CHAPTER FIVE

DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA'S ALLIANCES AND NAVAL STRATEGY

by

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5.1   INTRODUCTION: SOVEREIGNTY, MERCANTILISM AND GLOBALISM[1]

Anciently, the State was that institution which kept sole legitimate control of the means of destruction, over a land and its nearby oceans. Modern destruction occurs not only by land and sea, but in the air and from space. If the new democratic South Africa is to be a State, it must keep means of destruction available for use in all four media. Willy nilly, South Africa must have an army, a navy and an airforce - as well as electromagnetic spectrum and satellite capabilities - or it will not be a State. A modern sovereign State has the ability to use modern force.

Are atomic and hydrogen bombs the essential core of the modern sovereign State? Given the speed and global reach of modern warfare, it could be argued that only Nuclear States are sovereign. All others must be obedient clients or minions, in world real-politik. Only a Nuclear State can disobey a Nuclear State, in this view.

Yet the nuclear conundrum, of mutually assured destruction, demonstrates the weakness of the old definition of sovereignty. No State today has sole control of the means of destruction, not even the United States. All State autonomy is a relative autonomy now. A non-nuclear State can therefore be relatively sovereign, at least until a Nuclear State goes to war with it, and perhaps even thereafter, depending on its strategic alliances.

Nor is this insight new. The key to real sovereignty was ever the forging of alliances. Herein lies external legitimacy: allies uphold each other's legitimate control of force.

But true legitimacy is also internal: a State must obtain the minimum respect of its people, or fall in the longer term. The means of destruction are therefore necessary but insufficient for Statehood. A State must also foster the means of production and distribution, and maintain a sufficient level of culture, to win the unforced obedience of its people. Without an economy there is no army, navy or airforce; nor can these for long demand more than a small share of the overall wealth. The best States use the defence budget to make their economies grow, thus cementing internal legitimacy.

The paradox of relative sovereignty is found in economic matters as well as in nuclear ones. A prosperous modern State cannot be more than relatively economically autonomous. Pure mercantilism advocates high tariff walls, and aims at absolute economic sovereignty: "prosperity in one country". Taken to its extreme, this leads to mutually assured poverty. Global trade and technology transfer are crucial to the prosperity of any modern State. There are natural limits to the "free-rider" advantages of mercantilism[2]. Every State thus gets an interest in the prosperity of other States; hence an interest in free trade and technology transfer: hence an interest in global peace and security.

It is because the new mercantilism is in contradiction with the free trade needs of global prosperity, that, in John Lewis Gaddis's formulation, "the society of states seems to be moving into a double-edged process of fragmentation and integration"[3]. Globalism leads to aggregations of States, so that economies of scale are achieved, but mercantilism tends towards Balkanisation. The two together make for potentially severe instability. The lumping and splitting of the State is basic to the origins of war.

The working out of the contradiction between globalism and mercantilism will occupy at least the coming two decades, which is the strategic period of this chapter. Ideas of world disarmament, and permanently reduced military force levels, after the end of the Cold War, are therefore being moderated by a perception that global security remains fragile. The previous bipolar world is replaced, not by a unipolar world, but by a multi-powered world, with surprisingly uncertain, scary results. The many powers need orchestration, for peace to prevail. In Coral Bell's words,

> "Only a viable concert of powers, legitimised as the Security Council, is likely to be able to provide the necessary diplomatic clout and economic resources to keep the almost inevitable hostilities (as in Yugoslavia) within limits"[4].

Given "almost inevitable hostilities", this chapter argues that there is a natural limit to the size of the post-Apartheid peace dividend. The defence budget cannot sensibly be reduced below a certain threshold. Put another way, it is in the new South Africa's interests to contribute to regional and global security, not only by "good citizenship" and diplomacy, but also by maintaining military ability. South Africa must make a military contribution to the

concert of nations, including a naval contribution, or she cannot complain if her security is threatened. Just as citizens pay taxes so that the State can maintain the backup forces needed for internal peace, in the same way South Africa must play her role in world and regional peace-keeping forces.

Equally, because economic prosperity will demand a fair degree of openness to globalism, this chapter criticises Laurie Nathan's mercantilist proposal that

"National security shall be sought primarily through efforts to meet the social, political, economic and cultural rights and needs of the South African people. South Africa shall promote the security of the state and its citizens primarily through democratic governance, economic development, social justice and respect for human rights and cultural diversity"[5].

Despite its seemingly lofty ideals, this formulation places too much stress on the rights and needs of the <u>South African</u> people, of <u>South Africa's</u> citizens. It is too nationalist, rather than internationalist. Prosperity and security in South Africa depend on growth and peace in Southern Africa, and in the world. Human rights are international, not restricted to South African citizens. Nathan's proposal ignores the international perspective. It needs to add: "South Africa shall seek national security by fostering regional and global peace and prosperity, and by protecting human rights nationally and internationally".

South Africa must take its place in the global economy, without an excess of nationalism or mercantilism. There is, of course, a place for the direct protection of South African interests, against social and economic dumping or worse, but there must be limits to the new South African mercantilism. By itself, mercantilism will not bring peace or prosperity.

Nathan's formulation does continue on to say that "South Africa shall pursue peaceful and co-operative relations with neighbouring states"[6], but this addresses only the security needs of the region, not the economic and human rights issues. Citizens of neighbouring states have economic rights, and rights to justice, whether working in their own states or in South Africa, and South Africa has an interest in prosperity and justice in its neighbouring territories. Nathan's submission ignores all these. By contrast, this chapter will argue for

a strategy of voluntary closer union, across all of Southern Africa, under a Common Bill of Rights. This would more easily enable the South African Navy, and the South African Defence Force in general, to fall under the "common security arrangements" of which Nathan's draft principles make lukewarm mention[7]. The Defence Force would be aimed outside of Southern Africa, and the Navy would at once therefore become a much more important part of the Defence Force, because navies can reach the parts that other forces don't reach.

In sum, this chapter argues that South Africa needs a Navy, because the world remains a dangerous place, and because South Africa has economic as well as political interests in global and regional peace, so that trade and technology transfer can occur. The "Serbian", or mercantilist solution to Southern Africa involves a large Army, to put down internal risings, and to suppress the neighbouring states. The internationalist, or global solution to Southern Africa involves a smaller Army, and a relatively larger Navy and Airforce, preventing aggression from outside Southern Africa, and contributing to world security. The mercantilist solution tends towards military coups and fragmentation. The global solution tends towards establishing South Africa as a prosperous, responsible middle power, giving the sort of moral leadership that a man of the stature of Nelson Mandela could offer, in both North-South alliances, and South-South alliances, along the lines suggested for Australia by Richard Higgott and Andrew Cooper[8]. The South African Navy would form an essential part of this global, peaceful solution.

5.2   INTERNAL STRATEGY: PEACE AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

The first job of the South African Navy in the new South Africa, is to change its skin colour composition, to begin to match the South African population. This can be achieved with proper leadership, and with proper skills-training of the previously-excluded people. This is the first internal strategy, without which little else will be possible. Assume it done.

Next, the Navy must be a part of the development strategy of the new State. Police and Defence together use one-fifth of the South African government budget. Education departments use another fifth, but not much eduction happens. Just as the Army failed to

defend Apartheid, so the Apartheid schools failed to educate the people. At least forty percent of the State budget was therefore wasted. The new South Africa cannot afford such waste. Both budgets must be used for development.

A quality transformation must therefore occur, in Defence, and in Education. The security services must win the maximum willing support of the community, keeping the peace internally by consent. They must then prepare to defend Southern Africa externally by modern intellectual as well as technical means. Their budget share will be less than it was in the "total onslaught" era. They will have relatively less people and relatively less machinery, at least until the economy grows. This means they must think better, and have better quality machinery. As in Israel, or in Vietnam during the war, or in the great powers today, the civilian defence department and the military leadership must be homes to serious brain-power.

This is especially important for the Navy, which is a highly technological service, and which has always depended on long-distance intelligence rather more than the Army has. In an era when it is possible to blind an entire country electronically before destroying it (as in Iraq[9]), the Navy's intelligence-gathering abilities, both human and electronic, become more important. If the Defence Force's major task is no longer "internal stability", but prevention of aggression against Southern Africa, then the Navy becomes more important within the Defence Force. Further still, all intelligence work, including Naval intelligence, is gaining a bigger economic side to it worldwide,[10] and the Navy cannot perform its proper defence role, nor help to develop the new economy, unless the Navy understands how the new South Africa differs from the Apartheid State, and what the new economic development strategy is.

By threat and by force, Apartheid prevented the urbanisation and education of the majority of the people. It prevented them from achieving prosperity. It spawned widespread violence, internally and externally.

What is to be done? Create peace by prosperity, and build prosperity on peace. The political remedies are the legitimation of the state by popular vote under a bill of rights. Then deliver

the goods that the people want. The economic remedies are the building of modern cities, and the real education of the people, to meet the needs of twenty-first century, knowledge-based industry.

Apartheid hoped to produce "human cattle", for drudge-work in mining and agriculture. Democracy must produce the lively, cultured, skilled minds and bodies demanded by the electronic age.

The correct internal strategy, after achieving State legitimacy and peace, is urbanisation, and the building of the skills of the people. In essence, employ and train the five million unemployed to build the five million houses needed, while re-educating the whole workforce for modern production.

The **Macro-Economic Research Group's** proposed <u>Framework</u> therefore writes of economic growth of five percent per year. This is to be achieved by investment in formal education; adult basic education and worker re-training; primary health care clinics and nutrition programmes; a tripling of the provision of serviced sites for informal housing at once, and a tenfold increase in formal housebuilding within five years; redistribution of rural land to adult female members of landless households; a "realistic" statutory minimum wage; electrification of housing, rising rapidly to half a million new connections a year; minerals beneficiation before export; and industrialisation, producing manufactured goods both for home consumption and for export[11].

This is to be done, not by a <u>Gosplan</u>, nor by <u>laissez faire</u>, but by a mixed economy led by a slim, efficient, interventionist state, a development state.

Apartheid mal-distributed income, wealth, and economic power. Growth is therefore to be achieved through redistribution, led by the State, and channelled through the building of schools, houses, clinics and infrastructure[12]. The efficiency of the State sector is to be improved, by vigorous quality control and strong management, in the MERG's view.

The MERG is conscious that the slim development state will be difficult to achieve.

Elements of the constitutional settlement reached at Kempton Park in 1993 drive in the opposite direction. It is a petite-bourgeois marriage of the interests of white and African officials. The jobs and pensions of the old white civil service are protected, but affirmative action will put a new African civil service in place as well[13]. The country might have a doubled civil service. The two armies may be integrated into one, without any loss of jobs or pensions[14]. The MERG has offered no solution, beyond a call for an efficient State, and for a commission of enquiry into the state pension schemes[15].

The problem in the economic strategy of the new South Africa is this. Which cow is the double-handed civil service and Army going to milk? Where there were four provinces, there will now be nine, each with a government and bureaucrats, for example. A measure of the expense of these, is the Mercedes Benz demand. There were three hundred Mercedes Benzes in Umtata under the Apartheid State. Each of the nine provinces will demand at least that. Nine, times three hundred, times two hundred thousand Rand each, equals five hundred and forty million Rand, replaced every two years, and with drivers, petrol and maintenance still to come.

In the words of the old Cape Town workers' song, the politicians of Kempton Park may well ask, "Senzeni-na? What have we done?" Ninefold provincialism may well be the downfall of the new South Africa. It will place unusual pressures on the armed forces, for which they must prepare.

This scenario, of the constitutionally-entrenched, ninefold-doubled civil service, continues inexorably, via an oversized, underpaid, underfed, conscript Army, to military coups and persistent instability. The mechanism is mismanagement of the school leaving balance[16].

The age cohort from seventeen to twenty-five can be in a small number of places. They may be in jobs, or seriously self-employed. They may be in prison, unemployed on the streets, or pregnant, all three of which are a vicious circle. Where else can they be, except in the armed forces or in educational institutions? In a State where half the population is under twenty-five, managing the placement of this age cohort is crucial. Governments that get the school-leaving balance wrong, usually fall. The temptation is to conscript the youth, to get

them off the streets[17]. This is an error, even where the conscripts are put to building houses, because forced labour is very unproductive labour.

Instead, the goals should be to maximise employment, especially house-building employment, and education. The prisons, the street gangs, teenage pregnancy, and the size of the Army should be minimised. In particular, the Army should be small, well equipped, and professional, not conscripted. As the Falklands War proved conclusively, a professional Army is a better Army. Yet this is not the reason for keeping the Army small. The real reason is that education is a better investment for the State than the Army is, and further education happens to be what the youth repeatedly say they want. The State should listen.

What are the implications of this for the Navy? Firstly, the Navy must be a potential counter-balance to the Army in preventing any attempted military coup. Military rule would be a development disaster. South Africans have struggled for three hundred years for a legitimate democracy, and that gain must be preserved. One advantage of splitting the armed forces into three is that the Airforce and Navy can help to forestall Army adventurism. But secondly and more importantly, the Navy must see itself as an institution of further education, as a training outfit.

The internal strategy of the Navy is thus to uphold the peace and the new democracy, because without legitimacy there will be no economic growth and no development. Next, the Navy must be a model of efficiency, an example of how the slim development State works. Further, it must contribute, in its purchasing policy, to the industrialisation of Southern Africa, including the ability to export hi-tech manufactures. The Navy must acquire new science and technology from abroad by every intelligence-gathering means, and aggressively spread these new techniques into the civilian economy. In short, it must be a development agency. Yet finally, and above all else except its role as a Force-In-Being, the Navy must educate and train all who come its way, because success in the twenty first century will be knowledge-based.

The African National Congress and the Congress of South African Trade Unions have published a draft education policy document called A Framework for Lifelong Learning[18],

which admirably seeks to integrate all learning processes, with quick transfer between one institution and another. Yet, most surprisingly, the armed forces are not mentioned at all, in the context of education and training! This is surely an error. The defence budget must double up as a technical training and education budget in a development State.

The World Bank has recently published a Report, showing that "most of East Asia's extraordinary growth is due to superior accumulation of physical and human capital. But these economies were also better able than most to allocate physical and human resources to highly productive investments, and to acquire and master technology"[19]. The South African Navy must play a role in achieving similar goals for the South African development State.

5.3 SOUTHERN AFRICAN STRATEGY: VOLUNTARY CLOSER UNION

Until now, South African Navy vessels were chosen to be faster and stronger than those of Angola. A correct Southern African strategy would involve Angola, South Africa, and other Southern African states jointly choosing South African Navy vessels, appropriate to the defence needs of the whole sub-continent. How do we get there?

The present author has argued at length elsewhere for a common Southern African Bill of Human Rights, backed by a common Court of Rights[20]. The strategy is to build towards a non-hegemonic, voluntary closer union of all the States of Southern Africa, to achieve prosperity via greater economies of scale, and to maintain peace by structured interaction of governments and armed forces, under the umbrella of agreemeent on the rights of individuals.

Prosperity needs subcontinental freedom of movement of capital and labour. These need agreed rights across political borders, which requires a common court. In turn, the common court must be backed by appropriate policing agreements, and in the last instance by joint military command. The military forces can never be left without civilian leadership, so that a closer political union is desirable. The models are the great democratic aggregations of States, the European Communities and the United States, each of which had a common court and common rights to ensure that justice lay behind the actions of the police and the armed

forces. The process proposed in Southern Africa is strictly voluntary, yet determined, with an inter-State negotiating forum building Closer Union incrementally, step by step.

This is the easy way to peace in Southern Africa: it begins with justiciable human rights agreed upon by all parties. It stresses the goal of economic prosperity. It emphasises democratic legitimacy of civilian governments. Justice and the vote thus underpin any actions by the armed forces. The whole process is incremental and voluntary. The armed forces have clear joint civilian authorities to obey.

The most difficult route is via force or the threat of force, for two reasons. Modern warfare is extraordinarily destructive; and wars have uncertain outcomes. The next most difficult route is confidence building measures, or an attempt at joint military structures, without serious underpinning by political, economic and human rights structures. Confidence building is not be sneered at[21], but it works better within an integrated overall peace plan.

The correct South African Navy strategy for Southern Africa is therefore one that maximises the political, economic and legal development of the countries of the region into a voluntary Closer Union, so that there is strong and legitimate mutual benefit in integrated co-operation between all the armed forces of the region. The Navy hence comes to play a role as joint protector of the region against external forces, and is increasingly owned and designed by all the governments of Southern Africa. The Naval Strategy for Southern Africa is thus not to prepare for war with the other states of the region, but to build close alliances with those states.

Aside from the medium term goal of joint decision making about force levels and the order of battle, the immediate step towards these alliances is naval diplomacy at its friendliest. South African Navy visits to other Southern African ports, bearing suitable gifts of goodwill, and technical assistance, should be an early goal of the new State. The faster the South African Navy changes its skin-colour, of course, the more convincing those visits will be in the longer term alliance-building naval strategy.

An increasingly prosperous, democratic South Africa, freed of the stigma of Apartheid, will be in an unusually strong position to exercise leadership at the behest of the Southern states, within multilateral international organisations. South Africa may take the lead regarding nuclear non-proliferation, missiles control, chemical weapons limitation, and arms control in general. It will make a significant contribution regarding the environment. As an old, but new State, South Africa will also be able to form new bilateral partnerships within the South, having fresh intercourse to bring to military, political, economic and cultural relationships which were previously impossible under Apartheid.

South Africa lies between three great oceans, the Indian, the Atlantic and the Southern. She has extensive coastline, and a huge area of interest in these very high seas. She has the duty of protection of an important sea route. Her communications centre at Silvermine is charged with ocean control from the equator to the Antarctic Circle, from the mid Atlantic to the mid Indian Oceans. As South Africa increasingly takes on her proper role as a medium power, in securing regional and global peace, the South African Navy will need the capability to carry out a strategy of Southern alliance.

In the view of Australia's foreign minister, "India continues to be the most under-rated of the likely great powers"[22]. Australia, like many States around India, has carefully watched the growth of the Indian Navy, understanding the legitimacy of the process, yet still slightly nervous. Australia's two-ocean navy decision was at least in small part a response to the Indian naval build up[23]. The South African democratic movement, by contrast, sees India as an old friend. South Africa has substantial numbers of people of Indian origin; a deeply-rooted shared common history in the life of Gandhi-ji; and debt of gratitude to India for support during the liberation era. Who better to broker joint naval exercises between India and Australia than the new South African Navy?

Similarly, the South African Navy may find peace-making opportunities between the British Royal Navy and the Argentian Navy, as bilateral diplomacy between those two states repairs the damage done by the Falklands War. Without becoming too ambitious or attempting the
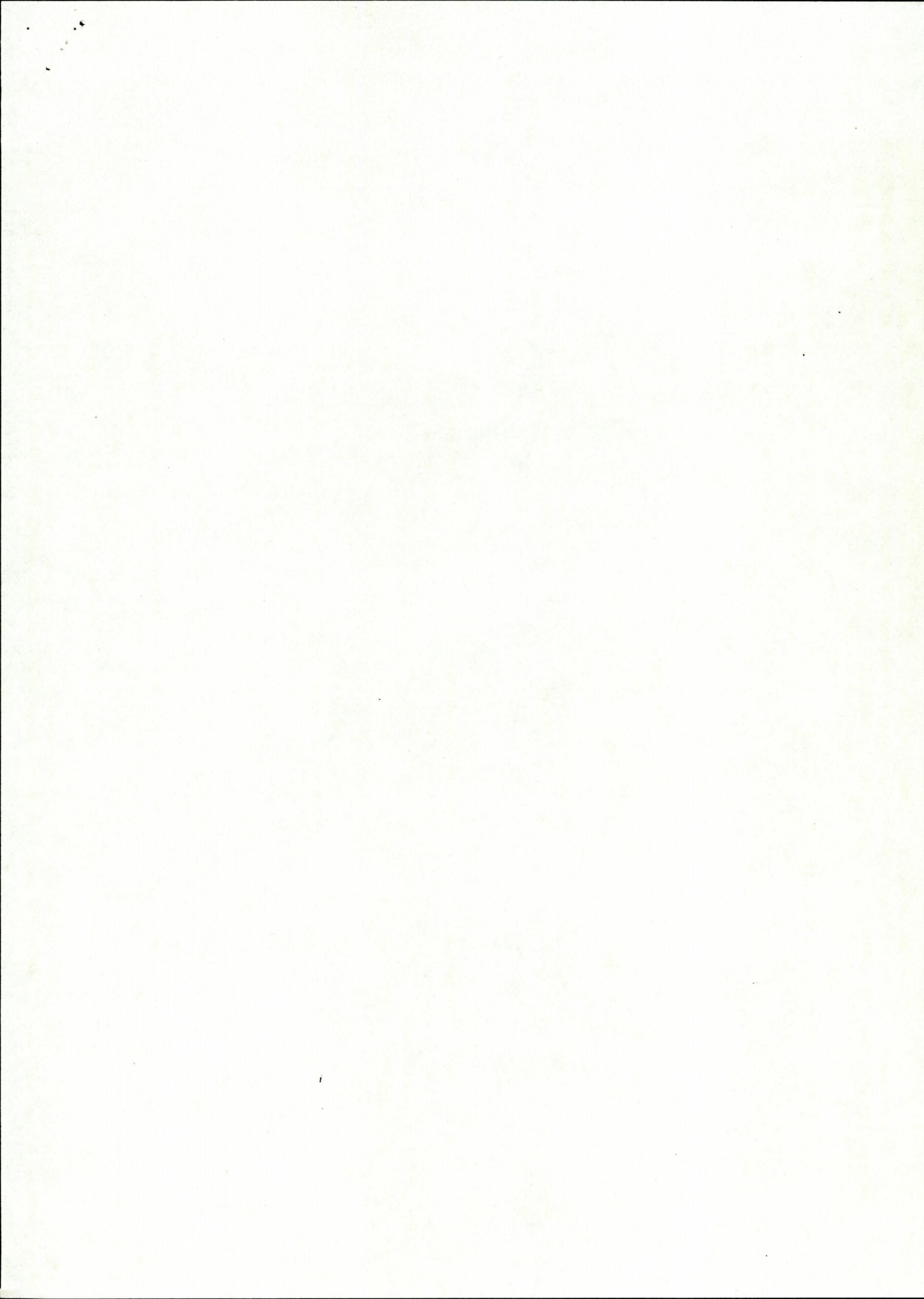
impossible, the South African Navy may play a role in improving relations between Cuba and the United States. There were, after all, elements in both those countries which contributed to the downfall of Apartheid.

These are just examples. Throughout the South, there are historical allies of the struggle against Apartheid, and there are natural allies to be found from geography, culture and economics. Be they with Nigeria or Australia, there are extensive alliances to be built between South Africa and a wide range of Southern States. The South African Navy may well soon find itself with more friendship visits to make than it can comfortably deal with; its strategists will want to build strategic military alliances into the naval diplomacy.

In particular, technology sharing, and economies of scale in ship acquisition, must be vigorously pursued with Southern allies. Again, for example, South Africa and Australia might collaborate in submarine acquisition in the medium term, with a northern supplier and three country manufacture. Electronics industries with naval applications might well find synergy across a number of Southern States.

Yet Australia's Michael McKinley has a powerful critique of technology acquisition in Indian Ocean Navies[24]. Electronic speed of surveillance, and offensive pre-emption, have outrun the fixed speed of human thought and talk. A "cyber-paranoia", which favours first strike and offense, threatens to replace not only peacemaking but also effective warfare, as outcomes become increasingly uncertain due to increased speed. If Mc Kinley is even half-right, the prodigious diplomatic and negotiating skills of the South African democratic movement may have a significant impact to make in and on behalf of the South, in securing peace.

5.5   WORLD STRATEGIC ALLIANCES: THE NORTH

The Australian foreign minister has succinctly explained why the armed forces play a central role in strategic alliance-building.

> "Our politico-military capability is also important. There is no reason to coy about the status conferred by the possession of military power, a status which improves our

ability to exercise leverage across many fields and makes us an attractive security partner for our neighbours and our allies"[25].

Equally, there is no reason for South Africa to pretend that it is not a medium power which is likely to become richer and stronger, if the transition to democracy is well managed. The country is that rare bird: an ex-nuclear power. It has disassembled the Apartheid atomic bombs, and converted much of its nuclear industry to peaceful purposes. While remaining a major uranium producer, the country has not the slightest interest in getting nuclear weapons in the forseable future. Nothing in world or regional politics at present justifies such a step. This is not to say that South Africa might not again take the Bomb in the forty year future, but that would require world and regional threats way beyond what exist at present. The point, however, is that the country has serious military ability, even without the bomb.

This makes South Africa an attractive Southern ally for many Northern powers. The stronger the South African Navy and Airforce become, the more attractive a military partner South Africa becomes. (It is assumed that the South African Army will continue to be the strongest in the region).

At one end of the spectrum, a South African Navy with just one or two attack nuclear submarines (SSNs), (not nuclear armed, but nuclear powered) would have profound potential sea denial capabilities from Perth to Cape Horn to the Equator. The purchase of SSNs might build a stronger alliance with, say, France, or Britain, or the United States. This not beyond the reach of a richer South Africa, in a hypothetically war-bound world of 2005. It would, of course, have some vigorous internal opposition.

Alternatively a dozen ultra-modern long-range conventional submarines might be purchased, say, from Germany or Sweden. Given current leaps forward in conventional submarine technology, these might provide a reach almost as far as the SSNs would, rather more cheaply and with less internal opposition. Such a force would give serious capability across most of the Indian Ocean.

This chapter will not give detailed options for the force structure of the South African Navy: that is done elsewhere in this volume. The point being made with the submarine example is that military (including naval) power and purchases are a strong route for the formation of strategic and economic alliances with the North. Joint production, or outright purchase, of maritime surveillance aircraft, or of maritime strike aircraft of the F 111 class, or of naval vessels, are all inevitable levers in modern diplomacy. The new democratic South Africa will use those levers.

The South African Naval budget will not be large in the first few years, and rightly so. The Apartheid peace dividend must build the houses, and lay the ground for large-scale twenty-first century manufactured exports. But there will be a Navy, and, if so, its capital goods purchases must be spread sensibly over a number of years. Block obsolescence and the subsequent purchase of a whole new Navy in one or two years will surely be avoided by the well-developed new civil service. The Navy will be built incrementally, year by year. The Naval budget will then become a serious tool of foreign policy, and of internal industrialisation.

The most obvious targets of alliance building in the North are the United States (with Canada and Mexico); and Europe, particularly the old ally, Britain; but also France with its expanding, major Navy[26]; Germany for submarines, corvettes and electronics; and perhaps Italy, Sweden or Holland. Further possibilities are to be found in the East, as the navies of the Pacific Rim grow to match the economic power of that region.

Considerable attention must be paid by the new ministries, of foreign affairs, economic development, trade and industry, as well as of defence, to the precise details of alliance - building through strategic military (including naval) purchases. The relationship with the United States promises to become increasingly strong, for a variety of historical reasons. As South Africa shoulders the security and peace-keeping burden in her area, much benefit will flow in both directions from a United States alliance. Similarly, a South Africa back in the Commonwealth has real advantages for the United Kingdom, not least in naval co-operation. France has previously supplied submarines, aircraft and nuclear technology: it may do so again in a more attractive moral climate. Germany promises to be a major

source, perhaps the major source, of scientific and technological renewal in South Africa, to the benefit of all concerned, and there may well be a military component. No modern State can afford to ignore the rise of the Pacific Rim, and the new South Africa will re-Orient itself.

As with all marriages, alliances are often uncomfortable. They require an opening up to the partner, which means vulnerability. They develop master-slave tendencies. Marriage to a declining power can be as unpleasant as marriage to a mordant alcoholic. States, however, are not bound by human family morality, and monogamy in State alliances is to be avoided. Australia, for example, found itself over-wedded to the United States[27], and while that alliance is still strong, Australia's recent more independent stance has been to the benefit of both States. The new South Africa will maintain a balance, that might be called non-aligned in a new sense of that word.

5.6 WARFIGHTING STRATEGIES IN THE ABSENCE OF THREAT

The purpose of a Navy is to project State power at sea, to carry out State foreign and economic policy. This means it must have significant warfighting abilities even if it never uses them. The new South Africa will use its Navy to contribute to the global and regional securing of peace, in order to promote prosperity and cultural development. This cannot be done unless the South African Navy is a Force-In-Being. The speed of modern warfare does not allow two years' delay while a Navy is created. The core of materiel and trained personnel to fight a war, must already exist.

The new State will inherit a Navy: ships, sailors, and large dockyards and engineering works, all paid for. It will not throw those assets into the sea: it will maintain them, and incrementally improve them, so as to have a Force-In-Being to carry out internal and external strategy, as described above. The reason for keeping the South African Navy is plain: it exists and therefore does not require sudden large investment to create; and it is an essential tool of modern State policy. So much for the question, why?

The answer to the question, how?, is rather less obvious. How are warfighting strategies to

be designed for the South African Navy if there is no obvious, credible naval threat to South Africa? Against whom should the Order of Battle be designed? Should the emphasis be on coastal waters (which is this case are very high seas and winds), on deep blue-water operations, on anti-submarine work, on mine laying and sweeping, on maritime air reconnaisance, on helicopters, on land-based maritime airstrike, on submarines, on inter-continental contributions (to the Gulf or to the Far East), on troop-landings, or on satellite and other electronic intelligence?

There is a considerable literature on strategies in the absence of credible threat. The best developed case-study is that of Australia[28], which is a wealthy middle power, having no potential enemy sufficiently armed and in striking distance of the big, empty continent, aside from the base threat of global intercontinental warfare. Australia played its part, rightly or wrongly, with its allies in the Cold War[29]. The Australian forces have also gone to war on behalf of their allies in various theatres since 1945, but there has been no direct threat to the defence of the continent itself in fifty years. Apart from designing an Order of Battle to meet the needs of their allies, how have the Australians developed warfighting strategies of their own, with no one to fight?

One answer has been one familiar to individuals in the South African democratic movement during the liberation struggle: "Just because you are paranoid does not mean they are not out to get you". Given the speed of modern wars, the absence of a visible credible threat does not mean there is no threat. As Criss and Schubert put it,

> "Australia faces a threat now: generically the threat is to avoid offering to another nation, interest or group, the temptation to try to expand at Australia's expense or to her detriment"[30].

This strategy is summarised more cogently by Reenen van Reenen: "The purpose of keeping a Navy is to raise any potential enemy's cost of entering into a war"[31]. He continues, that perceived threats are historically a poor predictor of required future strategies, operations requirements, or Orders of Battle[32]. In this sense, all Navies should build their strategies and abilities without too much respect for the presence or absence of threats. What is required is balance, sufficient size to have a deterrent effect, and flexibility to meet surprise.

A more sophisticated answer, used in Australia, is that of having a high ability to know when a threat is developing, and a graduated response. "National security involves the recognition and countering of threats as they develop, and the effective signalling of national will and resolve. The Australian government generally signals its resolve through diplomatic channels, but resort to force may be seriously considered in some future crisis"[33]. This requires that force must be available, and increasable in sufficiently small packets, so that the appropriate level of response can be made. Nuclear warfare, to take an extreme example, is inappropriate to fisheries conflict. In Hinge's view,

> "The Australian military leadership must therefore provide political leaders with a system of graduated response, providing an array of options to give proportional and appropriate responses to threats"[34].

The doctrine of minimum force, and proportionate response, must not, however, mean the loss of a war, when diplomacy fails. Battles are won by rapid concentration of overwhelming force. Even if there is no credible threat, there must be enough credible force to deter adventurism. This implies an irreducible minimum Force-in-Being. How much is enough?

The developed Australian doctrine teaches that intelligence and surveillance, both military and non-military, electronic and human, are crucial mechanisms for reducing the size of the military Force-In-Being which must be maintained. The more that is effectively spent on intelligence and surveillance, the less a State needs to spend on military hardware and personnel, always keeping the irreducible minimum.

Yet knowing when a threat is developing, is not enough. It must be known that defence preparation time is shorter than the warning time given by intelligence. In addition, homework must have been done on credible threat contingencies, so that known response patterns can be at hand. Finally, there must be a military and industrial expansion base which "retains and practices certain core skills, but not at high levels of readiness"[35].

It will be objected, that these are all peacekeeping strategies, not warfighting strategies. This objection has some weight. The more that is actually spent on ships and sailors, for

example, the less likely it becomes that a credible threat will develop. Few States would readily contemplate war with the United States, because of the size of the conventional Force-In-Being, let alone the nuclear threat which is at the disposal of the United States. Yet this objection is, at base, simply a restatement of the argument for an irreducible minimum. There is a level of military spending below which the State ceases to be a State and is at the mercy of all types of piracy, war-lordism, and opportunism. The rules for that irreducible minimum involve multiple vehicles, multiple media, balance, concentratability, flexibility, expandability, and serious hitting power: in a word, force.

South Africa is a medium power, not a big power. It cannot and must not compete with the size of, say, the French Navy. But it must keep in being a Naval force appropriate to a medium power with a very open economy whose trade is sea-borne across great distances and high seas. This irreducible minimum then dictates the warfighting strategies and the Order of Battle. On top of the Force-In-Being is built the contingency-planning, the expansion base, the intelligence and surveillance systems, the alliance networks, and the contribution to the world good citizenship that together minimise the likelihood of war, and maximise the chance of winning war.

The South African Navy is not unique. It must follow the general requirements for fleets of its size. Most small contiguous-sea navies have frigates or corvettes; fast strike craft; submarines; mine counter measure vessels; some helicopters; one or two large fleet replenishment ships; and hives of small boats[36]. The better small Navies have high satellite intelligence, electromagnetic spectrum, guided missile, technological research, and "Stealth" capacities[37]. The new South African Navy has by chance inherited a basis of these better qualities: <u>a prime warfighting strategy must be to maintain and improve them.</u>

A gap in the present hardware is in corvettes or frigates: ships large enough to spend significant time at sea in the high seas and high winds of the oceans in question. The present strike craft are too small. They pack a huge punch into tiny vessels, but they are appropriate to surreptitious coastal work off Angola or Mozambique, or to sneak attack in a hypothetical action against the old Soviet Navy, rather than to the longer distance naval diplomacy which the new, democratic South Africa will require. The present moves to acquire rather bigger

ships are therefore quite in order. It will be important not to buy them too small.

Satellite communications and joint air-sea operations are crucial to modern Naval warfare. The South Africa Navy must expand the first and re-develop the second. If the Force-In-Being is to be minimised by surveillance, then South Africa must have the aircraft and spacecraft means of surveillance; if there is to be modern force at all in the contiguous seas then air-strike is essential. The Navy seems at present to spend inadequate time in exercises with strike elements of the South African Air Force. The recent loss of a pilot and a Mirage F1 AZ when its single engine stopped during such an exercise south of Cape Point may demonstrate the need for more regular joint operations[38]. A two-engined maritime long-range strike aircraft would be an asset to be considered in the medium term.

The peace settlement in South Africa makes possible a wide range of contacts which will improve the Navy's warfighting abilities. Joint exercises with the navies of the United States, Britain, France, India, Australia, and other African and Southern States, should be vigorously pursued, as should attendance by South Africans on overseas staff courses. But, in sum, the warfighting strategy of the South African Navy, in the absence of credible threat, must be to maintain a small balanced, effective force, with enough intelligence and surveillance to know when an expansion is needed.

5.7 CONCLUSION

The new democracy in South Africa must radically transform its foreign and domestic affairs by a combined strategy: the outside and the inside relate to each other. At the very least, the colour of the leadership in the bureaucracy, the armed forces, and large private enterprise must begin to change to match that of the ordinary people. Yet this is but a small step. Much of what South Africa thinks and does must have changed within ten years, or it will not be a twenty-first century State.

Peace and economic growth must be vigorously pursued by a combination of intellectual cunning and negotiated alliance-building, at home and abroad, with the South as with the North. Knowledge-based armed forces must accompany knowledge-based industry. South

Africa has the moral opportunity for world multilateral leadership underpinned by astute bilateral diplomacy. At home, strategies must be evolved to deliver the goods to the people, not least electrified houses and modern education. The economy must be re-jigged for knowledge-based exports, without losing the natural resource-based advantages. The armed forces must be modernised, which means a smaller, professional Army, a better Airforce, and a better Navy.

In particular, the Navy must understand the internal and external strategies of the new State, in order to maximise peace and prosperity, minimise the chance of war, and win a war if it happens. Great friendship must be shown in Southern Africa. The environment and the South must be protected, by two-way alliances with the South and North, in Naval as in other matters. An efficient, small, but powerful Naval Force-In-Being must continue to exist. It must have the means to expand if need be; and it must maintain its industrial base.

But above all, the Navy must be a significant part of a completely revamped diplomatic and intelligence-gathering initiative by the new State, to obtain the necessary peaceful and military information which is essential to modern world good citizenship. By electronics and by scholarship, by joint ventures and by purchase, by signals monitoring and by human intelligence, the Navy and South Africa must join the twenty first century world of the practical use of intellect.

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