

anyone wanting to learn more about how Malaysian business and politics have increasingly become intertwined, and how this continues to shape the action framework of the government and the private sector alike.

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Maintaining the Strategic Edge: The Defence of Australia in 2015. Edited by Desmond Ball. Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No. 133. Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University, 1998. 445pp.

This is a fine collection of essays dealing with strategic issues edited by Desmond Ball of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University. The collection includes chapters that fall into two distinct categories. The first deals with politico-strategic issues and covers the changing nature of conflict, regional security dynamics, the Australia-United States Ministerial (AUSMIN) consultations (so named after New Zealand was cut out of the ANZUS alliance after it declared itself a nuclear-free state), and multilateralism. The second deals with technical-strategic issues, such as the revolution in military affairs (RMA), the relevance of the knowledge edge, defence planning, intelligence and human resource management. Curiously, the chapters are organized somewhat awkwardly, with those dealing with AUSMIN and multilateralism placed between others dealing with the “nitty-gritty” of defence planning and intelligence. Apart from this minor criticism, it is hard to fault the essays. Each of them shares the distinction of being well researched, cogently argued, practical, and interesting. The book is a valuable addition to the literature on Asia-Pacific security. It bridges the gap between Northeast Asian security literature, which tends to ignore the southern hemisphere in its entirety, and Southeast Asian literature, which all too often declines to engage in “hard security” issues.

This book is relevant as it addresses issues of primary concern to Australian defence academics and policy-makers. Without exception, it demonstrates a depth of balanced opinion. Robert O'Neill's discussion of the changing nature of conflict is perhaps the seminal example of fine

judgement. O'Neill rejects the notion that the old established motives for starting major wars still have credibility. Instead, he says that there is little likelihood of global conflict. Conflict will, however, continue to be fuelled by envy, fear, ideology, population explosions, the seizure of land and resources, and the tactics chosen by a few leaders to stabilize or expand their domestic political support base. For O'Neill, the new world order taking shape is loose, will tolerate severe challenges and disorder but may attempt to pre-empt the severe loss of life, will try to isolate conflict and ameliorate its worst effects, and will bring international miscreants to justice. This summation captures the essence of the imperatives that drove international interventions in both Kosovo and East Timor.

Having said this, East Asia is, on balance, the most potentially dangerous region in the world (although there is a strong case for arguing that this unfortunate accolade should belong to South Asia). The complex interrelationships that flavour security dynamics in East Asia is the focus of Chung Min Lee's thoughtful and sophisticated assessment of the security environment in Northeast Asia. North Korea's purposes remain opaque, and it has shown willingness to play the missile, nuclear, and starvation cards for all they are worth. Perhaps more seriously from an economic perspective, North Korea could suddenly collapse and would require immediate large-scale investment of scarce resources. China and Taiwan remain locked in a dangerous stand-off. Weapons of mass destruction and the non-nuclear theatre missile defence (TMD) system tend to send signals that worry policy-makers in much of the region. The South China Sea is a source of ongoing friction. Chung Min Lee's analysis of why no other region is so dependent on great power co-operation as East Asia is accompanied by an analysis of potential mechanisms to promote peaceful and stable co-operation.

Stuart Harris takes a different tack in his assessment of the economic dimension of security in Asia. As is customary with Harris' work, a path is charted between the views of hard-nosed realists, calling for the containment of China, and their more soft-line colleagues who argue that economic interdependence will not only lessen, but even remove the prospect of war in the region.

The opinions of the contributors provide a measure of what a group of sensible analysts consider to be the hallmarks of regional stability. They all agree that good relations between the great powers, the continuing presence of the United States, and the enduring value of alliances and successful multilateralism are important. Most of the contributors see institutions such as ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) as playing only an indirect role in promoting regional

dialogue through confidence-building and the promotion of dialogue on sensitive security issues between policy-makers. ASEAN's inability to take the lead during the East Timor crisis confirms this judgement, even though the institution has played an important role in facilitating personal relationships between the new Indonesian leadership and the leaders of the neighbouring states.

Mak Joon-Num reviews the security environment in Southeast Asia and points to an issue that should attract greater attention in Australian strategic planning circles, both in government and academia. Australia pursues regional security policies that balance hard security approaches, in alliance with the United States, with energetic participation in various multilateral institutions (how Australia could do even better is canvassed in Joseph Camilleri's contribution). However, from a Southeast Asian perspective, Australia's close association with American engagement, Mak writes, is seen as "part of a plot to undermine the sovereignty of Asian states". Such interpretations are incomprehensible to Australian decision-makers who entertain no such ambitions — but Mak's point does illustrate one of the problems in Australia's security relationships with its neighbours. No matter how hard Australia tries to be constructive and responsible, its motives will be questioned — all the more so when its Prime Minister is widely believed to have said that Australia sees itself as the United States' "deputy sheriff" in the region.

By assembling essays that reflect on each of the key themes in mainstream Australian official and academic thinking, this book displays its strengths and its weaknesses. The book is preoccupied with North and Southeast Asian affairs, the alliance with the United States, multilateralism and technical issues, which more often than not address the question of how Australia can remain operationally interconnected with the United States. Yet, there is almost nothing on peacekeeping and peace-making other than Jennifer Morrison Taw's essay on "Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)". The MOOTW reflects an American desire to separate peacekeeping/making from the core business of the military, which is to conduct war. Yet, as the Australians found in East Timor, peacekeeping/making could come very close to being war. Not only were shots fired between Indonesian-backed militias/TNI forces and Australian/New Zealand patrols, but Indonesian submarines and fighter aircraft were also deployed in the theatre, and on occasion acted aggressively. Not surprisingly, senior Australian officers stress that to be good at peacekeeping, the Australian Defence Force must be trained for war, with the flexibility to participate in a variety of peacekeeping/making missions.

While the challenges of working with the United States are dealt

with in many of the essays, there is nothing on how Australia may work co-operatively with its Asian neighbours in the defence sphere. Official Australian defence statements speak of shaping the regional security environment and this is an issue which has attracted the attention of policy-makers in Canberra. The immediate practical importance of this issue is highlighted by the experience of East Timor where the Australians found that they had no option but to work with contingents drawn from a variety of military cultures. Most national contingents worked well together. However, the Australians also found to their dismay that some contingents lacked an operational culture, or were under strict instructions to avoid casualties. Consequently, some contingents refused to patrol at night, and avoided risks and thus were of limited utility to INTERFET (International Force East Timor).

Defence co-operation with New Zealand, while touched on by Paul Dibb and William Tow, is not examined in any depth in this collection. It seems extraordinary that the New Zealand angle, with all its frustrations and challenges, is left out. New Zealand's armed forces currently have the capacity to provide a little under 20 per cent of the total capability for the defence of Australia. Australia found that New Zealand was not only relevant but a "linchpin" to the East Timor operation, as INTERFET Commander, Major-General Peter Cosgrove, described it. New Zealand allocated approximately half of its regular military capability to INTERFET.

The security dynamics in the South Pacific are also overlooked in this book, which is surprising, given the large scale of Australian diplomatic, defence, and aid assistance to Papua New Guinea. The escalation of ethnic clashes in the Solomon Islands and the insurrection in Fiji, both during 2000, underscore the importance of the need for Australia to pay close attention to its immediate neighbourhood.

The two most important technical chapters in the book deal with the knowledge edge, and the revolution in military affairs. Paul Dibb's chapter on the relevance of the knowledge edge to Australian security is an important work. His prescription (spend within means, modernize selectively and affordably, work hard on refining technical systems and logistics, and remain interoperable through shared doctrines and communications systems) on the problems facing a medium power with a limited budget and population base, are relevant to almost any small or medium state. François Heisbourg provides a detailed analysis of the RMA in a purer sense.

On balance, the contributions in this book are accessible, practical, and even-handed. The book will be useful to policy-makers, practically minded scholars, and journalists interested in questions on how to reform the armed forces of small-to-medium-sized states. It is also a

book that should be read by analysts and policy-makers trying to understand what makes Australia tick.

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***Voices from S-21: Terror and History in Pol Pot's Secret Prison.* By David Chandler.** Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999. 238pp.

Anyone who visits Toul Sleng museum will undoubtedly be moved by the degree and scale of atrocities committed in this secret torture centre during the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia. It is not just the blood stains on the floor, nor the torture implements on display, nor, indeed, the map of Cambodia made of human skulls. It is also the extraordinary *documentation* of violence that took place at this former high school in suburban Phnom Penh between June 1976 and January 1979. In one section of the centre, the walls are covered with stark black and white photos of the faces of those about to be executed: men, women, and children — some with blindfolds, some bearing the marks of torture, most wearing numbered tags. All have about-to-die looks of despair, horror, or incomprehension. These were some of the more than 14,000 inmates who passed through Toul Sleng before being taken to the nearby Choeng Ek “killing field”. Upstairs, in another section of the centre, can be found row upon row of filed photographs and documents, including autobiographies and “confessions” of the inmates of what the Khmer Rouge code-named S-21, or *santebal*.

With assistance from Vietnamese and East German specialists, the Toul Sleng archive was assembled in the 1980s by the regime that replaced the Khmer Rouge in January 1979. The 7,000 black and white photographs and negatives were methodically cleaned, restored, and catalogued in 1994 by the Photo Archive Group, and a selection of them appear in the haunting *The Killing Fields*, edited by the two American photographers responsible, Chris Riley and Doug Nivan, and published in 1996. The documents were photographed by Cornell University onto 213 reels of film. These primary sources are what historian David Chandler drew on to prepare his thought-provoking *Voices of S-21*. Between 1993 and 1998, he examined more than 1,000 confession texts,