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Reflections on the SDSC's Middle Decades

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This essay was previously published in the 40th anniversary edition. It is reprinted here in its near original format.

I joined the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (SDSC) as a research fellow in July 1974. I have remained with it for 32 years, nearly a third of a century, and more than three-quarters of its existence. I became a fellow in October 1980, the first tenured position in the Centre and, at the same time, was officially made the deputy head. I served as head from March 1984 to July 1991. It has been home for almost my entire academic career — such a part of my adult life that it is difficult for me to reflect about it objectively.

The Centre was established at The Australian National University (ANU) by T.B. Millar, a former Australian Army officer, in 1966, when he was a senior fellow in the Department of International Relations, to 'advance the study of Australian, regional, and global strategic and defence issues'. Its initial funding was by way of a grant from the Ford Foundation and, organisationally, it was an independent offshoot of International Relations. For two decades it was the only academic centre concerned with strategic and defence studies in Australia.

Several others were established in the late 1980s and the 1990s, but the SDSC has remained pre-eminent in terms of international reputation and research productivity.

SDSC was headed from 1971 by Bob O'Neill, a former army officer and a senior fellow in International Relations. He presided over the Centre's expansion and rise to international recognition throughout the 1970s and early 1980s. He was already the author of three books: *The German Army and the Nazi Party* (1966), the classic text on civil-military relations in Nazi Germany; *Vietnam Task* (1968), based on his experiences in Vietnam, where he had served as an infantry captain in 1966–67; and *General Giap: Politician and Strategist* (1969), a biography of the North Vietnamese military leader, the architect of the Viet Minh victory at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 and, two decades later, of the defeat of the United States in Vietnam. He was by 1971 regarded as Australia's leading soldier-historian and one of its best military historians ever. O'Neill's major research project during his 11 years at SDSC was his two-volume, 1,300-page official history of *Australia in the Korean War: 1950–53*. Volume 1, on strategy and diplomacy, was published by the Australian War Memorial and the Australian Government Publishing Service in 1981, and Volume 2 on combat operations was published in 1985. Reviewers said that the twin works 'will always be the indispensable reference' on Australia's role in the Korean War.¹

By 1974, however, when I joined him, O'Neill's talents were already turning to institution-building and project leadership. His first task was to build a critical mass of research posts in SDSC, based on a core staff of longer-term appointments. He promoted the Centre through regular public conferences and by developing contacts with the media. The conferences were usually products of extensive research projects, and usually addressed subjects for the first time in Australia.

Through the mid-1970s, O'Neill obtained financial support for several core posts. In 1973, when Lance Barnard was Minister for Defence in the Labor Government under Gough Whitlam, he secured funding from the Department of Defence for two academic posts; these appointments were for two years, with possible extension to a maximum of five years.

1 Desmond Ball, 'Robert O'Neill: A Strategic Career', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 60, No. 1, Mar. 2006, pp. 7–11.

He was then able to move SDSC into the staffing and budgeting system of ANU and obtained an ANU-funded post in 1976 and another two over the next five years. He also forged a strong relationship with the Ford Foundation and, later, the MacArthur Foundation.

I received one of the first two Defence-funded posts, beginning a relationship with Defence that we both often found uncomfortable over the ensuing years. The other post, for work on regional security issues, went to Peter Hastings, the pungent, waggish and quarrelsome journalist, who worked on political and security issues concerning Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. He enjoyed regular access to the office of the then director of the Joint Intelligence Organisation (JIO), as well as conviviality and good wine. He married Jolika Tie, who was our research assistant, in 1981. Two other key members of the Centre at this time, when a critical mass was being put together, were Jol Langtry and Billie Dalrymple. Langtry, another lover of good wine, was the Centre's executive officer from August 1976 to December 1988. A former Army officer who had worked in JIO and army combat development areas, his ability to think of novel strategic and operational concepts was inspirational. Dalrymple was the Centre's secretary from 1977 to 1989. As O'Neill said when she retired, Dalrymple was the crux of a hive of activity, working unstintingly 'with her own special flair and style, smoothing down ruffled feathers when others became agitated, cheering those under pressure and dealing with the outside world with charm and panache'.

O'Neill moved to London to head the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in 1982. He was already recognised internationally for his leadership qualities, adeptness at collegiate and foundation politics and immense personal integrity, as well as his intellectual work. In 1987 he became the Chichele Professor of the History of War at All Souls College at Oxford University, where he stayed until his retirement in 2001.

I saw O'Neill display not only superb diplomatic skills but also immense integrity and a commitment to academic values. Some of the Centre's work was intensely controversial, as befitting path-breaking scholarship on major national and international issues. Some senior Defence and intelligence officials regarded my own work on US installations in Australia, such as Pine Gap, with great suspicion. While I argued that it was necessary in a democracy for the public to

know the purposes and implications of these facilities, a proposition now taken for granted, the senior External Affairs and Defence public servant Sir Arthur Tange complained that I was dangerous and irresponsible, opening up matters that demanded absolute secrecy. He was especially upset because my post was then funded by Defence. O'Neill defended the right of academics to pursue unfettered research. Only when I later became head of SDSC and inherited the files of correspondence between O'Neill and Tange did I fully appreciate the extent of his discourse and the solidity of his refusal to countenance any hint of infringement on the principle of academic independence.

Tom Millar's Return

When O'Neill resigned, the Director of the Research School of Pacific Studies (RSPacS) appointed Tom Millar as acting head, effective from 1 August 1982. He was reappointed head from 14 October 1982. He was then a professorial fellow in International Relations and, of course, had been the founding head of the Centre. The relationship between Millar and myself was proper but not warm. We both held the interests of SDSC in the highest regard, but we were of different personalities and some of my social and political values were difficult for him to abide. He objected to my partner Annabel Rossiter and I living together without being married, which excluded any social relationship between us. He was rigid in some of his views.

Millar was soon embroiled in a bitter controversy about the academic merits of peace research and its place in the Research School. He was strongly supportive of the study of arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament and, soon after resuming the headship, he sought funds from both the Department of Foreign Affairs and ANU to support work in this area. In mid-1983, ANU agreed to fund a post in 'Arms Control, Disarmament and Peace Research' in the Centre, to which Andrew Mack was appointed later in the year. By this time, the Labor Government under Bob Hawke was in office. Over the previous couple of years, Mack (then a senior lecturer in international politics at Flinders University and Australia's leading academic peace researcher) and I had separately been working with the Australian Labor Party's Foreign and Defence Committee on the inclusion of a commitment to the establishment of a Peace Research Centre (PRC) in the party's platform,

and talking at length with Bill Hayden about its implementation. Together, I think, we persuaded Hayden, when he became Foreign Minister, to place the new Centre in RSPacS, 'separate from but to cooperate closely with' SDSC. Millar was very upset; he believed that peace research could too easily become 'unprofessional', its rigour compromised by activist agendas, and had to be subsumed within and under the broader subject of strategic studies.² He resigned as head of SDSC and returned to International Relations on 31 January 1984. He later became Professor of Australian Studies and head of the Sir Robert Menzies Centre for Australian Studies at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies in London (1985–90). After Millar died in London in June 1994, Coral Bell produced a volume of essays in his honour.³

Mack stayed in the Centre for nearly two more years, completing a comprehensive review of peace research in the 1980s,⁴ before becoming the first head of PRC in late 1985. Mack and I had a superb working relationship for the next half decade. We were members of each other's advisory committees; we organised joint SDSC–PRC conferences and published joint books and articles; we lobbied within ANU and with US foundations on each other's behalf; and we socialised together a lot, mixing business with pleasure. We were very good friends. Our relationship quickly deteriorated, however, after Mack moved to the chair of International Relations in 1991, an appointment in which I had played a substantial role. We argued vehemently about the relative resources that SDSC and International Relations received from the Research School; Mack now thought that SDSC, although still much smaller than his department in terms of academic staff, was being favoured in Research School budgetary processes. Yet I believe Mack was also jealous of the relative productivity of the Centre and the international reputation that we enjoyed. I saw an unpleasant side of Mack that I had not hitherto appreciated.

2 T.B. Millar, *The Resolution of Conflict and the Study of Peace*, Working Paper No. 73, (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, Jul. 1983).

3 Coral Bell (ed.), *Nation, Region and Context: Studies in Peace and War in Honour of Professor T.B. Millar*, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No. 112 (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, 1995).

4 Andrew Mack, *Peace Research in the 1980s* (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, 1985).

Structuring SDSC's Research Agenda

By the time O'Neill left in 1982, the enhanced SDSC had members working on global strategic issues, security developments in the Asia-Pacific region and Australian defence matters, funded through various arrangements, including several visiting fellowships. For planning purposes, I adopted this three-tier structure as a basis for the Centre's further expansion throughout the 1980s, obtaining a core establishment of tenured or 3–5 year appointments to lead the research in the three areas, with an increased number of visiting fellows of various sorts. Conferences remained a major feature of the research programs.

The largest proportion of the Centre's work in the second half of the 1970s and in the 1980s concerned the defence of Australia. SDSC was at the forefront of the conceptual revolution in Australian defence policy from 'dependence on great and powerful friends' to 'greater self-reliance' and from 'forward defence' to 'defence of Australia' that occurred during this period. The first major step in this process was a conference that O'Neill organised on 'The Defence of Australia: Fundamental New Aspects' in October 1976, which was designed to assist policymakers struggling with the transformation of Australia's defence posture. It included papers by leading overseas experts on the concept of 'total defence' and on the strategic and tactical implications of new conventional weapons technologies; by Bill Morrison, who succeeded Lance Barnard as Defence Minister in 1974 and was a visiting fellow in SDSC in 1976–77, on the role of the minister in policymaking since the reorganisation of Defence in 1973–75; on force structure and equipment acquisition matters; and O'Neill's own paper on the development of operational doctrine for the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

SDSC contributed to the development of new ideas concerning many aspects of the defence of Australia, including the command and control of the ADF, the establishment of 'functional' command arrangements for joint operations; reorganisation of the Defence portfolio, such as the establishment of the Defence Council, which was recommended by Millar; greater utilisation of the civilian infrastructure, especially in defence of Australia contingencies; greater appreciation of the challenges of lower level contingencies in northern Australia; regular officer education and training; and particular force-structure issues.

Members of the Centre were credited with an influential role in the government's decision in 1981 to acquire the F/A-18 as the RAAF's tactical fighter aircraft. Costing \$4 billion, this was the largest capital program in Australia's history, and turned out to have been the right choice. The core people involved in this work on Australian defence were O'Neill, Langtry and myself, together with Ross Babbage, initially as a doctoral student in International Relations in the mid-1970s and later (1986–90) as senior research fellow and deputy head of SDSC, but we relied greatly on a stream of Defence-funded visiting fellows, including mid-career ADF officers, for their operational and planning expertise.

Babbage was the conceptual leader. He introduced me to thinking about the defence of Australia at Sydney University in 1972–74, where I was a lecturer before joining SDSC, when he did his Master's thesis on 'A Strategy for the Continental Defence of Australia'. I was his supervisor, but he was far more knowledgeable about the subject. I encouraged him to move to Canberra in 1974 and I assisted O'Neill in supervising Babbage when he was a doctoral student. His PhD, published in 1980 as *Rethinking Australia's Defence*, was the seminal study of the subject. His major work when he was in the Centre between 1986 and 1990 was *A Coast Too Long: Defending Australia Beyond the 1990s*, published in 1990.

Many of the ideas developed in the Centre during the second half of the 1970s and the first half of the 1980s, especially those relating to northern defence, were incorporated in Paul Dibb's *Review of Australia's Defence Capabilities* produced for Minister for Defence Kim Beazley in 1985–86, and described by Beazley as 'the most important appraisal of Australia's defence capabilities since the end of World War Two'. Dibb joined International Relations as a senior research fellow in 1981 and the SDSC in 1984, and took leave from SDSC to produce the review.

The field trips we made around northern Australia during the 1980s, using Coastwatch or RAAF aircraft, four-wheel-drive vehicles and river barges, mapping the local civil infrastructure and vital national installations, proffering novel operational concepts for northern defence, and seeing these being tested in large-scale defence exercises, were exhilarating affairs. In addition to my first trip across northern Australia, from Cape York to the Kimberley region of Western Australia,

in July–August 1983, I still have vivid memories of trips through the Northern Territory and the Kimberley with Langtry in July–August 1984 and September–October 1985, with Langtry and Babbage up the Tanami Track and through the East Kimberley in October 1986, and around the Torres Strait with Babbage, Langtry and Cathy Downes in May–June 1987. My daughter Katherine, born in 1984, was named in part after the township 320 kilometres south of Darwin, which we had identified as the focal point for the defence of the Top End, and where the first squadron of the new F/A–18 fighters would soon be based. One of the particular northern infrastructure projects for which we became leading proponents was construction of an Alice Springs to Darwin railway connection, and it was pleasing to be invited to Darwin in October 2003 to see the first train come up the line.

The second significant area of work in the Centre, which brought us to international attention, concerned the strategic nuclear balance between the United States and the Soviet Union, and related issues of nuclear proliferation. The first SDSC conference that O'Neill organised, in July 1974, addressed US, Soviet and Chinese strategic nuclear policies and capabilities, nuclear arms control and non-proliferation; it was the first serious examination of the subject in this country. The papers were edited by O'Neill and published by SDSC in August 1975.⁵ A 'follow-up' conference on 'The Strategic Nuclear Balance 1975' was held in June 1975, with the edited papers being published by SDSC in May 1976.⁶

My work focused on the operational aspects of strategic nuclear targeting and the controllability of nuclear war, and showed that the mechanisms needed for controlling a nuclear exchange degraded rapidly after only several tens of detonations or a day or so of operations, leading inexorably to full-scale nuclear war. These were heady days, involving frequent sojourns to underground missile silos, the warning centre under Cheyenne Mountain near Colorado Springs, the Pentagon, the US intelligence agencies and the White House. I sat only feet away from the 1.2-megaton nuclear warheads atop the Minuteman ICBMs at Whiteman Air Force Base, each about a hundred times more powerful

5 Robert O'Neill (ed.), *The Strategic Nuclear Balance: An Australian Perspective* (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, 1975).

6 H.G. Gelber (ed.), *The Strategic Nuclear Balance 1975* (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, 1976).

than the bomb that destroyed Hiroshima in 1945. I also spent a few days at McConnell Air Force Base near Wichita in Kansas, which had 18 Titan II ICBMs, each with 9-megaton warheads, or nearly a thousand times larger than the Hiroshima bomb. In 1982 I worked with a group of recent and current officials from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the National Security Agency (NSA), including two former NSA directors, and the Pentagon, on the vulnerabilities of US nuclear command and control systems. In 1985–86 I was privileged to be a member of a group sponsored by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences to study ‘the role of crisis as a precursor to nuclear war and the extent to which the superpowers’ command organisations could maintain control over such a chain of events’. The other participants included former president Jimmy Carter, who I had only met once before; former secretary of defense Robert McNamara, who I already knew well; Hans Bethe, the nuclear physicist and Nobel Laureate, and Richard Garwin, the two most brilliant men I have ever met; McGeorge Bundy and Brent Scowcroft, former national security advisors to presidents Kennedy and Nixon, both of whom I also knew well; recent commanders-in-chief; and Condoleezza Rice, a specialist on the Soviet High Command who was working at the Joint Chiefs of Staff.⁷ In 1988 I did a report for the US Air Force Intelligence Agency on Soviet signals intelligence (SIGINT) capabilities, the principal source of ‘strategic warning’ of a nuclear attack.⁸ I was in West Berlin on 9 November 1989, when the Berlin Wall was demolished, watching the panicked Soviet intelligence officers based in the Soviet consulate desperately reacting to the loss of some of their covert technical equipment. This work was not only extremely exciting, it also enhanced the profile of Australian strategic studies in the United States.

The third broad area of Centre research in the late 1970s and the 1980s concerned security issues in the Asia-Pacific region. We had a succession of two- to three-year appointments on various aspects of regional security, funded variously by the Department of Defence, ANU and the Ford Foundation. They included Lee Ngok, Donald McMillan, Gary Klintworth and Denny Roy who worked on China; Paul Keal and Peter Polomka on Japan; Greg Fry and David Hegarty

7 Kurt Gottfried and Bruce G. Blair (eds), *Crisis Stability and Nuclear War* (Oxford University Press, 1988).

8 Desmond Ball, *Soviet Signals Intelligence (SIGINT)*, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No. 47 (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, 1989).

on the south-west Pacific; R. Subramanian, S.D. Muni, Sreedhara Rao, Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema and Sandy Gordon on South Asia; and Alan Dupont on Indonesia. Their names are associated with standard reference works in their respective areas.

I became head of SDSC on 7 March 1984, during a period when I was spending lengthy periods overseas — at the Centre for International Affairs at Harvard University, the RAND Corporation in Los Angeles and IISS in London, as well as various places in Washington D.C. — and was contemplating moving to the United States. In March 1987 I was awarded a personal chair, one of six ‘special professorships’ created in the Institute of Advanced Studies ‘in recognition of a high international reputation for distinguished academic work’. I had really wanted to stay at ANU, both because I much preferred living in Canberra to any major city in the United States, particularly now that Annabel and I were having children, and because of the opportunity to devote a lifetime to academic research in the Research School that the personal chair offered.

The working environment in the 1970s and 1980s was more relaxed and sociable than in later years. There was more time for informal discourse between colleagues from different parts of the Research School and, indeed, ANU, perhaps lubricated by good wine on the lawns of the old Staff Centre (Old Canberra House). The contemporary research projects and publications tended, as a result, to be broader and more multi-disciplinary. Books published by Centre members in the 1980s included chapters by Rhys Jones in pre-history, John Chappell in biogeography, Andy Mack and Trevor Findlay in PRC, Hal Hill in economics, Richard Higgott in International Relations, and Jamie Mackie and Ron May in the Department of Political and Social Change. The discussions with Jones led to one of my favourite edited books, *Aborigines in the Defence of Australia*, in which he and Betty Meehan wrote a chapter on ‘The Arnhem Salient’.

By the end of the 1980s, SDSC was being consistently ranked among the top 15 or 20 strategic studies centres in the world. In 1990, the review of the Institute of Advanced Studies, chaired by Sir Ninian Stephen, cited SDSC as an illustration of ‘how well parts of the Institute’s research have met the goals of those who created the ANU’. The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Laurie Nichol, said it ‘is one of this University’s major success stories’. Bill Hayden, then

Governor-General, said at the SDSC's 25th anniversary conference in 1991 that its influence extended 'well beyond academic cloisters' and that 'this kind of interaction between scholars, policymakers and the broader community was in fact the inspiration behind the establishment of the Institute of Advanced Studies in 1946'.⁹

Defence Funding

The rise to prominence of the Centre during the 1970s and 1980s would not have been possible without the largesse of the Department of Defence. The two posts that O'Neill arranged with Barnard and Tange in 1973–74 were the cornerstones in his building of SDSC. O'Neill also arranged, in 1977, for Defence visiting fellows to come to the Centre for 12-month periods; the first of these, in 1977–78, was Lieutenant Colonel Steve Gower, who worked on 'options for the development of a defence technological strategy' for Australia.¹⁰ Inevitably, however, the dependence on Defence funding, as with all external funding, created difficulties. There were pressures to change some of our research directions and constraints imposed on some of our research activities.

I initially wanted to research decision-making with respect to US facilities in Australia, as part of a larger project on the politics of Australian defence decision-making. I did not have to deal directly with Tange's rage at this notion; that was for O'Neill. But Tange's message that Defence funds should not be used on this subject was clear. When I published *A Suitable Piece of Real Estate: American Installations in Australia* in 1980, I specifically wrote that 'this book was written at home rather than in my office at the Australian National University',¹¹ in a lame attempt to distance SDSC from it. I was gratified when O'Neill commented at the launching at the National Press Club that he regarded it as an important SDSC product.

9 Desmond Ball & David Horner (eds), *Strategic Studies in a Changing World: Global, Regional and Australian Perspectives*, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No. 89 (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, 1992), pp. xxvi–xxxi, 10–20.

10 S.N. Gower, *Options for an Australian Defence Technological Strategy* (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, 1982).

11 Desmond Ball, *A Suitable Piece of Real Estate: American Installations in Australia* (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1980), p. 13.

When my own two-year Defence-funded appointment was up in July 1976, Tange refused to renew the post. I am sure that his anger at my appointment was behind his decision. I was fortunately appointed to the SDSC's first ANU-funded post (with O'Neill being officially on the books in International Relations), which O'Neill had secured earlier that year. The other Defence-funded post was never threatened: Peter Hastings was extended until 1977; he was succeeded by Philip Towle in 1978–80, Paul Keal in 1981–83 and Greg Fry in 1983–86.

My most difficult times were with Bill Pritchett, Tange's successor in Defence. He took great umbrage at the work that Langtry and I were doing on Defence's mobilisation planning, where we were finding grave deficiencies.¹² On one occasion he called me over to his office, after some embarrassing revelation by Langtry and I about the inadequate planning machinery, and demanded that I sign a retraction he had prepared. In 1982 he intervened with the Pentagon and then the State Department to persuade the RAND Corporation in Santa Monica (where I was working from time to time as a consultant on US strategic nuclear targeting policy) to curb my access to areas holding the most highly classified materials, effectively making it impossible for me to work in the main building. He argued that my position at RAND, funded by the United States Air Force (USAF), gave credibility to criticisms I was making of the US facilities in Australia, including the USAF's own satellite ground station at Nurrungar in South Australia. I have to say that both RAND and the USAF were supportive throughout this affair. They both initially resisted the pressures from Canberra and the State Department, and both RAND management and successive chiefs of the USAF ensured that our working relationship was maintained for another decade.

Defence support was substantially revamped after Beazley became Minister for Defence. He agreed in May 1985 to new arrangements that were formalised in a memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed by Sir William Cole, secretary of Defence, and Peter Karmel, ANU Vice-Chancellor, in November 1985. Under these new arrangements, Defence funded two three-year research fellow/senior research fellow posts, one in the area of Australian defence and one in the area of regional security, and two three-month visiting fellowship posts

12 Desmond Ball & J.O. Langtry (eds), *Problems of Mobilisation in Defence of Australia* (Canberra: Phoenix Defence Publications, 1980).

per year. In early 1987 Defence also agreed to fund two scholarships per year for Australian scholars to undertake the new Master's degree in the Centre. The first appointment in the regional security area was David Hegarty, who joined SDSC in September 1986; the first in the Australian defence area was Cathy Downes, who joined SDSC in January 1987 and who worked on manpower recruitment and development policies and practices for the ADF.

SDSC had 11 Defence-funded visiting fellows from 1986 until 1991, including Michael McKinley, Carl Thayer, Gary Brown, Sandy Gordon, David Jenkins, Alan Dupont and Mohan Malik. A full list, together with their research projects, is in the SDSC December 1991 Newsletter.

In addition, arrangements were instituted for the three Services to send officers to SDSC for 12- to 18-month visiting fellowships. This program was initiated with the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) in July 1984; the first RAN fellow was Commander Simon Harrington, followed by Commander G.F. Smart and then Commander Bill Dovers. MoUs were signed with the Army and the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) in January 1990. The first Army fellow was Brigadier Paul O'Sullivan and the first RAAF fellow was Wing Commander Gary Waters. There were 17 Defence and Service fellows at the Centre from 1976 until 1991; they are also listed in the December 1991 Newsletter.

From time to time, Defence also funded visiting fellows on an individual basis. These included Lieutenant Colonel Jim Sanday (1987–88), who had been chief of staff and deputy commander of the Royal Fijian Military Forces before the coup in Fiji in May 1987; Balthasur Tas Maketu (1988–89), who had been secretary of the PNG Department of Defence since 1974; and Denis McLean (1989–90), who had been secretary of New Zealand's Ministry of Defence for the previous decade. We also had several secondments from Defence, including Fred Bennett in 1988–89, who, prior to joining SDSC, had been chief of capital procurement in the Defence, and Barry Roberts, who was seconded to SDSC in November 1987 to provide the quantitative skills required for our new graduate program.

Whereas O'Neill resisted the involvement of Defence in the appointment processes for the Defence-funded posts, I initiated some measures whereby the Defence interest would be heard without compromising academic criteria. I discussed the proposed research

topics of applicants for the Defence-funded posts with the appropriate Defence officials, including Pritchett on at least one occasion, but I was not beholden to their preferences and I did not divulge the names of the applicants. In 1990, when Gordon was appointed to the regional security post and Stewart Woodman to the Australian defence post, we even invited Defence to nominate an official to serve as a member of the appointment committees. The appointment of Bob Mathams to the Centre's Advisory Committee in 1985, as noted below, helped improve our credibility in important parts of the Defence establishment.

The Advisory Committee

From the beginning, SDSC had an ardent and assiduous Advisory Committee, chaired by the Director of RSPacS. Its role was 'to advise the Director of RSPacS and, through him, the ANU Vice-Chancellor on matters of policy relating to SDSC; and to advise the Head of SDSC on the Centre's research program'. Its first chair was Sir John Crawford, who played a leading role in the Centre's establishment. Its members were senior academics from elsewhere in ANU, mostly from relevant departments in the H.C. Coombs Building. It had proven helpful to O'Neill as he moved SDSC into the Research School structure, and was later invaluable to me. It supported me in the intra-School politics as we claimed an increasing number of RSPacS posts, reaching four by the late 1980s; and it gave me considerable protection against external pressures, including pressures from Defence. The Director of RSPacS and chair of the Advisory Committee from 1980 to 1993 was R. Gerard Ward; he was supportive of SDSC, for which I will always be grateful, although our relationship began to fray in the early 1990s as budgetary cuts hit RSPacS and he was unavoidably drawn into my conflict with Mack.

Two of the initial members of the committee, Hedley Bull and Bruce Miller, the joint heads of International Relations from 1967 until Bull went to Oxford University in 1977, played important roles in the foundation and early development of SDSC. Miller, together with Crawford, conceived the idea of a Strategic and Defence Studies Centre; he remained on the committee until his retirement in 1987. Bull brought his intellect and the reputation that followed publication

of *The Control of the Arms Race*,¹³ but he could sometimes be difficult, puffing on his pipe between acerbic comments. At the SDSC conference on Australian defence policy in October 1976, he intervened in a heated discussion about alternative defence-planning methodologies to opine that the whole subject was a waste of time; there were more momentous issues in the world warranting academic inquiry than defending Australia. He did not really believe this, and in fact wrote several articles about Australian defence, but he enjoyed sniping.

Other members of the Advisory Committee in the late 1970s and the 1980s included Harry Rigby, a senior fellow in the Research School of Social Sciences and an internationally recognised scholar on the Soviet Union and especially the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; Jim Richardson, Coral Bell and Geoffrey Jukes from International Relations; Professor Max Corden from the Department of Economics; and Professor Jamie Mackie from Political and Social Change. Mack joined the Advisory Committee when he became head of PRC in 1985. Hugh Smith, from the Department of Government at the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) in Canberra and an expert on civil–military relations, was also appointed in 1985.

I also arranged for Mathams to be appointed to the Advisory Committee. He had headed the Scientific Intelligence Group in the Joint Intelligence Bureau from 1958 until the creation of JIO in 1969, when he became the Director of Scientific and Technical Intelligence in JIO.¹⁴ He played a central role in the establishment of the ground station for the CIA's geostationary SIGINT satellites at Pine Gap. This program gave Australia a central role in maintenance of the global strategic balance, and, at a personal level, forged connections between Australian defence and intelligence officials and the hierarchy of the CIA's Deputy Director, Science and Technology in Langley, Virginia. He was a good friend of SDSC. I first met him when he attended SDSC conferences on the strategic nuclear balance in 1974 and 1975, and came to know him better in the early 1980s. Although he retired

13 Hedley Bull, *The Control of the Arms Race: Disarmament and Arms Control in the Missile Age* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1961).

14 R.H. Mathams, *Sub Rosa: Memoirs of an Australian Intelligence Analyst* (Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1982); and R.H. Mathams, *The Intelligence Analyst's Notebook*, Working Paper No. 151 (Canberra, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, 1988).

in 1979, he was still, in 1985, highly regarded in Defence and the Defence intelligence agencies. He left Canberra for more northern climes at the end of 1989.

Graduate Students

One of the original distinctions between centres and departments in the research schools, along with the injunction against tenured posts, was that only departments were allowed to have doctoral students. However, both O'Neill and I recognised that viable institutions require continuous regeneration. We both supervised doctoral students working on strategic or defence topics in International Relations, including David Horner, Babbage and Ron Huiskens, who later took up senior positions in SDSC. Tim Huxley, one of O'Neill's students at the beginning of the 1980s, is now the senior fellow in charge of Asia-Pacific security matters at IISS.

In 1983 RSPaS changed its policy and allowed SDSC to enrol a small number of doctoral students. The first was Andrew Butfoy, who received a Master of Arts in war studies at King's College, London. He joined SDSC in March 1984 and wrote his dissertation on 'Strategic Linkage and the Western Alliance: Nuclear War Planning and Conventional Military Forces'. Butfoy later was a senior lecturer in international relations specialising in security studies at Monash University. Our second was Robert Glasser, who joined SDSC in January 1986 and wrote his dissertation on 'Nuclear Pre-emption and Crisis Stability'. He is now Chief Executive of CARE Australia, after earlier careers at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico and AusAID in Canberra. Our third was Matthew Allen, who began his dissertation on 'Processes of Change and Innovation: A Study of the Development of Military Helicopter Doctrines' in February 1987. The fourth and fifth, who both began in 1992, were Leonard Sebastian, on 'Indonesian National Security and Defence Planning', and Nicola Baker, on 'Defence Decision-making Processes in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore'. It remained a small program, with usually only around three or four students at any one time.

Members of SDSC had contributed a course on 'Strategic and Defence Studies' to the Master's program in the Department of International Relations since its inception in 1975 and, in 1986, we decided to

establish our own graduate program. It was initiated by Babbage, who took overall responsibility for the program in 1987, its first year. Substantial funding for the program was provided by the MacArthur Foundation, including funds for a program coordinator, an administrator, and some scholarships for Asian students. The founding coordinator was Leszek Buszynski, an analyst of Soviet activities in Asia, who joined SDSC in October 1987. He was later assisted by Stewart Woodman, who joined SDSC in December 1990. As well as the two Defence-funded scholarships for Australian students agreed in early 1987, the New Zealand Ministry of Defence also agreed to fund two 'Freyberg Scholarships' for New Zealand students. In November 1989, British Aerospace Australia began funding an annual scholarship. The program was administered by Tina Lynham, whose devotion to the students was wonderful.

Officer Education and Development

Beginning under O'Neill's tenure, members of SDSC have played important roles in the evolution of ADF officer education and development and, more directly, in the formulation and presentation of the strategic studies components of the courses at the major Service training institutions, in that time the Joint Services Staff College (JSSC) and the Army, RAAF and RAN staff colleges. In 1977, for example, SDSC was requested by the Army's Regular Officer Development Committee (RODC) to prepare a paper on 'the future operational requirement and officer development', which influenced the final report.¹⁵

SDSC members were active proponents of a single, integrated institution for officer cadet training, of the sort embodied at ADFA. I was a member of the ADFA Council, appointed by the Minister for Defence, from 1985 to 1991, when I was succeeded by Paul Dibb.

Members of SDSC had an especially close affiliation with the JSSC at Weston Creek. O'Neill was a member of the Dunbar Committee, chaired by Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the ANU, which reorganised

15 Desmond Ball, Ross Babbage, J.O. Langtry & R.J. O'Neill, *The Development of Australian Army Officers for the 1980s*, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No. 17 (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, 1978); and Desmond Ball, 'The Role of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre', in Hugh Smith (ed.), *Australians on Peace and War* (Canberra: Australian Defence Studies Centre, Australian Defence Force Academy, 1987), pp. 77–81.

the JSSC's curriculum and teaching methods in 1975–76. I succeeded O'Neill as Academic Adviser to JSSC after his departure in 1982. I was a member of its Board of Studies from 1986 to 1991, when I was succeeded by Horner who had been on the Directing Staff at JSSC from 1988 to 1990. All of the Centre's academic staff and many of its visiting fellows lectured at JSSC.

Members of SDSC also lectured and assisted with curriculum reform at, and served on the boards of, the Service staff colleges. Horner attended the Army Command and Staff College at Queenscliff in 1983, and was a regular lecturer there from 1983 to 1992. Babbage and I assisted the RAAF Staff College with the major review of its syllabus in 1989–90, after which I served for five years on its Board of Studies. Horner also served on the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Accreditation Board in connection with graduate accreditation of courses at both the Service colleges and JSSC.

Members of SDSC were extensively involved with the Australian College of Defence and Strategic Studies (ACDSS), which provided education and training for senior ADF officers and civilian officials from 1995 to 2000. I was a consultant to the Chiefs of Staff Committee when ACDSS was proposed and, in 1993–94, several SDSC members were in continuous dialogue with the founding Principal, Air Marshal Ray Funnell, and the Directing Staff. Dibb invariably delivered the 'opening address' to each year's intake, and he and Woodman were responsible for the module on defence decision-making and the policy advisory process.

By the early 1990s, several SDSC members began advocating rationalisation of the staff college system and co-location of the Service staff colleges into a single complex together with the JSSC at Weston Creek. In February 1995, Dibb, myself, Horner and Woodman testified 'in camera' to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, which was inquiring into the provision of academic studies and professional military education to ADF officers. We reckoned that between the four of us we had something like 90 years' experience in officer education or professional matters within Defence. We argued, with some slight differences of 'nuance and opinion', that rationalisation and co-location of the various colleges was essential to enable mid-level officers to think about operational and strategic matters in joint terms, that there was much duplication

at the separate colleges with respect to both facilities and curricula, and that a single Australian Defence College (ADC) would be more cost-effective. In 1997–98, Dibb was commissioned by Defence to review the higher defence education requirements of the new ADC, and to submit proposals for its educational objectives and curriculum.

ASIO and the KGB

Some of our work was regarded with deep suspicion by a number of senior Defence and intelligence officials who believed that defence policy and national security should be a secret domain. My own work on US installations in Australia, especially the Pine Gap station, caused the greatest anxiety.

The Australian Security and Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) began watching me soon after I joined SDSC. It started a file on me in April 1966, when I was a second-year undergraduate at ANU and was involved in an anti-Vietnam War demonstration, and thereafter had regularly reported my participation in student protest activities. In 1969, when I was a doctoral student in International Relations, ASIO became concerned about the interest I was taking in the establishment of the CIA's satellite control station at Pine Gap. In December 1968, Robert Cooksey, a lecturer in the Department of Political Science, published an article on Pine Gap in *The Australian Quarterly*, in which he acknowledged my assistance. In April 1969, at the request of Sir Henry Bland, Secretary of the Department of Defence, Sir Charles Spry, the Director-General of ASIO, prepared a report on Cooksey that speculated about our motivations. Spry asked ASIO's ACT office to 'fully identify' me.¹⁶ I assume that Bland was prompted by Raymond Villemarette, the CIA's Chief of Station in Australia. I had not known that the CIA was the US agency in charge of Pine Gap until it was revealed by Brian Toohey in the *Australian Financial Review* in November 1975, a disclosure described by Tange as 'the gravest risk to the nation's security there has ever been', prompting the 'security crisis' in the week preceding the downfall of the Whitlam Government. The CIA, however, was concerned that my research might reveal both its role and the existence of its geostationary SIGINT satellite program

16 National Archives of Australia (NAA), 'Ball, Desmond John: B/78/42, Volume 1', CRS A6119.

(then codenamed Rhyolite). Although I learned about the Rhyolite program in 1977, following the arrest and trials for espionage of Christopher Boyce and Andrew Lee ('the falcon and the snowman'), I was uncertain about whether the Rhyolite program was Pine Gap's only function until Hayden confirmed it for me in April 1981, after he returned from a tour of the facility. Soon after he became Foreign Minister, Hayden publicly affirmed that Pine Gap was a CIA operation.

By February 1975, six months after I had joined SDSC, ASIO had compiled a preliminary list of my 'contacts'; it was noted that 'the list is not comprehensive as there are additional names on which follow-up action is required'.¹⁷ In January and February, 'a usually reliable source' reported to ASIO that one of my 'contacts' whom I was 'cultivating' was Kevin Foley, a former RAAF officer. The 'source' could not 'reconcile Foley's political beliefs with those of Ball'. In fact, Kevin and I were good friends. We had done our PhDs in international relations at the same time, when very few students were working on defence issues, and we shared many social interests. Recently declassified ASIO files suggest that Millar was the source. Other more personal information was reported or usually misreported by Andrew Campbell, who worked for ASIO in Canberra at various times from 1973 to 1979.

It was reported in September 1980 that my office had been searched and bugged, my files and diaries photographed and my telephone tapped by ASIO as part of 'Operation Answer'.¹⁸ As well as in the late 1970s, it probably also happened on other occasions in the 1980s and 1990s. Operation Answer was reportedly mounted under the pretext of 'counterintelligence and counterespionage', but it was really designed to ascertain my 'links with the Canberra press gallery', and in particular whether I was a conduit for leaks of classified Defence documents to Toohey and William Pinwill, both of whom were journalist friends of mine. I was at IISS in London when the story appeared in the *Australian* in September 1980, but O'Neill sent me a telex with the relevant paragraphs excerpted. He said that he was 'treating [the] issue as of [the] utmost gravity for [the] integrity and academic freedom of SDSC', and that he had asked the ANU Vice-Chancellor, Anthony Low, to take the matter up with the head

17 NAA, 'Ball, Desmond John — Miscellaneous Papers', CRS A6119.

18 Richard L'Estrange, 'ASIO Agents Spy on Suspect ANU Scholar', *Australian*, 3 Sep. 1980, p. 2.

of ASIO, Justice Woodward, 'to establish truth or falsity'. I do not know what, if anything, eventuated from this. In May 2004, a former senior officer in ASIO's Counterespionage Branch, who had been involved in spying on me, wrote me a long 'confession'. He noted that 'it had been said that you were a dangerous radical, against the Vietnam War, and a drinker in possession of SIGINT material smuggled outside of a controlled area', but that I was eventually 'rightfully cleared'.

News Weekly, produced by the National Civic Council, reported in 1999 that two SDSC 'directors' had been ASIO sources and that, 'for over two decades, the KGB has regarded SDSC as a key target area in which they can recruit agents of influence and access agents' in Defence and the intelligence community.¹⁹ It said that Lev Sergeyevich Koshlyakov, the energetic KGB Resident in Canberra from 1977 to 1984, was 'well known to key senior Centre staff'. Koshlyakov's cover was Press Attaché, and he would often visit the National Press Club, where I used to imbibe in my drinking days. He was lively, amiable, and reputedly very adept, although I never had a serious conversation with him. *News Weekly* said that Koshlyakov 'frequented' ANU and SDSC, but I do not believe he ever visited the Centre. The only time I recall seeing him outside the Press Club was at a rock concert in front of Old Parliament House in, I think, 1983; Annabel and I were sitting on a blanket when Koshlyakov, in his jeans and leather jacket, joined us for a few minutes.

Two other Soviet officials in this period who did visit both International Relations and SDSC, to attend seminars and to talk with staff members, were Igor Saprykin and Yuri Pavlov. They were Foreign Ministry officers and both later served as Soviet/Russian ambassadors, but several members of the Soviet Affairs Group in ASIO's Counterespionage Branch thought that Saprykin at least was a KGB officer. Dibb got to know them fairly well. He was tasked by his friend, Don Marshall, then the head of ASIO's ACT Regional Office, to cultivate them so as to discover their views on issues concerning the central strategic balance and to discern their real interests and priorities, and possibly persuade one or other of them to defect. I do not believe that I met either of them.

19 'Spy Scandal Throws Spotlight on Intelligence Community', *News Weekly*, 5 Jun. 1999, p. 8.

Protests

On the other hand, we were also accused by political activists of various sorts of being agents of the 'military-industrial complex'. Demonstrations were held in protest against many of our conferences, sometimes directed at the participation of particular ministers or overseas speakers and sometimes at our subject matter. On two occasions, hundreds of protesters tried to physically break up the proceedings, once in the Coombs Theatre in November 1989 when the subject was 'New Technology: Implications for Regional and Australian Security' and the other in the Law Theatre in November 1991 on Australia and space. They were misplaced affairs, given the broad and fundamental nature of the conference agendas and the reputations of the overseas participants as leading critical thinkers, and really quite insipid compared with protests against the Vietnam War or nuclear weapons that I had been involved in organising.

The 1990s

Dibb succeeded me in July 1991 and became the Centre's longest serving head, passing O'Neill's tenure (1971–82) by a few months. Frustrated with the administration associated with the position — which was probably less arduous than in more recent times — but for which I was clearly unsuited, I was also anxious to spend less time wearing a suit and tie and more time fulfilling the research commission of my personal chair.

I began sounding Dibb out about possible SDSC headship in mid-1989. Somewhat to my surprise, for this involved a major career change and a commitment to academia rather than a passing stay, Dibb warmed to the idea. In July 1989, at the National Defence Seminar at Canungra, which was sponsored by Beazley as Minister for Defence and General Peter Gration as Chief of the Defence Force (CDF), I asked Beazley what he thought about the proposition, and he gave it his blessing.

In addition to authorship of the Dibb Review in 1985–86, Dibb had served as head of the National Assessments Staff in JIO, the forerunner of the Office of National Assessments in 1974–78, Deputy Director (Civilian) of the JIO in 1978–81, Director of JIO in 1986–88,

and Deputy Secretary of the Department of Defence responsible for strategic policy and intelligence from 1988 until 1991. He had also had two previous tenures in the H.C. Coombs Building: as a research fellow in the Department of Political Science in the Research School of Social Sciences in 1967–70, and a senior research fellow in International Relations in 1981–84 and then SDSC in 1984–86, where he wrote the prescient study *The Soviet Union: The Incomplete Superpower* and served as deputy head and, oft-times, acting head.

His remarkable background was eloquently described in the references we solicited for his proposed appointment to a special professorship at ANU and headship of SDSC. Tange, commenting on Dibb's 'rare versatility', said that, as Deputy Director (Civilian) and later Director of JIO and Deputy Secretary (Strategy and Intelligence), he had 'done much to redirect the activities of the intelligence community to matters more closely related to the practical defence interests of the country', that on defence policy issues 'there is none inside or outside the Defence Community better equipped at present to understand the issues in contention and the policy choices', and that Dibb had exhibited remarkable 'courage in arguing with the Services about their own business [i.e. weapons acquisition]'. He also, I might add, could not resist using his reference for Dibb to make some caustic remarks about myself, saying that I had evinced 'some imbalance in the choice of subjects of study', including the US facilities in Australia 'which successive American and Australian Governments have deemed it a national interest' to keep secret, and expressing relief that I would no longer be heading SDSC. Gareth Evans said that 'Dr Dibb's intellectual capacities ... are among the most outstanding of the public servants I have encountered in this area of Government'. Gratton commented on Paul's 'intellectual rigour', noting that he had 'a unique blend of academic experience and real life strategic policy making, where theoretically attractive concepts have to be tempered with practical realities' and that he had 'a mature understanding of the capabilities, aspirations and limitations of the armed forces as instruments of national policy'. Admiral Ron Hays, who had just retired from the post of US Commander in Chief, Pacific, said he was 'by American standards, a national asset'. Michael McGwire of the Brookings Institution in Washington D.C. said that he had 'earned a first class [international] reputation'. By 1991 Dibb had written five books, four major government reports, and some 100 chapters and articles in scholarly books and journals.

Dibb's accession to the headship coincided with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. As a result, he had to manage a wholesale transformation in the Centre's research agenda. The post-Cold War issues were more disparate and diffuse. A new core of academic staff was assembled, consisting, in addition to Dibb and myself, of Bell, Horner, Dupont and, since 2001, Huisken and Clive Williams. Bell became a visiting fellow in SDSC in 1990. Truly indefatigable, she was Professor of International Relations at the University of Sussex in 1972–77 and returned to Australia to spend the next 11 years as a senior research fellow in International Relations, pursuing her passion for comprehending and explaining the fundamental power dynamics of the international system. In the decade and a half that Bell spent with SDSC, she has produced more than half a dozen insightful books and monographs, most recently *A World Out of Balance: American Ascendancy and International Politics in the 21st Century* (2003). Horner, a former Army officer with wide command and staff experience, is Australia's leading military historian. He joined the Centre as its Executive Officer in September 1990, transferred to a fellow in 1994, and a Defence-funded post of Professor of Australian Defence History in 1999. Horner won the J.G. Crawford Prize for the best PhD in ANU in 1982. Huisken was a visiting fellow in the Centre in 1976–77, and returned as a senior fellow after more than two decades in the departments of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Defence, where he was responsible for arms control issues and the Australia–US defence relationship.

About half of the Centre's work became devoted to Asia-Pacific security matters. Dibb produced the classic studies of the balance of power in the Asia-Pacific region and the revolution in military affairs (RMA) in Asia, as well as the US–Australia alliance. We developed many of the original practical proposals for regional security cooperation in the early 1990s, a lot of which were quickly adopted by the new Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum (ARF). SDSC was one of the 10 regional strategic studies centres that, in 1992–93, founded the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP), the premier 'second track' organisation in this part of the world, which now has 22 member committees in 22 countries (with the Australian committee served by a secretariat in SDSC),

and that, through its steering committee meetings, study groups and general conferences provides an institutionalised mechanism for continuous activity for promoting regional security cooperation.²⁰

SDSC members also explicated a broader conception of security to encompass economic, environmental and other so-called 'non-traditional' threats in addition to the traditional military focus. Dupont's path-breaking book, *East Asia Imperilled: Transnational Challenges to Security*, analysed over-population, deforestation and pollution, global warming, unregulated population movements, transnational crime, virulent new strains of infectious diseases and a host of other issues that could potentially destabilise East Asia. There was an increasing appreciation of the importance of 'human security' as opposed to state security, as reflected in some of my own work on security issues in the Thailand–Burma borderlands.

SDSC took some hard knocks in the 1990s, although its international reputation remained undinted. It suffered from the vicissitudes of dependence on external funding from external sources, and especially Defence, which, at its height at the beginning of the decade, amounted to nearly half of the SDSC budget. More painfully felt were cuts in the Centre's ANU funding and a shift in Research School priorities, which decimated much of its work on Australian defence. It was severely damaged by the move off-campus to Acton House in 1992. This occurred partly at our instigation, as we had PhD students and visiting fellows spread around several buildings and were desperate to bring everyone together. In practice, we found sub-standard premises and intellectual isolation. In October 1999 we moved to the Law Building, which at least had the great benefit of bringing us back onto the campus and close to the H.C. Coombs Building. There was a palpable air of exuberance when we returned to Coombs in September 2004. It was a real homecoming. We were excited about the prospect of daily encounters with colleagues who we had too rarely seen; the closer interaction has already brought cooperative research initiatives and joint publications between SDSC staff and other members of the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies (RSPAS).

20 Desmond Ball, *The Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific: Its Record and its Prospects*, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No. 139 (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, Oct. 2000).

The return coincided with other major SDSC developments, producing a sense of regeneration. We have accorded a high priority to educating and training a new generation of strategic thinkers, which has involved greatly expanding our PhD program and developing a new Master's program, directed most ably by Robert Ayson, who himself completed his Master of Arts in the Centre in 1988–89. Dibb reached retirement age in October 2004 and became an Emeritus Professor. Hugh White was appointed head in November 2004. He had previously been Deputy Secretary of the Department of Defence (Strategy and Intelligence). He was the primary author of the Government's Defence White Paper published in 2000, and had been the founding Director of the Defence-funded Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) in 2001–04. He was attracted to SDSC by our international reputation, but also by the intellectual freedom enjoyed in academia and the depth and breadth of expertise about our region that prevails in RSPAS.

Strategic and defence studies are not popular areas of academic activity. To some critics, the study of war is macabre. Some of our former colleagues in the Coombs Building used to refer to members of SDSC as 'bomb-fondlers', not always in jest. Work on defence planning is regarded as antithetical to the universalism of scholarship. Policy-relevant work is regarded by some as serving the interests of defence and foreign affairs bureaucracies and military establishments, and supporting state power more generally. Academic papers by colleagues elsewhere in ANU have referred to us as 'prostitutes'. Some critics have argued that SDSC should be moved from ANU to Defence.²¹

However, we could not do our job in Defence. Compared to the Coombs Building, we could expect more luxurious facilities and fabulous resources; but we are, at heart, 'defence intellectuals'. I would simply find it unbearable to work in Defence or under any direct or indirect official instruction. The majority of my colleagues in SDSC have spent large parts of their careers in the higher echelons of Defence or the intelligence agencies, but they come to SDSC because of the freedom to think and write independently, critically and objectively, untrammelled by prevailing government policies or bureaucratic interests. Strategic and defence issues are among the most vital issues of public policy; defence capabilities are also enormously expensive.

21 David Sullivan, 'Professionalism and Australia's Security Intellectuals: Knowledge, Power, Responsibility', *Australian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 33, No. 3, 1998, pp. 421–40.

They warrant intensive and rigorous scrutiny and informed public debate, at least as much as health, economic, welfare, environmental or other national issues. SDSC remains the leading academic centre in Australia capable of providing this systematic scrutiny and informing debate.

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