

Soos die skrywer self verklaar, het hierdie studie met die toekoms te make, maar daar is baie oor die verlede daarin omdat enige skema of plan of oplossing vir 'n probleem min kans op sukses het as dit die lesse van die verlede nie in aanmerking neem nie. Hy begin dus sy studie met 'n filosofiese betoog oor wat is oorlog? en waarvoor is daar weermagte? Hy gee ook 'n baie duidelike antwoord op die laaste vraag en gaan dan voort om die sewe rolle van die Britse Leër oor die afgelope 100 jaar te bespreek, asook om 'n vooruitskouing daaroor in die 1990s te maak. Hierdie sewe rolle is die volgende: strategies; sekerheid; versekering; wet en orde; opvoeding/opleiding; seremonieel; diplomatieke; hulp aan die burgerlike owerheid.

In die tweede hoofstuk word 'n beknopte geskiedenis van die Britse Leër in twee fases nl vanaf 1945-1970 en weer van 1970-1990 weergegee. In daarop-volgende hoofstukke bespreek hy die rol van die Britse Leër in die twintigste eeuse Britse samelewing; die koste verbonde aan die instandhouding van 'n leër; die aard en rol daarvan in die toekoms; die gesindheid van die Britse publiek teenoor hulle leër; tipes leërs wat aanvaarbaar is; die behoud van doeltreffendheid en moreel; die tipiese Britse regimentstelsel; diensvoorwaardes en beroepsgeleenthede; die terugkeer na die burgerlike lewe; die probleme wat met werwing ondervind word; die probleem om personeel te behou en sy voorspelling oor hoe die Britse Leër van die toekoms daar sal uitsien.

Die feit dat die Britse Leër, soos bykans elke hedendaagse veiligheidsmag, wel deeglik deur die gevolge van die ontbinding van die Warskou Verdrag beïnvloed is en daarom besig is met 'n proses van introspeksie en reorganisasie spreek deeglik uit hierdie studie. Daar is egter ook die invloed van die gestadige "sosiale revolusie" as gevolg van veranderende ekonomiese en demografiese faktore wat in aanmerking geneem word. Die skrywer toon duidelik aan watter invloed bg faktore op die rol, samestelling en karakter van die Britse Leër in die laaste dekade van hierdie eeu alreeds het en waarskynlik nog gaan hê. Indien dit sy doel was om die soldaat in te lig oor wat hy/sy in

die toekoms te wagte kan wees, het hy uitmuntend daarin geslaag.

Dit is vanselfsprekend dat sir John Baynes goed bekend is met die militêre milieu en sy agting vir en betrokkenheid by die Britse Leër spreek duidelik uit die werk. Sy objektiwiteit tov gebreke en probleme word egter nie in twyfel getrek nie. Hy het die nodige kwalifikasies, ondervinding en insig om met gesag oor sy onderwerp te kan praat. By die deurlees van hierdie boek raak 'n mens nie slegs bewus van die probleme en uitdagings van die Britse Leër nie, maar kry op die koop toe 'n kykie in die wese van die Britse samelewing en die denke van die skrywer - duidelik 'n lid van die "old school".

Die gevolgtrekkings waartoe die skrywer kom en die aanbevelings wat hy maak, is goed deurdag en behoort van waarde te wees vir betrokkenes by die herstrukturering van die leër in Brittanje. Daarbenewens is dit 'n waardevolle werk vir studente in militêre studies en enigeen met 'n belangstelling in die rol van verdediging en die weermag in die moderne samelewing.

Daar is ongelukkig nie veel wat van toepassing op die Suid-Afrikaanse situasie is nie, buiten die wêreldwye invloed van die einde van die Koue Oorlog en gemeenskaplike ekonomiese probleme. Hoewel die SAW ook 'n fase van afskaling en inskuing beleef het, is die politieke, sosiale en ekonomiese omwentelings wat vir ons voor die deur is, so ingrypend dat daar weinig ooreenkoms met die Britse situasie is.

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PORTUGAL'S WAR IN ANGOLA 1961 - 1974

W.S. Van Der Waals

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Angola, once the jewel in the crown of the Portuguese colonial empire, has

been in the forefront of world news for many years arising from the tragic and bloody civil war that has torn the country apart. Cities and towns have been ravaged, the dead and mutilated bear witness to the savagery of the conflict and the human flotsam of refugees reflects the misery of the uprooted and dispossessed. There was a brief period following the signing of a peace accord when it was hoped that this dreadful saga was coming to an end and the country could begin the slow, albeit painful, process of reconciliation and rebuilding in this once beautiful and prosperous land. These hopes proved to be short-lived and a vicious civil war erupted again.

The events in Angola since 1975 have been well-chronicled by the media and in many publications as the country became a cockpit in the international power struggle. In contrast, what happened prior to the military coup in Portugal has not been fully documented. It is this gap in recorded history that Brig "Kaas" van der Waals has done his best to fill with his well-researched and knowledgeable book "Portugal's War in Angola 1961-1974". The author's career and first-hand experience of the situation provide excellent qualifications for the portrayal of this piece of history.

This book began life as an academic dissertation and this is reflected in the extensive references and bibliography cited. It is interspersed with a wide selection of fine quality photographs and maps which add to the reader's understanding of a complex situation.

In the opening chapter the reader is given an informative potted history of almost five centuries of Portuguese colonialism in Angola, complete with details concerning the geography and population make-up of that country. This sets the scene for the remainder of the book and leads into what could be termed the "Salazar era", the period of iron-fisted rule in metropolitan Portugal and its African provinces.

We are taken briefly through what has been described as the golden era of Portuguese African history in which substantial economic growth and infrastructural de-

velopment took place and Angola became a prized possession. However, this was deceptive and masked the burgeoning resentment and resistance building up against the draconian policies imposed by Lisbon. The various causes are clearly stated.

Harold MacMillan's "winds of change" speech in 1960 presaged a storm that blew through the continent of Africa as the colonial powers progressively abandoned their African possessions with unseemly haste. The exception was Portugal which fought to hold on to its African "provinces" as part of a Lusitanian empire and as a means to bolster its international status.

The fireworks exploded in February and March 1961 and sent a shock wave through the territory and indeed the Southern African region as a whole. There is a graphic account of the wanton carnage and orgy of destruction. Thousands of people were killed, many more became refugees and countless settlers fled back to Portugal. Portuguese military reaction was slow, but with substantial reinforcements the territory initially lost to the insurgents was regained over the next six months. However, race relations in Angola were irreparably damaged and, significantly, Portugal and its empire assumed a high profile in the United Nations, along with South Africa and Rhodesia.

For the next 13 years, Portugal was engaged in a prolonged counter-revolutionary struggle of varying intensity in Angola and progressively in its other overseas territories. We are introduced to movements and leaders whose names are now household words and are given a clear insight into the rivalries between them and the conflicting ideologies and strategies that they pursued. At the same time, the battle between the "hawks" and the "doves" in metropolitan Portugal is depicted which, together with the cumulative effect of fighting revolutionary wars on several fronts with no end in sight, ultimately led to the military coup in Lisbon in 1974. As noted, Portugal did not lose the Angolan conflict on the battlefield but in the hearts and minds of its own citizens and as the military became psychologically exhausted.

Serving professional soldiers, military analysts and historians will find these chapters of considerable interest and value in

assessing the relative successes and failures of Portuguese military strategy and tactics. In particular, the Appendix sets out in precise detail the principles and criteria to be applied in revolutionary and counter-revolutionary warfare.

For the politician, there is incontrovertible

proof that in wars of this nature the solution is eighty per cent political/psychological and only twenty per cent military.

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XMAS EVE

"It's awfully good of you to keep coming round like this, sir."

(Nongqai Dec 1942, p. 1259)