), and would suggest that military strategy should be practiced and learnt in a number of situations in order to gain a breath of understanding for the task to be performed.

Also, I think it is particularly difficult to sustain an off-shore based challenge against Australian sovereignty in the northern half of our continent due to the extremes of environment / absence of infrastructure resource / and lack of food and water.

Alternatively, it is relatively easy to launch counter-offensive strikes from bases in the south where the population support exists, and which I choose to regard as the soft (exposed) under-belly capable of representing a launch platform against the major Australian centres.

I would also suggest that the Antarctic continent as the single largest source of fresh water in the world, a considerable known mineral wealth potential, and as the support biosphere for a considerable terrestrial and aquatic faunal assembly and breeding area represents a significant future regional defence challenge asset to Australian interests.

Finally, I consider the prospect of an isolated wounded bull (President George Bush, the US Congress and the American people) looking to seek revenge for the spear in its back far more dangerous than having several friends in the same ring providing balanced evaluation as to the options available for resolution of differing expectations.

I would encourage Australia's elected representatives and diplomats to continue dialogue with the US regardless of the perception of other countries and the actions they make take as a consequence of Australia's perceived position in regard to foreign trade.

I trust these comments are useful, and if you require further assistance please call.

Yours faithfully  
SMITHSON PLANNING

*Neil R. Smithson*

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CC : Mr Lee Cordner, CISA