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AN ANALYSIS OF THE CHANGING BASES OF AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN POLICY

by

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INTRODUCTION

Australia is a rather large sparsely populated nation located in the Southwest Pacific Ocean. Although this is a rather simple and brief statement, it suggests a great deal about the nature of Australian foreign policy. Most importantly, it suggests something about the political environment in which Australian statesmen have had to prosecute and protect the national interests of the nation they represent. Specifically, it suggests that Australia, like any other small or non-great power, has had to seek security and well being within an international political system whose major lines and parameters of political activity are established and maintained by the great powers. The foreign policy of any non-great power amounts to little more than a record of their efforts to adjust to great power-inspired changes in these major lines and parameters of political activity. Therefore, in order to fully appreciate the principal thrust of Australian foreign policy, one must first identify the major themes operative in world politics during the period in which Australia has been an active participant in world affairs. Historically, the conduct of world politics during that period was dominated by a single all-pervasive process; the outward

expansion, eventual universalization and subsequent collapse of the European political system.

After the end of the so-called "Dark Ages" in Europe, European society generated a phenomenal burst of creative energy. The geographic confines of Europe soon proved incapable of containing that energy. Eventually it led to the outward expansion of European civilization into foreign and frequently unknown lands.

The expansionary phase of this process lasted for several centuries and involved a continual broadening of the sphere of European political influence. While it would be extremely difficult to determine precisely when that political system became universalized it is accurate to conclude that it reached its zenith during the closing decades of the nineteenth century. During that period the world was overwhelmingly European oriented and all political actions either flowed into or radiated outward from Europe. Europe was the decision-making center for the world, and even the most remote regions felt the impact of the decisions made there. Today it is fashionable to refer to that political system as the "classical state system."[1]

In philosophical orientation, the classical state system was extremely ethnocentric. The men who governed

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[1]See Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations (3rd. ed.; New York: Alfred Knopf, 1964), Parts IV and VII or K. J. Holsti, International Politics (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967), Chapters III and IV.

the system not only believed in the intrinsic superiority of European civilization but also assumed that all non-Europeans shared their belief. After all, had not European civilization proven its superiority by sweeping away all obstacles before it? Operationally, the classical state system was governed by status considerations. Rarely did statesmen make all-out power calculations. The conduct of world politics was a remarkable and orderly process involving the adroit manipulation of the symbols of power through a delicate mechanism known as the balance of power.

The settlement of Australia by Europeans occurred during the later stages of the expansion of the European political system. In addition to providing the framework for the settlement of Australia, the European political system soon was perceived by the men and women who migrated to that land as the guarantor of their security and well-being. Since the land was largely uninhabited at the time of their arrival, and the majority of those primitive indigenes found scavaging in the bush were quickly dispatched with, the Australian settlers transplanted European civilization to this new region in a virtually unadulterated form. They remained historically, politically, culturally and economically tied to Europe. Even though they had traversed ten to twelve thousand miles to reach their destination, the world of the Australian remained European-centered. They continued to look to Europe for inspiration.

remained emotionally linked to Europe, and carried with them the ethnocentric belief in the inherent superiority of European civilization. Subsequently, the Australian people have always considered Australia to be a western nation which, through an accident of geography is located in a near Asian setting, while in reality Australia is geographically an Asian nation which through an accident of history is an outpost of Western civilization. It is not surprising, therefore, that this group of transplanted Englishmen who grew up under the physical and psychological wing of Great Britain came to perceive their fate as being intrinsically linked to the preservation and maintenance of the classical state system, or, more specifically, to the perpetuation of the British Imperium.

Sometime near the end of the Nineteenth Century the European civilization underwent a fundamental change. For a number of reasons, the energy which had carried it outward seems to have reversed its direction and turned inward. Not the least of those reasons was the fact that having become universalized, it was denied an external release for its surplus energy. Irrespective of the causes of that development, it had a profound impact on the conduct of world politics. What occurred in the international field was that the classical state system began to contract.

The most visible indication of the ebbing and subsequent recession of European control over the conduct of world politics was the famous Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902. Through that alliance, Europe's most powerful nation signalled that it was incapable of solving what came to be known as its "Eastern Problem." In an attempt to solve that problem, the British turned over a portion of their role as the "world's policemen" to the Japanese. This was a highly significant development, for in an attempt to redress an imbalance in their political system, the Europeans were forced for the first time to include the power of a non-European nation in the international balance of power.

Much of the history of the first half of the Twentieth Century amounts to little more than a record of the self-destruction resulting from the turning inward of European civilization's surplus energy. In the diplomatic field, the process of self-destruction quickened the pace of contraction of the classical state system and eventually led to its collapse. The outbreak of war in Europe during 1914 was indicative of the fact that the system was no longer capable of effectively adjusting itself. Moreover, during the subsequent four years of warfare, European statesmen were forced to void a basic tenant of the classical state system and engage in all-out power calculations. The real magnitude of the problem was perhaps most dramatically demonstrated by the fact that while Europe had proven that

it was still capable of starting wars it had also proven incapable of finishing them without recourse to external assistance. The inter-war period witnessed valiant efforts on the part of European statesmen to rebuild or regenerate the classical state system. Their inability to solve the world's economic crisis and the persistence and intensification of such problems as Britain's "Eastern Problem" were ample evidence of the futility of their efforts. The resumption of hostilities in Europe during 1939 sounded the death knell for the classical state system. During the period of warfare that followed, European civilization suffered a total collapse, and at the conclusion of hostilities, two nations on the periphery of Europe had inherited control over the principal lines of world politics.

Since the Australians have always perceived themselves as being intrinsically linked to Europe, the history of their performance in the international arena is essentially a record of their response to the process of contraction that has characterized European civilization during the Twentieth Century. Traditionally, they had looked upon the presence of European power in the Far East as a barrier separating them from the overpopulated and impoverished people of Asia whom they have believed were casting covetous eyes at Australia's open spaces and good fortune. It was this belief which has always made the

Australians what can only be termed hyper-sensitive to considerations of their military security.

Consequently, the Australians viewed the contraction of European power with alarm and foreboding. Prior to that development they had shown little interest in foreign affairs, but once the process of contraction set in, Australian foreign policy concerns came to be dominated by what might be termed an outpost syndrome--a pervasive fear that as the tide of European power and influence receded Australia might become an abondoned outpost of European civilization left to confront the uncertainties of an alien and potentially hostile environment unassisted. As a result of that fear, the paramount goal of Australian foreign policy has been singular and enduring--to reverse or at least arrest the process of contraction that has characterized European power during the past seventy-five years.

The purpose of this paper is to historically trace the Australian response to changes in their external environment, evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the foreign policy positions they took in thi regard, and draw some conclusions from that experience relevant to the future conduct of Australian foreign policy. In that process the author will attempt to develop the thesis that the traditional bases of Australian foreign policy will no longer provide the Australian people with a reasonable

expectation of realizing their principal foreign policy objectives in the contemporary world. Specifically, the author will attempt to prove that pursuit of the paramount Australian national purpose, namely, the maintenance of their British cultural heritage in a geographically remote and culturally alien setting can no longer be insured through traditional Australian reliance upon the major centers of Western power to keep any real or perceived Asian threat to Australian security as far removed from Australian shores as possible.

Part I presents a rather broad and far-ranging review of the determinants of pre-World War II Australian attitudes toward foreign affairs. Since it is doubtful whether Australia can be said to have formulated a foreign policy during that period, the review will not focus on foreign policy *per se*. Rather, it will involve an effort to present an analysis of those unique and not so unique qualities of the pre-World War II Australian political setting which later would serve as the basis for the emergence of a truly independent Australian foreign policy. Part II will focus on those World War II developments which led to the Australian Labour Party's formulation of an independent Australian foreign policy. It also will include an analysis of Labour's highly controversial post-war foreign policy. Part III is devoted to an analysis of contemporary Australian foreign policy as formulated by

the Liberal-Country Party. Here, the analysis will focus on the formulation, implementation, and eventual collapse of Australia's "Forward Defense" strategy.

PART I

BACKGROUND TO AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN POLICY

When the student of world politics attempts to analyze the foreign policy of any country, he is immediately confronted by a major dilemma: that of determining where to begin his analysis. Traditionally, historians and foreign policy analysts have sought to resolve this dilemma by arbitrarily selecting some major historical or political development which they consider (to be) a benchmark, and employ that event as a point of departure for their analysis. The World War II period is commonly used as a point of departure in the analysis of Australian foreign policy since it was during that period that Australia undertook the formulation of a truly independent foreign policy.

Like the selection of all such points of departure, however, the choice of the World War II period to commence a study of Australian foreign policy tends to obscure the fact that the foreign policy of any nation is a continuum whose principal themes pre-date any specific event. Part I is presented in recognition of this consideration. It involves an attempt to isolate and evaluate some of the more important influences on Australian foreign policy attitudes prior to World War II. First, a review of the impact of geography on Australian attitudes toward foreign policy will be presented. Following this, the concept of the nation-state will be employed in a two-part analysis of Australia's

capacity to operate effectively in the international arena. This will involve an analysis of both Australian nationalism and the expansion of Australia's legal prerogatives in the foreign policy realm. Finally, reviews of pre-World War II Australian defense policy , Australian policy toward the League of Nations and the diplomacy of Prime Minister William M. Hughes will be presented as examples of the intermittant interest which Australia took in world affairs during that period.

Chapter 1

THE INFLUENCE OF GEOGRAPHY ON AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN POLICY

DISTANCE

A brief look at a world map suggests that the dominant characteristic of Australian geography is its insular nature. The student of world politics can rather quickly recognize that Australia is a small continent surrounded by water located in a "near-Asian" setting. Although linked to the huge Asian land-mass by a long land-bridge of islands, Australia is located far to the south-east of Asia and separated from all other land regions by enormous stretches of nearly empty water. One can quickly conclude that geographically, Australia is one of the most remote and isolated regions of the world.

Such a conclusion does not explain the role geography played in the formation of Australian attitudes toward world affairs. A more comprehensive study of this topic reveals that one's original conclusions concerning Australia's geographic isolation is reinforced and further complicated by more subtle and complex geo-political considerations. While it would be extremely difficult to either categorize or integrate these considerations, a

very useful framework for analyzing the impact of geography on Australian attitudes toward world politics has been suggested by a contemporary Australian geographer. In a recent article on this subject, Mr. A. J. Rose observed that Australia is strategically separated from potential sources of political conflict or military aggression by a three-fold barrier to human movement: by sheer distance, by the sea, and by the Australian desert.[1]

While Mr. Rose suggests that it would be extremely difficult to assess the relative importance of the three dimensions of this barrier to human movement, he concludes that when approached from a strategic perspective, distance has probably had the greatest impact on Australian behavior in the international arena. A brief comparison of the distances involved in travelling between Australian cities and points overseas helps to bring Mr. Rose's observation into closer perspective. Such a comparison would reveal that it is roughly the same distance (measured in air miles) from Sydney to Singapore as it is from Tokyo to New Delhi or London to Teheran; from Melbourne to New Delhi as from Washington to Tierra del Fuego or London to Colombo; from Perth to Djarkata (the shortest distance between a major Australian city and a foreign capital) as from Paris to

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[1] A. J. Rose, "Strategic Geography and the Northern Approaches," Australian Outlook, XIII, no. 4, p. 309.

Istambul; from Darwin (Australia's "northern outpost" of less than twenty thousand inhabitants) to Manila as from Washington to Caracas. Moreover, the distances separating Canberra from London and Washington (the traditional focal points of the Australian perspective on world affairs) are so great--roughly half way around the world--that they simply are not subject to meaningful comparative analysis. It is this type of comparison which led Michael Lindsay to observe that "Australia's neighbors are neighbors on the scale of the outback rather than on the scale of a suburb."[2]

Unfortunately, the findings of this sort of comparative analysis tend to be non-conclusive as well as deceptive. Their true meaning can be properly understood only when one recognizes that still other considerations influenced the impact of distance on Australian attitudes toward world affairs. To begin with, one must remember that the relatively recent development of commercial air transport substantially reduced the time and effort previously required of travel between the above-mentioned points. In an age of moon landings, one too frequently fails to remember that prior to World War II the distance involved in travel between two points on a world map was considerably lengthened by the geographic limitations inherent in travel by steamship.

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[2]Michael Lindsay, in Australian Journal of Politics and History, III (1957), p. 33.

Perhaps of greater importance, however, is a realization that a comparative analysis of the above nature tends to be deceptive unless one possesses some appreciation of Australian demography. A brief review of this consideration reveals that Australia's population and industry are highly concentrated in the large urban centers located in the southeast quadrant of the continent. In other words, what might be termed the "political center" of Australia is located as distant as possible from Asia or any other part of the world except New Zealand. In fact, the "political center" of Australia is located not only far to the south of Asia, but also far to the east. "A line laid due north from Canberra (a point roughly corresponding to the demographic center of Australia) would not touch even the outlying islands of the continent, but make its Asian landfall in Soviet territory near the head of the sea of Okhotsh."[3] Therefore, the use (for purposes of comparative geographic analysis) of Australian cities other than those located in the southeast quadrant of the continent would tend to distort and depreciate the value of the political conclusions one could derive from such an undertaking.

In attempting to assess the actual impact or influence of geographic remoteness on Australian attitudes toward world politics, one engages in an effort from which

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[3]Rose, op. cit., p. 304.

no definitive conclusions can be drawn. A study of Australian history suggests, however, that the most important of these generalizations would include the observation that geographic remoteness heightened the already acute or intense Australian awareness of the ethnic and cultural differences that distinguished them from their nearest neighbors.

Historically and culturally the Australian image of world affairs had (and remained) that of a European centered world. They looked beyond Asia to Europe--especially Great Britain--for inspiration and reassurance as they set about developing a hard and rugged continent. This almost instinctive reaction intensified their sense of remoteness and reinforced their tendency to perceive of themselves as a remote and isolated outpost of European civilization located in a potentially hostile near-Asian setting.

It was this self-perception which for many years determined the focus of Australian interest in world affairs. On the one hand, it not surprisingly encouraged Australian officials to become preoccupied with the politics of the Pacific basin and contiguous regions. The object of that concern, however, was somewhat more surprising. It would appear to have been the preservation of "British civilization" and the presentation of its adulteration by keeping Asian influences as distinct as possible from Australian shores. On the other hand, the same self-perception

encouraged the Australians to contemplate their fate in the event they became an abandoned outpost of European civilization in a near Asian setting. This produced an acute sensitivity among Australian officials with regard to the lines of communication that connected Australia with Europe.

Traditionally the Australians have conceived of themselves as the terminus of a twelve thousand mile sea route that ran through the center of the British Empire--the so-called "Imperial jugular vein." This line of communication was important not only because of the real economic,political and cultural functions it performed, but also because it was viewed as being Australia's ultimate source of rescue. In both a real and perceived sense, this line of communication came to be considered as Australia's "life line." Subsequently, concern for the maintenance and preservation of the life line became a principal pre-occupation of Australian officials, whose attention was quite naturally drawn to its most vulnerable points; principally the Suez passage and to a lesser extent the British presence in India and Malaya. Indeed, it was concern over this life line which in large measure determined that the focal point of Australia's participation in both world wars and much of the cold war would be North Africa and the Middle East.

THE SEA

A review of the second dimension of Mr. Rose's threefold barrier, the seas that surround Australia, suggest that for many years Australia enjoyed the same advantages which Great Britain derived from her insular nature. For both countries, the sea acted as a natural barrier which insulated them from the long centuries of political struggle that characterized those regions immediately contiguous to their shores. Since both Great Britain and Australia could be brought to heel militarily only by a hostile nation that possessed control of the sea, their officials shared a concern to insure that control of the sea surrounding their lands remained either in their hands or those of friendly great powers.

For the Australians this role historically was performed by the British. Like the Americans and the Canadians (to mention only a few) they were the principal beneficiaries of the _Pax Britannica_ forged by the guns of the Royal Navy. During most of their colonial period, when the supremacy of the Royal Navy went virtually unchallenged, the Australians demonstrated little concern for the strategic implications of the seas which encompassed their land. In fact, the ocean was often regarded as a perfect defense by the early Australian settlers. Although the Royal Navy was recognized as separating and protecting them from Asia, its seeming invulnerability fostered a strong sense

of security and remoteness among the Australians in spite of occasional reflections on the facts of geography.

At the close of the nineteenth century, the development of new machines of war, particularly the dreadnaught, and the emergence of modern Asian nations, notably Japan, precipitated a rather drastic decline in the relative power of Great Britain. The differing American and Australian responses to that development were both illustrative and symptomatic of the directions in which those two nations were tending at the time. On the one hand, the Americans, on the threshold of great power status, responded by simply building a fleet of their own to assume the security function the Royal Navy had previously performed for them. In fact, it was only through the use of historical perspective that the Americans belatedly came to appreciate the crucial role the Royal Navy had played in their process of national development. The Australians, on the other hand, lacked the resources necessary to duplicate the American construction of the Great White Fleet. Consequently, their response to the relative decline in British power was characterized by apprehension and a heightened appreciation of the important strategic role which the Royal Navy had in the past and would in the future continue to play in the security of their homeland.

This increased awareness of their ultimate dependence upon the British for defense had a direct and clearly

recognizeable impact on Australian attitudes concerning the nature and conduct of their relations with the external political environment. To begin with, it precipitated a fundamental change in the Australian assessment of the role the ocean played in their defense. With the decline in relative British power, the ocean tended to "cease being perceived as a defensive barrier and with increasing frequency came to be regarded as a broad highway for the approach of possible invaders."[4] Not infrequently, Australian assessments of this development verged on near hysteria and paranoia. Subsequently, a primary preoccupation of Australian officials came to be the continued maintenance of either British or joint Australian-British control over the seas and islands both adjacent to and remote from Australia.

Furthermore, increased awareness of their dependence upon British power encouraged the Australians to think about the sources of British power and the nature of the British Empire. Apprehension over the decline in relative British power led them to the realization that the strength of the Royal Navy in the Pacific Basin was a function of Britain's overall or world wide power position. In turn, this realization provided the basis for what emerged as a

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[4]Norman Harper & David Sissons, Australia and the United Nations (New York: Manhattan Publishing Co., 1959), p. 6.

tendency among many past and contemporary Australian officials to meticulously avoid any behavior that could remotely lead to a further erosion of British power. This belief became so pervasive that many Australians apparently came to assume that whatever was good for Britain was almost automatically and without question good for Australia even if that conclusion occasionally involved the sacrifice of Australian interest.

THE DESERT

In his commentary on the third dimension of his threefold barrier, Mr. Rose concludes that for the purpose of political or strategic analysis the Australian deserts are much larger in scope than a review of Australian rainfall patterns would suggest. This conclusion is based on the observation that for a political scientist a desert can be conceived of as being a function of demography as well as rainfall. Thus, for purposes of political analysis, the term desert can be used to designate those regions which receive less than ten inches of rainfall as well as those where human settlement is slight or absent, for "the greatest barrier to human movement . . . is the lack of human beings."[5]

When approached from this perspective, the scope and breadth of the Australian desert is indeed much greater than that which might be derived from an appreciation of rainfall

[5] Rose, op. cit., p. 305.

patterns. Although the Australian population is widely dispersed, it always has been relatively small (approximately four million in 1914, 8 million in 1940 and 12 million in 1970) and, as previously mentioned, remains concentrated on the southeast fringes of the continent. It occupies the "fertile crescent" from Rockhampton to Adelaide, with an appendage located in the extreme southwest which is separated from the population centers in the East by such a vast desert that it assumes many characteristics of a land island. In short, almost all of Australia except for the southeastern quadrant can be conceived of as desert.

The scope of this desert led the Australians to draw some rather unique strategic and political conclusions about the proper conduct of their external relations. One area in which the impact of the desert was easily recognizeable is that of military strategy. The Australian assessment of the military implications of the desert was characterized by ambivalence. On the one hand, the deserts could be viewed as a military liability. Having at its disposal industrial and manpower resources comparable in size to those of Belgium or the Netherlands, the Australian government has found itself in the awkward position of having to defend an enormous and virtually empty region that fronts on two oceans, a feat which it always has been incapable of performing without external assistance. Therefore, as O. H. K. Spate has observed, "From a military point of view,

Australia would be more efficient if the continent were only a quarter of its actual size, premising that the quarter left was the southeast quadrant."[6] On the other hand, the Australian deserts could be conceived of as a strategic buffer zone shielding the population centers in the southeast from any invasion likely to occur along the vulnerable northern and western coastlines. This interpretation provided the basis for R. H. Greenwood's analysis of the strategic role of the desert during World War II. After study of that subject, he has concluded that:

> Even had the Japanese achieved footholds along the northern Australian coast, the advance toward populous areas would have involved the transport of men and supplies for great distances over a region of naturally scorched earth with very little natural cover for protection against the strafing that would have been concentrated on the few railways and surfaced roads."[7]

The available historical evidence suggests that for a variety of reasons, many having little or nothing to do with strategic considerations, pre-World War II Australian Governments were disposed to favor the latter version of geographic analysis and to utlize the strategic buffer qualities of the desert. While none of this evidence

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[6] O. H. K. Spate, "The Pacific: Some Strategic Considerations," The Commonwealth: Special Problems of the Member Nations in G. Greenwood, ed., Australian Papers, Commonwealth Relations Conference, Lahore, 1954 (Melbourne: Australian Institute of International Affairs), p. 9.

[7] R. H. Greenwood, "The Challenge of Tropical Australia," Pacific Affairs, 1956, p. 130, cited by Rose, loc. cit.

suggests that these Governments actively sought for strategic reasons to discourage economic development or human settlement in the desert, neither is there much indication that they actively supported programs and policies which would have decreased the strategic buffer qualities of the desert. The fate which Darwin (the principal port of entry and the supply link for much of northern and western Australia) experienced during the pre-World War II period was indicative of the importance, or lack thereof, which the Australian Government attached to the desert. On the eve of World War II, Darwin was a small and neglected town of under 2,500 inhabitants, located nearly a thousand miles from the nearest railheads or surfaced highways leading to the population centers in the southeast.

The impact of the desert on Australian attitudes toward foreign affairs also centers on the Australian perception of their nearest neighbors. When they have compared the smallness of their numbers relative to the vast domain over which they exercise sovereignty, the majority of Australians traditionally have been jarred by the contrast between their large tracts of open space and the overcrowded conditions they perceive as characterizing Asia. They tended to focus on population statistics in a manner similar to that which today frequently characterizes the American perception of mainland China. It was this tendency which led many

Australians to view Asia almost exclusively as a source of possible waves of unwanted immigrants.

The desert influenced the Australian perception of their possible friends as well as their possible enemies. It encouraged those Australians who thought about these matters to reverse their perspective on the world and arrive at the somewhat egocentric conclusion that many Asians must be casting covetous eyes on Australia's own good fortune and broad acres. In this process they tended to over-generalize and conclude that their affluence and slender numbers made them the inevitable target of Asian territorial expansion. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Australians tended "to take an apocalyptic view of this matter--the Yellow Peril--and Japan had become the principal horseman of the apocalypse."[8]

It was this sort of reasoning which underlay the Australian apprehension concerning the decline in British power, for the Royal Navy was seen as the principal guarantee that, in the finaly analysis, the horsemen would never ride.

At the risk of engaging in geographic determinism, it is probably fair to state that the geographically inspired tendency of the Australians to reverse their perspective vis-a-vis Asia played a principal, if not a determinant, role in the formulation of Australia's controversial immigration

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[8] C. Hartley Grattan, The United States and the Southwest Pacific (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 136.

policy. The tendency for "nothing (to be) more Asian in Australian eyes than a teeming population"[9] together with an Australian determination to preserve their British heritage were primary motivations behind the creation of the "White Australia" policy--a series of measures which effectively restricted the immigration of non-Europeans.

During its initial phase, the major thrust of the White Australia policy focused almost exclusively on the adequacy of the restrictive measures employed therein. By the inter-war period, however, this focus began to undergo a basic change. No longer was the mere restriction of non-European immigration considered by many Australians to be a satisfactory solution to their problem. The notion that in addition to restricting non-European immigration Australia must take positive steps to populate its open spaces with European immigrants became increasingly popular. It provided the inspiration for several political movements whose various objectives were encompassed by the slogan "populate or perish." It was the sense of urgency implicit in this slogan, a sense of urgency that was reinforced by their experience during World War II, that led the Australians to undertake a vigorous post-war program of intensive recruitment of European immigrants.

In this analysis of the impact of geography on Australian attitudes toward world affairs, one central theme

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[9]Rose, op. cit., p. 309.

emerges as having had a pervasive influence on the Australian appreciation of their relationship with the external political environment. This theme is the extreme sense of isolation that has always characterized Australian behavior in the international arena.

During most of Australia's colonial period this sense of isolation bred a comfortable feeling of separation or insulation from the main currents of world politics and great power conflict. As a consequence, the hallmark of Australian thinking about world affairs during that period was widespread apathy. This apathy was so widespread that it is probably correct to conclude that most Australians held extremely little, if any, interest in foreign affairs. It tended to inhibit any alteration in the kinds of conclusions Australian officials should have drawn from the technological "shrinking" of the world and severely limited their marshalling of public support for even the most limited of diplomatic initiatives.

At the turn of the century, the Australian sense of isolation produced a different set of attitudes toward world affairs. The first signs of Asian nationalism and the ebbing of relative British power were viewed with great apprehension by those Australians concerned with these matters. They began to visualize their future in terms of an abandoned outpost of Western civilization left unassisted, to face the "teeming masses" of Asia. In many cases,

apathy toward world affairs was replaced by periodic xenophobia.

It was this change in attitude which belatedly led the Australians to perceive more accurately the geographic imperatives of their situation. They began to recognize that as a small Pacific power lacking the wherewithall to defend itself against attack from any major power, Australian security could be considered only in relation to the strategy of the great powers. This meant that Australia's security ultimately rested upon the outcome of conflicts between the great powers, and that those conflicts in all likelihood would be fought and resolved in regions distant from Australia's shores. It further meant that in the absence of an international organization possessing power sufficient to control conflict among the great powers, Australian security in the final analysis would depend upon the ability of Australian officials to forge an alliance with one or more friendly great powers.

Geography, history, culture, and constitutional considerations collectively determined that Australia's security arrangements should be worked out within the framework of the British Imperium. In short, the Australians perceived of themselves as having a strong vested interest in the perpetuation of Pax Britannica. Their response to the passing of Pax Britannica stood in marked contrast to that of the other Anglo-Saxon peoples. Whereas the other

Dominions tended to welcome the opportunity this development offered them to vent their rising nationalism and in the United States the ebbing of British power passed either unnoticed or at least without great concern, the Australians sought to arrest the passing of the Pax Britannica by attempting to shore up the British Empire. In an effort to restore British power, or at least curtail its further erosion, the Australians parted company with their fellow Dominions and the United States by choosing to move closer to Britain rather than further afield. Subsequently, Australian statesmen became the principal "colonial" proponents of the dogma associated with the continued maintenance of "the diplomatic unity of the Empire."

In summary, geographic considerations helped make good imperialists out of the Australians. Australian conclusions regarding the imperatives of their geographic situation tended to arrest their nationalism and inhibited the emergence of a truly independent Australian foreign policy until the exigencies of World War II somewhat belatedly forced a rather radical change in Australian attitudes toward world affairs.

Chapter 2

AUSTRALIAN NATIONALISM

NATIONALISM AND THE FEDERATION MOVEMENT

Within the perplexing array of literature on nationalism one can discern one unifying theme: the suggestion that nationalism is a highly enotional feeling which is an expression of values and beliefs commonly shared by an analytically distinct group of people. It is this feeling which forms the basis of a common identity and comprises the core of what is defined as being a nation. Nationalism forges the political concensus which serves as the foundation for the legal authority and power of the state--it legitimizes the power of the state. This implies that in order for a nation-state to function effectively as a political unit, one all important condition must prevail within that unit; the state must be the ultimate focus of all political loyalty.[1]

It is this consideration which serves as a useful mechanism for reviewing the course of Australian nationalism.

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[1]See Hans J. Morganthau, Politics Among Nations 3rd ed.,; New York: Alfred Knopf, 1964), Part III or Charles O. Lerche and Abdul A. Said, Concepts of International Politics (2nd ed.; Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: 1970), Chapters V and VI.

By historically tracing the focus of Australian political loyalties, one can observe that Australian nationalism followed a rather unique and varied course.

The origins of Australian nationalism can be most directly traced to the growth of the Australian labor movement which began to gain momentum during the second half of the nineteenth century. Not surprisingly, the focus of this early nationalism was the attainment of a greater measure of control over domestic Australian economic and political institutions. There was an external or international dimension to this initial focus of Australian nationalism only to the extent that the objectives of the labor movement involved alterations in relations between the Australian colonies and the Imperial authorities in London.

It was not until the late 1870's and 1880's that a foreign dimension was added to the focus of Australian nationalism. Prior to this time, when Pax Britannica was at its zenith, the Australians had shown little, if any, interest in world politics other than to voice a generalized fear of the Yellow Peril. What altered that situation was the first signs of the waning of British dominance in world affairs. The most immediate and important ramification of this development was the belated but intense German search for colonial possessions in the islands to the north and northeast of Australia.

Prior to the German search for colonies in the South-West Pacific, the Australians had shown only limited interest in their geographic setting. As long as British naval supremacy remained unchallenged it was assumed that the Imperial authorities were capable of keeping potentially hostile powers far from the shores of Australia. The thrust of German colonial activity into the South-West Pacific during the 1880's dramatically altered that situation, for not only was Germany openly challenging British supremacy in world affairs but also Germany now hovered alarmingly close to Australia's coastline.

Intensified German colonization of the islands to the north and northeast of Australia encouraged the Australians to increasingly anticipate the designs of the European metropolitan powers. In turn, that tendency inspired the Australians to conceive of the South-West Pacific islands as a possible defense rampart against a foreign menace. Such a rampart would serve both to buttress the British naval barrier which traditionally had separated Australia from the centers of world conflict and to provide Australia with the means to deny foreign powers possession of bases which might be used for launching attacks against the Australian mainland.

At this stage in their national development, however, the Australians lacked both the resources and the authority to independently undertake the creation of a defense rampart

in the islands to their north. Control of and responsibility for the external security of the six Australian colonies was at that time a virtual monopoly of the Imperial authorities in London. Consequently, the Australians sought to achieve their objective within the confines of the British Imperial framework. Specifically, they undertook a concerted effort to press the British authorities to annex all the remaining unclaimed island groups in the South Pacific. For reasons which will be discussed later, the British authorities were not receptive to Australian pressure. In 1883, for example, when the Queensland authorities sought to force the hand of the British by annexing Eastern New Guinea in the name of the Crown, the British refused to ratify that action.

The Australians refused to be discouraged by this development. At an 1883 Australasian Inter-Colonial Convention called to discuss matters of common concern to the six colonies, the Australians persisted in their course. They passed a strong resolution which reiterated their belief:

> That further acquisitions of dominions in the Pacific, south of the Equator by any Foreign Power, would be highly detrimental to the safety and well-being of the British possessions in Australasia and injurious to the interests of the Empire.[2]

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[2]Neville Meaney, "Australia's Foreign Policy: History and Myth," Australian Outlook, XXIII, no. 2., p. 173, citing a resolution passed at the Conference.

During this period of growing divergence between the interests of the Australians and the Imperial authorities, the British government seems to have viewed the Australian reaction to German activity in the South-West Pacific islands as being motivated by excessive alarmism. At any rate, they made it abundantly clear that they would not give in to Australian pressure. Moreover, one suspects that the British informed the Australians that if they were truly concerned about the security of their continent, they might better channel this concern in the direction of improving continental defense preparedness.

Since the local Australian authorities had assumed responsibility for internal security and continental defense after the British garrisons were withdrawn from Australia in 1870, the British authorities were able to shift responsibility for any difficiencies in Australian security arrangements back to the local authorities. In short, the British response to pressure from the Australians amounted to an early version of what is currently termed the "self-help" doctrine.

The most obvious manner in which the Australians could independently strengthen their security was through the rationalization and integration of the disparate and frequently feeble defense programs of the six separate colonies. Although numerous attempts were made to coordinate and increase the defense efforts of the six

colonies, it soon became clear that these undertakings would prove incapable of overcoming the parochialism of the separate colonial governments. Subsequently, the notion that it was necessary for the six colonies to unite in order to insure their own security gained increasing popularity among the Australian colonists. It was this argument which was adopted and became a central theme of the federation movement which dominated Australian political life during the last decade of the nineteenth century. For example, in 1889, when Sir Henry Parkes called the federation movement into existence during his Tenterfield speech, he put forward as his chief argument in support of unification Australia's vulnerability in an uncertain and unpredictable Pacific setting. In other words, the Australian colonists saw "little to unite for and nothing to unite against" until the Germans extended their race for colonies into the South-West Pacific--union then became a "condition of survival to Australians."[3]

When compared with the experience of other nations, the above described episode both conforms with and diverges from the traditional pattern of nationalist movements. Historically the presence of a real or perceived external threat to the security of a given society has tended to unify

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[3]A. Wyatt Tilby, Australia, 1688-1911, (Boston, 1912), p. 208, cited by Amry & Mary B. Vandenbosch, Australia Faces Southeast Asia (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1967), p. 11.

that society and intensify its nationalistic impulses. The Australian response to German colonialization efforts in the South-West Pacific had this effect on Australian society: it stimulated Australian nationalism and contributed to the unification of the six Australian colonies.

The departure of the Australian experience from the traditional pattern of nationalist movements occurred in the realm of motivation. Traditionally, pre-independence nationalist movements have served as the nucleus of a process which has been called the creation of "one nation in one state." Among the many objectives sought by participants in these movements has been the attainment of greater control over the management of their society's external security policy. In general, the leaders of those movements have acted on the belief that some external power was playing too large a role in their security affairs. Consequently, as a part of their overall effort to realize all the political authority and legal prerogatives associated with the concept of sovereignty, they have sought to diminish or even remove the role of external powers in their security affairs.[4]

Departing from this generalized pattern, the Australian nationalists were inspired by the belief that the external power possessing control over the management of their external security was not doing enough--a reversal of

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[4]See Cecil V. Crabb, Jr., The Elephants and The Grass (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1965).

the more familiar relationship. Confederation was viewed by the Australian nationalists not as a means of wresting control over their ultimate security away from the Imperial authorities in London, but merely as a means of enhancing Australia's voice in those Imperial councils which determined British Empire security policy. The Australian nationalists undertook to unify their six colonies not out of a desire to decrease the external guarantee of their security but as a means of further strengthening that guarantee.

This was an extremely significant episode in Australian history for it indicated that the parameters for the expression of Australian nationalism would in large measure be determined by a consideration of Australia's security interests. This meant that as long as Australian interests were perceived as being dependent upon or served by the continuance of the British Imperium, Australian nationalism would have to find expression in a manner which would in no way diminish British power.

This episode further suggests that the goals of the Australian nationalists were much more limited than those which have characterized most contemporary nationalist movements. In general, the goals of the Australian nationalists of the colonial period were limited to the achievement of domestic autonomy and a larger voice in the conduct of Imperial affairs. With the proclamation of the

Commonwealth of Australia those goals were by and large realized. Furthermore, the manner in which those goals were achieved had an important bearing on the course of Australian nationalism. The proclamation of the Commonwealth was the end result of a process in which the Imperial authorities more or less acquiesced in the request from the Australian colonies for increased control over the conduct of their own affairs. In fact, it would appear that the Australian nationalists encountered far more difficulty in convincing their fellow countrymen of the desirability of what they were proposing than they did in obtaining British concurrence to their proposals. Since large increments of sovereignty were peacefully--and even willingly--granted to the Australians by the Imperial authorities in London, Australian society largely bypassed the unifying experience that frequently characterizes political movements which endure long periods of struggle and hardship before eventually achieving their objectives.

During the years between 1901 and 1941, Australian nationalism was something of an enigma. Throughout much of that period it was often dormant or arrested. In general, it seems to have risen in intensity only to later ebb.

THE IMPACT OF WORLD WAR I ON AUSTRALIAN NATIONALISM

It would appear that Australian nationalism reached its apex in intensity during the World War I era. Overall, the war had a rather peculiar impact on the course of

Australian nationalism since it released political emotions which simultaneously strengthened and weakened the Australian nationalist impulse. On the one hand, the war experience tended to unify the country and intensify Australian nationalism. For example, it served as a catalyst for an increase in the power and authority of the federal government at the expense of the state governments--a process which tends to characterize all democratic federations during periods of national crisis.

Of perhaps greater importance, however, was the contribution the war experience made to the growth of a distinct Australian national identity. Unlike the Americans, the Australian people never suffered a great psychological dissillusionment with the outcome of the war. They emerged from the war with "a strong and enduring conviction that Australia had come of age on the battlefields."[5] While the participation of Australia's statesmen in the war effort provided an important stimulus to national maturation, it was pride in the performance and exploits of the Australian fighting men which proved a particularly strong and enduring inheritance. The focus of this pride was the exploits of the Australian armed forces during the infamous and ill-fated Allied landings at Gallipoli. As Hartley Grattan has observed, the Australians borrowed from the capacity of their British

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[5]C. Hartley Grattan, A History of the Southwest Pacific Since 1900 (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1963), p. 48.

cousins to "extract glory out of a single defeat, (and) built the Gallipoli experience into a prime proof of their distinction as a people."[6] Testimony to the enduring emotional importance of that event is readily recognizable in the almost religious qualities which surround the annual commemoration of the day on which the Australian forces were put ashore at Gallipoli (ANZAC Day). The celebration of no other Australian national holiday comes near to arousing the nationalist fever that is to this day associated with and reserved for ANZAC Day.

On the other hand, the war experience also triggered developments which tended to weaken the Australian nationalist impulse. Foremost among those developments was the so called conscription campaigns that dominated Australian politics during 1916 and 1917. At issue in the conscription campaigns was the determination of the manner in which the Australian contribution should be made to the Imperial war effort.

At the outbreak of hostilities the policy followed by the Australian Government with regard to conscription prescribed that overseas service for Australian troops was to be on a voluntary basis (a policy having strong socio-political roots in Australian history) while conscription was permissible for continental defense purposes (a policy which had met with a surprising amount of resistance from the

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[6]Ibid.

highly individualistic Australian populace). During 1916 the Government's conscription policy came under attack from a most unexpected source--the Labourite Prime Minister William M. Hughes.

Politically Hughes was a product of the Australian labor movement, a movement which has been a well-spring of Australian nationalism. During its early period the world outlook of the participants in that movement was characterized by an inclination toward isolationism. What little interest they did express in the conduct of world affairs was reserved for support of policies designed both to shield the Australian working class from exploitation by the British "capitalists"--particularly the London bankers--and to prevent their conscription into "capitalist wars." In short, the use of conscription for overseas service by Australian troops was an anathema to orthodox labor doctrines.

Having been Prime Minister only a relatively short period of time, Hughes surprisingly broke with that basic doctrine of his own party. In order to understand why he decided upon that course of action, one must comprehend something of the nature of this fascinating man. Apparently, Hughes was essentially a Fabian collectivist. In political style he tended to be extremely combative, assertive, autocratic and excessively dogmatic. Above all else, however, he was a nationalist and an imperialist. In a manner similar to many of the more moderate members of his party,

Hughes drew a sharp dividing line between domestic and foreign affairs.

During 1916 Hughes went to England as Australia's Prime Minister to participate first hand in the war. While in England, he correctly recognized that the hostilities had degenerated into a war of attrition which ultimately would be won by whichever side proved capable of out-lasting the other in its capacity to muster the manpower and material resources necessary to continue the costly trench warfare.

Moreover, during his stay in England, Hughes--the brusque and outspoken "colonial"--soon became the darling of the British jingoists who saw in him an opportune ally. This was apparently a particularly flattering experience for Hughes. At any rate, whatever his views were with regard to the war prior to his departure for England, he returned to Australia a firm believer in the ethnological interpretation of the war. According to Hughes what was at stake in the war was not the redrawing of some distant boundary or expansion of great power spheres of influence but the very survival of that most revered of all institutions, British civilization in its entirety.

Hughes returned to Australia oonvinced that Australia's contribution to the Imperial war effort had to be increased. The most obvious obstacle to such an undertaking was the restriction barring conscription as a means of recruiting Australian troops for overseas service.

Subsequently, Hughes set about formulating a political strategy whereby he hoped to convince the Australian people of the need to institute conscription for overseas service by their armed forces. Sensing that the federal Parliament, particularly the more radical members of his own party, would reject any such proposal, and being a labor populist by political inclination, Hughes elected to take his case directly to the people--not once, but twice--in the form of a national referendum.

The ensuing political battle that erupted over the conscription issue was an extremely traumatic experience for Australia. What should have been a debate conducted in a dignified and dispassionate manner rapidly degenerated into an emotion-laden political brawl which dishonored Australia and seriously divided the Australian people. In so doing, it fragmented the focus of Australian loyalties and served to disorient the nationalist movement.

Viewed in retrospect, Hughes must bear primary responsibility for that development. The issue he had raised "was of the highest character, a question of public policy which should have been decided in the calmest atmosphere manageable."[7] His decision to raise the conscription issue in wartime and secure its acceptance through a populist campaign probably made that impossible.

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[7]Ibid., p. 56.

Moreover, Hughes' actions eventually took on the characteristics of a personal crusade. In an all-out effort to achieve his goal Hughes passed up no political trick. He systematically contributed to the general degeneration of the political debate over the conscription issue. One of his more damaging tactics was to repeatedly equate his position with "loyalty." He argued that Australian adoption of conscription for overseas service was necessary to prove Australian allegiance to the Crown in particular and British civilization in general. Another of his favorite arguments employed the "defense of the center of the Empire" thesis, which he used to suggest that those who opposed conscription for overseas service were either pacifists or willing to allow Australia to remain unarmed during a time of national peril.

Although these arguments were extremely powerful and seductive, they were aimed more at the hearts than at the minds of the Australian people. The real issue in question during the debate was not the immediate defense of Australia, for which conscription was already permissible, nor allegiance to the Crown, but the determination of the size and nature of the Australian contribution to Imperial defense. That was an issue which should not have been raised in public debate or national referendum during wartime.

In the end, the Australian electorate twice rejected Hughes' proposals. In this process, however, Hughes had

virtually shattered the Australian Labour Party (ALP). He was stripped of ALP support, and "crossed the aisle" to lead a conservative government.

THE IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON AUSTRALIAN NATIONALISM

If we can conclude that the intensity of Australian nationalism reached its apex during the World War I period, we can also conclude that it plummeted to its nadir during the years of the Great Depression. Following the fall of Hughes from the Prime Ministership in 1923, Australian nationalism seems to have lapsed into a period of dormancy and became obscured by the general apathy that characterized the political life of Australia during the 1920's. The coming of the depression brought this already weak Australian nationalist impulse under further severe strain. The impact of that strain was most noticeable in the area of federal-state relations, an area in which inherent political friction was greatly exacerbated and magnified by depression-generated tensions.

At the outset of the depression Australia was dependent on world trade for the sale of the majority of its crucial primary products and on the international money markets as its primary source of vital investment capital. In other words, the structure of the Australian economy was particularly sensitive and vulnerable to deflationary changes in the world economy. As the depression gained momentum the

basic exports of the country suffered precipitate price declines while at the same time it became very difficult to borrow money in London. In short, the two principal pillars of the Australian economy were simultaneously shaken.

The political tensions generated by that development served to magnify both the tenuous nature of the Australian nationalist impulse and the provincialism of Australian politics. The source of much of the tension was a controversy over what monetary and fiscal policies should be implemented by the federal government as a means of combating the impact of the depression. Numerous "plans" for achieving that purpose were set forth by different political interest groups in Australia. In the end, however, the conservative federal government chose to rely upon the classical deflationary practices of cutting government spending and balancing the budget.

The approach chosen by the federal government ran directly counter to the "plan" proposed by Mr. J. T. Lang, the ALP Premier of New South Wales. Lang was an eclectic socialist whose political style was reminiscent of W. M. Hughes. At any rate, Lang interpreted the course being pursued by the federal government as a capitulation to an assault on the standard of living of the Australian working class by the London bankers working hand in hand with the Australian bankers. Therefore, he took a stand in favor of economic remedies that involved no cut in wages or social security benefits. He opposed deflationary budget cutting

and made the bankers, or, more specifically, interest rates, the focus of economic adjustment. His plan contained three major proposals: 1) Australian governments should pay no more interest to British bankholders until the rate was reduced to 3%; 2) interest on all domestic debts should be reduced to 3%, and 3) a "goods standard" currency for Australia should replace the gold standard.[8] In effect what Lang was proposing was to shift the burden of economic retrenchment away from the Australian working class toward the "capitalist" bankers.

The political orientation of Lang's plan was anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist. Moreoever, it was the most extreme form of Australian radicalism to find expression at the government level during the depression. Unfortunately, the episode did not end with the federal governments' rejection of Lang's proposal. Having failed to convince the federal government of the merits of his plan, Lang went ahead with it without the approval of the federal authorities. He decided that the New South Wales' government would go it alone and implement his plan. Subsequently, he repudiated the interest owed to holders of New South Wales bonds.

That action amounted to a direct and fundamental challenge by a state government to the constitutional supremacy and legal authority of the federal government. It was a challenge which wasn't rebuffed until the federal

[8]Ibid., p. 100.

authorities were forced to sue the New South Wales government for recovery of monies owed to holders of its bonds. Even that action, however, did not bring the episode to a close, for Lang remained undaunted by the set-back to his "plan." He shortly renewed his challenge to the authority of the federal government. Having been unable to defy the federal government, Lang subsequently undertook a scheme designed to greatly increase his ability to influence the policies of the federal government. To achieve this end, he attempted to fundamentally alter the structure of the Australian Labour Party.

Following the political debacle the ALP experienced during the conscription compaigns, the conservatives dominated federal Australian politics for over a decade. During most of that period, the ALP was the opposition only in the sense that it was the only available party to which voters could turn as an alternative. Not only were the political platforms of the party unattractive, but the party leadership also was divided by personal and idealogical animosities. In the late 1920's, however the ALP had moderated its platform, expounded a vision of a desirable social order attractive to large segments of the Australian electorate, and had assumed the characteristics of a true opposition party.

Within the rapidly deteriorating economic situation of 1929, the ALP received a heavy protest vote which

propelled it into office under the leadership of James Scullin. The ALP's victory, however, was a tenuous one. While the ALP won control of the House of Representatives, control of the Senate remained in the hands of the conservatives. Moreover, both the temper of ALP politics and the magnitude of the problems confronting the federal government tended to tarnish the ALP's victory.

At the time of its victory, the ALP demonstrated little of the party orthodoxy necessary to insure the cohesiveness and discipline of Labour parliamentarians. Having won a protest election victory, the ALP leadership was in a poor position to establish the legitimacy of the policies it proposed to implement even in the minds of its own people. Let alone the people outside the government. Once in office its problems were further exacerbated by the fact that it found itself in the unenviable position of being the focus and target of the unprecedented political punishment generated by the depression.

Therefore, although the ALP won the federal election of 1929, it found itself in an extremely delicate political position. Sensing the delicacy and vulnerability of the Scullin Government's position, Lang decided to follow through on a political maneuver he had begun during the battle over interest rates. During that battle, Lang insisted that the ALP members of the federal parliament from New South Wales owed their allegiances not to the

federal ALP caucus, but to the New South Wales ALP directorate. Subsequently, a group of ALP federal parliamentarians who owed their political fortunes and allegiances to Lang were expelled from the federal party organization and set up a separate federal caucus under the leadership of John (Jack) Beasley. That situation persisted while the Scullin Government struggled with the continuing deterioration of the Australian economy.

Eventually, the Scullin Government adopted an economic recovery plan (known as the Premier's Plan) which was more moderate than Lang's plan, but one to which the Lang Labour caucus grudgingly lent its necessary support. As time wore on, however, and the economic situation did not recover, Lang and his followers grew increasingly dissatisfied with the economic policies of the Scullin Government. In 1931, Lang decided it was time to make his next move. He had the Lang Labour caucus present the Scullin Government with what amounted to an ultimatum. Either the Scullin Government would adopt policies more to his liking, or the Lang Labour caucus would withhold its support from it.

This amounted to still another serious assault on the supremacy and authority of the Federal Government, for what Lang was attempting to do was once again force the Federal Government to adopt policies formulated and supported by a single state government. Having failed to

achieve his objectives through defiance of the federal government, Lang sought to realize them by placing himself in a position from which he hoped to dictate to the federal government.

Surprisingly Lang and his followers made good on their threat. When the Scullin Government failed to come to terms, they withheld their support for the Government and forced the ALP out of office. It marked the only occasion in Australian history in which labor votes forced a labor government out of office and was a development which earned Mr. Beasley the well deserved nickname of "Stabber Jack."

In the election precipitated by the "stabbing in the back" of the Scullin Government, the ALP experienced still another political disaster from which it did not recover until 1941 when the Lang Labour group was finally brought back into the ALP fold. The Scullin Government was replaced by a conservative government led by still another laborite who had "crossed the aisle": Mr. Joseph A. Lyons.

During the period in which the federal government was grappling with the problems raised by Lang and his followers, there arose yet another challenge to federal supremacy and authority. This time, the challenge came from a Western Australian political movement which proposed to settle once and for all the vexing problem of federal/state relations.

The subject of federal/state relations had always been a politically sensitive issue in Western Australia. The source of that sensitivity was the belief held by many Western Australians that many of their economic troubles stemmed from the disabilities and inequities they suffered at the time of federation. Behind this belief lay the fear that in joining the federation, Western Australia had invited political domination and economic exploitation from the more populous and wealthy states located far to its east. While that fear had made Western Australia the most hesitant of the six colonies which eventually formed the federation, it had tended to fade into dormancy after the proclamation of the Commonwealth.

As the impact of the depression bore down on the predominantly agrarian economy of Western Australia, however, that latent fear surfaced and became the motivating force of an expanding political movement which proposed to solve Western Australia's troubles through major constitutional surgery: it proposed that Western Australia secede from the Commonwealth and resume the status of a separate self-governing British colony.

Encouraged by Lang's attempt to "go it alone" in New South Wales and the failure of the Australian economy to recover, the movement became surprisingly popular among the Western Australians. Eventually, the issue raised by the secession movement was taken to the electorate in the form

of a referendum. On April 8, 1933, to the great astonishment of many of their fellow countrymen, the Western Australians elected by a margin of 68,000 votes to secede from the Commonwealth of Australia.

This was a challenge of a different nature to the supremacy and authority of the federal government. It was a constitutional challenge whose outcome might well have determined the very survival of Australia as a single political unit. The response of the federal government to this challenge involved an effort to rebut and belittle the action taken by the Western Australians. However, that effort met with only limited success. Only after the issue was taken to the Imperial authorities where the Privy Council advised that for constitutional reasons it couldn't intervene in the dispute, did the secession movement collapse.

Still another indication of the shallowness of the Australian nationalist impulse during the inter-war years was the extent to which the persistent Australian national purpose--"national development" (meaning economic development)--was realized during the period. Since the proclamation of the Commonwealth, a principal focus of this pursuit was the unification of the differently gauged state railway systems. That goal was viewed as the great creative task for the federal government. Unfortunately, the task was never seriously tackled, for national development was a

"cooperative enterprise, and though the Commonwealth...made good its claim to leadership--the success of the venture was vitally conditioned by state performance,"[9] and the state governments simply lacked the continental vision necessary to implement and complete such an undertaking as national development.

Another task over which the federal government had direct responsibility was the construction of the federal capital at Canberra. For an excessively long period of time that project was delayed with the consequence that an important visible symbol of national identity was denied the Australian people for far too long. Although work on the capital began shortly after federation, it was delayed by World War I, and it was not until 1927 that the Commonwealth Parliament for the first time opened in Canberra. The bureaucracy, however, was only very slowly transferred to the bush capital. Even after World War II, Australia was still being governed from three cities--Melbourne, Sydney, and Canberra.

From this brief review of the early course of Australian nationalism, one observes that pre-World War II Australia was a country still grappling with the serious problems involved in the process of nation-building. The nature of those problems was most clearly demonstrated by

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[9]Gordon Greenwood, Australia: A Social and Political History (Sydney, 1959), p. 245.

the failure of the federal government to emerge as the ultimate focal point of political loyalties and action. Until well after World War II, state rather than national loyalties still formed the central core of Australian society and the state governments remained the principal forums of political activity. According to Hartley Grattan:

> . . . it was still very noticeable in the late 1930's that here was a country without a focus. It was rather a nation with six foci, among which Sydney and Melbourne jousted for first place, a nation acutely beset by regionalism . . . . Most Australians it seemed, knew little of Australia beyond their parishes . . . . In spite of the fact that the favorite political gambit of the intellectuals was denunciation of the state parliaments as nests of bumbling mediocrities with parish pump outlooks, the people thought differently. As the results of referenda showed, most voters were against reducing state power by increasing federal powers.[10]

A combination of factors seems to have caused that situation to persist for many years and inhibit the emergence of an Australian identity which was national in scope. As the Lang Labour and West Australian secession movements indicated, problems related to the nature of Australian federalism remained unresolved throughout much of this period. Central to those problems was the constitutional requirement that federal economic polity be implemented through the state governments, thereby giving the states the power to influence the completion of national economic programs. It was this continuing constitutional problem which moved Amry and Mary Vanderbosch to note that:

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[10]Grattan, op. cit., p. 118.

> Australia represents a strange political anomaly. While its people desire a highly developed welfare state, its constitution does not give the Commonwealth government power to enact sufficient social and economic controls to bring it about, and obviously the states cannot create a broad socialization of economic life. (Yet) the people have been reluctant to increase the power of central government, as the defeat of numerous proposals to amend the constitution has shown.[11]

Furthermore, geography also played an important role in perpetuating the provincialism and parochialism of Australian politics. Because the country is sparsely populated with vast regions remaining practically unpopulated, life remained decentralized for an extended period of time. Moreover, the political life of each state is dominated by a large city. Since well over half of the Australian population resided (and still reside) in the six state capitals, "All this tends to make the Commonwealth a federation of city states,"[12] and thereby frustrate the continental ideal and vision expounded by the more sophisticated Australian nationalists.

Last but not least, the nature of pre-World War II labor politics also undoubtedly played an important role in thwarting the growth of Australian nationalism. As suggested earlier, the Australian labor movement historically has been a well-spring of Australian nationalism. During much of the inter-war period, however, the labor movement was

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[11] Vandenbosch, op. cit., p. 16.

[12] Ibid.

constantly beset by internal conflict and turbulence. As a current ALP leader has observed,

> The first thing to note about Labour Party's foreign policy, and indeed about any aspect of the Party's policy, is that it is an endless open debate. It is doubtful if the Labour Movement after 1917 was a movement at all. It became an ideological battleground--Irish nationalism, IWW, Communism, Socialism, pure industrial unionism, industrial groups, all certainly more intent on destroying one another than the alleged political opponents."[13]

That situation not only robbed Australia of a "loyal opposition" but also served to retard the growth of a distinctly national Australian identity.

All this suggests that prior to World War II the growth and expression of Australian nationalism was an extremely internalized process, whereas the growth of nationalism among many other peoples has involved the projection of a portion of their political energies and emotions into the international arena. In the Australian case, concern over security considerations seems to have caused the Australian nationalist impulse to be deflected inward onto an already weak socio-political fabric. Perhaps that consideration partially accounts for the turbulence which has characterized Australian domestic politics and the shrillness of Australian nationalism once it finally found an external outlet during World War II.

It is clear then that prior to World War II, Australian political life was characterized by many of those

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[13]Kim E. Beazley, "Labour and Foreign Policy," Australian Outlook, XX, no. 2, p. 129.

qualities currently associated with the political life of the so-called "newly emerging nations." These similarities suggest that like many of these newer participants in world affairs, pre-World War II Australia fulfilled the legal requirements associated with the concept of the state long before it demonstrated those qualities associated with the notion of nationhood.

Chapter 3

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

THE IMPACT OF WORLD WAR I ON BRITISH EMPIRE RELATIONS

No review of the background of Australian foreign policy would be complete without a discussion of the expansion of Australia's constitutional or legal prerogatives in the field of foreign policy. Such a review involves a discussion of the role Australia played in the evolution of British Imperial relations: a process characterized by a series of overlapping and interdependent relationships through which the Imperial authorities slowly but deftly transferred sovereignty over the Dominions to the local authorities.

As long as Great Britain maintained direct control over her Dominions, the formulation of independent foreign policies by these Dominions was both superfluous and legally impossible. Only after the details of domestic self-government were agreed upon during the latter half of the nineteenth century could the Dominions even begin to contemplate separate foreign policies. As late as the turn of the century, however, the British had demonstrated a strong reluctance to relinquish their monopoly over the

foreign relations of their Empire. As late as the Imperial Conference of 1911, the British served notice on the self-governing Dominions that they were not prepared to relinquish monopoly control over foreign policy. At that time, British Prime Minister Herbert H. Asquith flatly declared that the responsibility of the Imperial Government for the conclusion of treaties, the maintenance of peace, and the declaration of war were powers which simply "cannot be shared."[1] In addition, he rejected a proposal for the creation of an Imperial Council of States on which all the Dominions would be represented because it would be "fatal to the very fundamental conditions on which our Empire has been built and carried on."[2] While the Imperial authorities apparently recognized that nationalism was on the rise in the Dominions, and although they were not impervious to foreign policy suggestions from the Dominions, they refused to give in to pressure from the Dominions for a larger voice in governance of the Empire. It is clear there were definite limits on the amount of sovereignty the British were willing to grant at that time to their Dominions.

Although the Australians shared feelings of inadequacy with the other Dominions with regard to the

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[1]Asquith in A. B. Keith, ed., Selected Speeches and Documents on British Colonial Policy (London: Oxford University Press, 1918), I, p. 303, cited by Norman Harper & David Sissons, Australia and the United Nations (New York: Manhattan Publishing Co., 1959), p. 7.

[2]Ibid.

conduct of Imperial relations, their feelings in that regard were more restrained. While Australian nationalism was definitely on the rise during that period, it was checked by a firm determination to retain at all costs the essentially British character of the Australian nation. According to one prominent Australian newspaper, that determination was an expression of the paramount Australian national purpose.

> With us it is not a mere question of sentimental or racial prejudice, but the grave question of whether we shall preserve our existence as Anglo-Saxon people, and prevent the Australian continent from being swarmed over by races that do not assimilate, but might in their multitudes alter or sweep away the institutions we are so carefully building up for ourselves and our children."[3]

What the Australians and the other self-governing Dominions sought during the pre-World War I era was not necessarily greater independence _from_ Great Britain, but greater influence and freedom of action _within_ the framework of a close, collaborative relationship with the British. They sought greater access to the Imperial decision-making councils rather than to escape from a closed Imperial system. Although the Dominions wanted responsibilities, they did not want unlimited responsibilities.

World War I marked a major turning point in the course of Imperial relations. Most important for purposes of this discussion, it served as the catalyst which hastened

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[3] _Sydney Morning Herald_, cited in Harper and Sissons, _loc. cit._

the transfer of even larger increments of sovereignty from the Colonial Office to the self-governing Dominions.

When war broke out in Europe during 1914, Australia became a belligerent because it was British. Australia entered the war and contributed to the Imperial war effort because Sir Edmond Grey, speaking for the Empire as a unit, had declared Great Britain to be at war. In general Australians accepted their fate without protest. Always acutely aware of their ultimate dependence upon Great Britain for security, they possessed a deep sense of obligation toward the British. Both emotional and security requirements led the Australians to the conclusion that they had a duty to contribute to Imperial defense through active and full participation in British wars. Thus, Australian Prime Minister Andrew Fisher spoke for the vast majority of his fellow countrymen when, shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, he pledged Australian support "to the last man, to the last shilling,"[4] for the British war effort. They were words which flowed from a feeling of patriotic obligation rather than any understanding of world politics or the nature of the conflict unfolding in Europe.

As the war became extended both in time and cost, however, Australia and the other self-governing Dominions grew increasingly restive over their inability to participate

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[4]C. Hartley Grattan, A History of the Southwest Pacific Since 1900 (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1963), p. 41.

in the decisions governing the course of a collective effort to which they were making substantial contributions. Arriving in London during 1916 to become Australian High Commissioner, Andrew Fisher, lately Prime Minister and a former Scottish emigre to Australia, verbalized this latter day version of the "taxation without representation" complaint against the British when he declared:

> If I had stayed in Scotland, I should have been able to heckle my member (of Parliament) on questions of Imperial policy, and to vote for or against him on that ground. I went to Australia. I have been Prime Minister. But all the time I have had no say whatever about Imperial policy, no say whatever."[5]

In actual practice the self governing Dominions could and did on occasion seek to move the Imperial authorities on foreign policy through the use of pressure designed to promote their own interests. Nevertheless, the decisions of the Imperial authorities remained binding whether the Dominions concurred in them or not. Therefore, as the cost of their contributions to the Imperial war effort continued to mount, the Dominions increasingly viewed their essentially petitionary relationship to the Imperial authorities as an impediment which blocked their legitimate aspirations for fuller participation in the governance of the Empire.

Eventually the political dynamics of World War I served to remove many impediments to the realization by the Dominions of their aspirations. Participation by the

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[5]Ibid., p. 43.

Dominions in the war tended to increase their self-confidence, self-consciousness and political maturity. Generally, it strengthened their nationalism and their desire to be more fully the masters of their own fate. In addition the basic nature of the conflict--a war of attrition--provided the Dominions with the political leverage needed to gain easier access to Imperial decision-making councils. As the Imperial authorities were forced to increase their recourse to the manpower and material resources of the Dominions, they soon found themselves confronted by a debt which they eventually repaid by inviting the Dominions to share more fully in the direction of the Empire.

The breakthrough in Imperial-Dominion relations occurred in 1917, when Lloyd George established an Imperial War Cabinet--a device until then constitutionally unknown to the British political system. According to Canadian Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden that arrangement enabled the Dominions to meet on "terms of equality under the presidency of the First Minister of the United Kingdom; we meet . . . as equals: he is 'primus inter pares.'"[6] In substance the arrangement provided for a sort of top-level directorate designed to govern the Empire's war effort. Operationally, its functions were executive and not merely

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[6]Ibid., p. 60.

consultative in nature. It was clearly a reversal of Asquith's 1911 position.

The establishment of the Imperial War Cabinet suited Australian aspirations well and was enthusiastically received by Prime Minister Hughes. To those Australians who were concerned about the conduct of world politics, it appeared that they had finally achieved a long sought voice in governing the Empire. Hughes, ever the political activist, eagerly looked forward to this expansion of Dominion authority and was of the disposition to take full advantage of the opportunities therein.

THE POST-WAR SETTLEMENT

The next major development in the constitutional evolution of the British Empire was largely a response to a series of proposals set forth by Sir Robert Borden. In brief, what Borden proposed was that the principle of shared Imperial authority incorporated in the Imperial War Cabinet should support separate Dominion representation at the Paris Peace Conference (the Dominions to be members of the British Empire Delegation), separate Dominion signature of the peace treaty, and individual Dominion membership in the League of Nations. Somewhat surprisingly, all of Borden's proposals were accepted. Therefore, by the time the League of Nations began to function there was little to distinguish the Dominions from fully sovereign states.

The Australian response to this series of events was rather mixed. Hughes, enthusiastically supported Borden's proposals and was again fully prepared to take complete advantage of the new status which would be conferred on the Dominions. During his colorful performance at the Paris Peace Conference, however, Hughes demonstrated that he was ever mindful of the dangers inherent in the direction in which the Empire was moving. Although his performance was characterized by vigor, intransigence and enormous personal popularity with the British press, Hughes never challeneged the Imperial axiom concerning the diplomatic unity of the Empire nor did he question the principle that differences of opinion within the Empire should be hammered out within the British Empire Delegation, thereby insuring that a common Empire position was presented at all great power and plenary sessions of the Conference. In short, Hughes staunchly supported the idea that the Empire should continue to "speak with one voice."

The response in Australia to Borden's proposals was much more subdued. Hughes' own cabinet expressed strong reservations, as did many Australians outside the government, about the direction in which the Empire seemed to be tending. In short, there were strong indications in Australia that Hughes' thinking was further advanced than that of many of his countrymen. While Hughes seems to have believed that Borden's proposal would actually increase the power and prestige of the British Empire--by giving the Empire more

votes at the Paris Peace Conference and in the League of Nations--many of his countrymen were restive about that development and fearful over where even those limited steps might lead. Thoughtful Empire statesmen feared that with greater Dominion autonomy in foreign affairs it would be difficult to maintain a common Empire foreign policy, without which it was believed the British Commonwealth and hence Australian security might disintegrate. It is important to note, however, that central to both of these responses was the concern over how implementation of Borden's proposals would effect the ability of the Imperial authorities to insure Australian security.

By the end of the Paris Peace Conference it was becoming increasingly clear that a disparity was developing between the Australian (and New Zealand) notion of enhanced Dominion status and the goals being pursued by the other Dominions. While Hughes and his followers were more than willing to support proposals designed to increase the status and responsibilities of the Dominions <u>within</u> the Empire, they were not prepared to go beyond that point. Although they supported Borden's proposals out of a belief that they would concurrently expand Dominion autonomy and strengthen the British Empire, they apparently failed to understand the nature and strength of nationalism in South Africa, Canada, and Ireland. Operating from a different political-security perspective, the Australian impulse to acquire and accept a

higher international status was not strong enough to carry her to the lengths to which the other Dominions soon were willing to venture. In short, the Australians failed to realize that forces at work within the other Dominions would soon lead to proposals which would permit the self-governing Dominions to carry on their foreign relations <u>outside</u> the Imperial framework on a separate and independent basis. When that occurred, the Australians parted company with their sister Dominions. "They tended to dig in their heels on the <u>status quo</u> of 1919 and to resist the Canadian, South African, and Irish developments in thought about the status of the Dominions that came to expression in the 1920's."[7]

All this suggests that at this point in their history the Australians were confronted with the necessity of making a fundamental choice about the future conduct of their foreign relations. Ever conscious of their strategic isolation, the Australians sensed that the relative security they had enjoyed in the pre-1914 era had been seriously eroded by a war which consumed a frightening quantity of British resources and a peace treaty which facilitated an alarming expansion of Japanese power in the Pacific. In their efforts to adjust to those developments and reinforce their security positions, the Australians were confronted with essentially two alternative courses of action: they could

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[7]Ibid., p. 61.

focus their quest for security either on the new League of Nations or on the rapidly developing British Commonwealth of Nations.

That choice involved a determination as to which of the two security mechanisms could best maximize the impact of Australia's admittedly limited power on the conduct of world affairs. On the one hand Australia could maintain its 1919 Imperial relationship and seek to make its influence felt through the medium of the British Commonwealth--an arrangement whose capacity to insure Australian security was well known, and one in which increased access to the Imperial decision-making process hopefully would magnify Australia's capacity to influence the conduct of world affairs. On the other hand, Australia could concentrate its foreign policy on the collective security machinery of the League of Nations--machinery which was as yet untested and which would in all likelihood set Australia on a course closer to the go-it-alone position toward which the other Dominions were leaning.

A greater appreciation of the differences in stature between Australia and the great powers determined which of these alternative security arrangements would become the focus of Australian foreign policy. While the Australians appear to have been willing to join with other Dominions in asserting equality of status with the British, their strategic isolation led them to accentuate differences in

stature between themselves and the British. Therefore, the Australians remained less adventurous when it came to foreign policy matters and opted for continued reliance upon the Imperial security machinery. Prime Minister Hughes succinctly summarized the Australian decision in this regard with the observation that:

> Australia outside the Empire would, although the nation were armed to the teeth and prepared to fight to the last ditch for what it believed to be essential to its national existence, have failed to turn the (Paris Peace) Conference from what was only too obviously its settled purpose.[8]

By the end of 1919, therefore, the Australians had more-or-less realized all the structural and consitutional goals which they had sought in the foreign policy field. All that remained to be done was to insure the continued growth of the British Commonwealth and perfect the machinery of "consultation." This, then, became the principal concern of Australian foreign policy for the next two decades.

THE AUSTRALIAN RETREAT FROM EXPANDED DOMINION PREROGATIVES

After the signing of the Versailles Treaty, Hughes retained the Prime Minister's Portfolio until 1923. During that brief period, he kept pressure on the Imperial authorities for the continued operation and further expansion of

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[8] William M. Hughes, The Splendid Adventure (London: Ernest Benn, 1929), 108-09, cited in Harper & Sissons, op. cit., p. 9.

the "model of Imperial relations established at Paris." He insisted upon continuous consultation on Imperial foreign policy matters and was instrumental in securing Dominion representation at all major international conferences in which Empire policy would play a major role--most notably at the Washington Conference on the Limitation of Armaments. In pursuing that policy he even undertook to develop a small Department of External Affairs as a means of facilitating Australia's consultation with the British.

When Hughes fell from power he was replaced by S. Melbourne Bruce. The hallmark of Mr. Bruce's foreign policy was strict adherence to the "diplomatic unity of the British Empire." Unlike the exuberant Hughes, Bruce outwardly demonstrated no irritation over the British failure to develop satisfactory machinery for consultation with the Dominions. An advocate of "quiet diplomacy," he dismantled the Department of External Affairs and sought to resolve the consultation problem by the less controversial means of sending Richard C. Casey to London as a "liaison officer." Believing that foreign policy discussions with the Imperial authorities should take place behind the scenes and not in a public forum, Bruce instructed Casey to cultivate contacts in the British Foreign Office and act as his personal representative in London.[9] In other words, Bruce was one

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[9] C. Hartley Grattan, op. cit., p. 73.

in a long series of Australian Prime Ministers who have been referred to as "king's men" because of their Imperial orientation. Under his stewardship, "Australian nationalism was in abeyance, as though a casualty of the war or a victim of the prevailing conception of Australia's international position."[10] Moreover, Bruce's diplomatic style seems to have set the pattern for the conduct of all subsequent Australian foreign policy during the inter-war period. Throughout the period the Australian government was largely quiescent about foreign affairs. It was judged both wise and proper for Australia to follow the British lead, with the right to be consulted being understood. The attitude of the government in those years was expressed most graphically by Prime Minister Lyons' phrase concerning the need for Australia to keep "close to Britain."[11]

The Australian response to the passage of the Statute of Westminster (1931) was indicative of foreign policy attitudes during the inter-war period. Reaction to that important constitutional development can only be described as having been unenthusiastic in Australia. Fearing that acceptance of the Statute might involve or precipitate a breach of the diplomatic unity of the Empire, Australia chose not to sign the Statute, thereby

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[10]Ibid., p. 72.

[11]Cited in Amry and Mary Vandenbosch, Australia Faces Southeast Asia (Lexington, Ky.: University of Kentucky Press, 1967), p. 13.

demonstrating what the other Dominions must have regarded as a serious case of arrested nationalism. Only when the tensions of the early months of the war in the Pacific led to strained relations between Australia and Britain did the Australians adhere to the Statute and even then only on the grounds of technical legal convenience.

In addition to those political and strategic considerations which kept Australia "close to Britain," the pattern of Australia's external economic relations also tended to reinforce her Imperial orientation. Since Australia was a former British colony, its economy historically was dependent on British markets for the sale of exports and British capital market for investment resources. The only serious challenge to Britain's dominant position in Australia's external economic relations had been mounted by Germany during the pre-World War period. That influence had been removed, however, during the war by government measures which liquidated most German holdings in Australia.

During the inter-war period, the position of the British in the Australian economy was strengthened even further. In an effort to soften the impact of the depression on the British Commonwealth nations, the Imperial authorities undertook to strengthen the Empire's economic cohesiveness. That effort led to the Ottawa Agreements of 1932 which created a more-or-less "closed" Imperial trading system.

Australia was a strong supporter of the Ottawa Agreements and showed little interest either in diversifying its export markets or in the creation of an "open" international trading system. For example, Australia never demonstrated any powerful belief in expanding the Asian market and its perception of the economic opportunities in that market was always strongly qualified by a realization that trade with Asia could only be supplementary to trade with the British Commonwealth. Nor did Australia undertake to expand its trade with Japan or the United States. In fact, through a plan known as "trade diversion" it sought to reduce Australian imports from the United States and Japan as a means of both protecting British markets in Australia and encouraging local production.

Thus, on the eve of World War II, the management of Australia's external relations remained largely in the hands of the British Foreign Office. The prosecution of Australia's national interests by Australians generally was restricted to consultation with the British to participation in the League of Nations in very close association with the British. Unlike the other Dominions, Australia established no diplomatic missions outside the British Commonwealth and no effort was made to use the League of Nations as a forum for the articulation of a distinctly Australian political view. This was not constitutionally obligatory on Australia's part, but a matter of policy.

After 1932, Australia or any Dominion theoretically could do many things in foreign policy up to and including declaring itself neutral in war. Thus, the Australians accepted through choice rather than constitutional necessity, continued British direction of their foreign policy.

Both emotional and strategic considerations had played important roles in the determination of that situation. On the one hand, emotional attachment to "British civilization" proved to be an obstacle to the development of independent Australian foreign policy initiatives. On the other hand, strategic considerations required, or appeared to require, that Australia's position in the Pacific rarely be disentangled, even for purposes of discussion, from her position as a British country located on the outer marches of the Empire and ultimately dependent for defense on British seapower. As a result of those considerations, the Australian government remained wedded to the "single voice" principle of Imperial relations. Its responses to constitutional developments which threatened that principle was to arrange that their application to Australia be blunted, while taking no direct measures to hinder the aspirations of the more adventurous Dominions.

Judging from the role the above considerations played in the constitutional evolution of Imperial relations, it would appear that the basic foreign policy objective of Australia during much of the inter-war period was a return

to a *status-quo ante-bellum*: that is, to an international political system characterized by the *Pax Britannica*. Australia seemed to want to turn back the clock and to be uneasy or apprehensive about the major changes that were occurring in the international system. Once the principle of equality of status within the British Empire had been established, it was concluded that the best means of arresting the fading of the British Imperium was by staying close to Great Britain and supporting Great Britain during her hour of need. Therefore, Australia sought to supplement Great Britain's diminished power with the growing power of the Dominions--a process which hopefully would enable Great Britain to play her traditional role in world politics and thereby set everything "right" once again. Australia favored a single, unified foreign policy for the entire British Empire and feared what would happen if the Dominions pursued independent foreign policies, saying it could lead only to "British division and defeat."

All this suggests that throughout the period under consideration, Australia strongly resisted the major thrust of world politics: namely, the breakdown of the European centered international political system. It attempted to revitalize or at least prevent the further decay of that system by raising the dogma concerning the "diplomatic unity of the Empire" to the level of folk religion. Unlike most of its sister Dominions, Australia persisted in the

belief that it was more desirable to influence the course of world politics from within the Imperial framework rather than go-it-alone.

Chapter 4

AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC DILEMMA

PRE-WORLD WAR I STRATEGIC CONCERNS

Prior to World War II the dominant characteristic of Australia's defense policy was dependence on the British imperium. While the nature and extent of that dependence was frequently debated in Australia, it was widely recognized that Australia's ultimate defense was in the hands of the Imperial authorities in London.

Reliance upon Imperial defense was never taken lightly by Australian officials. It fostered a sense of obligation to contribute to Imperial defense--to participate in British wars--and encouraged widespread acceptance of the notion that when Britain went to war, Australia was automatically committed to billigerent status and full participation in any such war. Even though one of the bitterest Australian domestic political controversies was fought over the form in which the commitment to Imperial defense should take, the existence and necessity of the commitment was never seriously debated in Australia. Unlike several of the other Dominions, Australia's response to British calls for assistance during periods of war was automatic and unquestioning.

Historically the focal point of Australian strategic concerns has been the sea; a concern derived from the assumption that only a nation which is a sea power can seriously threaten Australia's security. As mentioned earlier, the sea was at one time conceived as a perfect defensive barrier. Later this conception changed radically as Australia's physical isolation began to disappear. It heightened Australian recognition of their dependence on the British demands for a greater role in the formation of Imperial defense policy.

In pondering the strategic qualities of the seas which surround their land, the Australians always have been confronted by the dilemma that their continent faces on two oceans. However, the task of Australian defense planners has been simplified in that regard by the fact that as long as Britain ruled India, the Indian Ocean would remain, for all intents and purposes, "a British lake." Therefore, as long as the security of the "imperial jugular vein" remained a principal concern of the Imperial authorities, the Australians were free to concentrate their attention on the affairs of the Pacific basin.

The fundamental objective of Australian defense policy, then, was a return to the relative security of the colonial period. It involved efforts to strengthen and perpetuate Australia's isolation from hostile foreign powers. Moreover, that objective drew Australian attention

to the numerous islands in the South Pacific basin and provided the basis for what Hartley Grattan has termed Australia's "island policy"--a policy of excluding non-British interests from those islands.[1]

Once the disposition of the South Pacific islands was settled at the 1886 Berlin Conference, the mext major phase in the evolution of Australian defense policy occurred in the decade prior to World War I. At the time of federation in 1901, the principal thrust of Australian security concerns was the continued pursuit of safety behind the guns of the Royal Navy. During that period, Australia's "enemies" were perceived to be Germany and Japan. In 1902 the British negotiated an alliance with Japan which tended to clarify Australia's security position. Although Australian opinion was divided over the restraining effect of this alliance on the Japanese, and many Australians never fully abandoned their suspicions of the Japanese, the Anglo-Japanese alliance determined that it was Germany which would emerge as the "enemy of the moment."

Germany was not only identified by the Australians as a challenge to British power in Europe and on the high seas, but also as being very active in the islands to Australia's north. In other words, Germany was perceived as

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[1]C. Hartley Grattan, The United States and the Southwest Pacific (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 105.

as a potential threat to both the more remote and the more immediate sources of Australian security.

This concern over Germany was intensified by a persistent Australian tendency to exaggerate German naval and military strength in the Pacific. It was that tendency which served as the basis for the popularization of the thesis that "who controls New Guinea controls Australia." W. M. Hughes was an ardent supporter of that thesis and his comments on this subject reveal something of the pervasiveness of the Australian fear of the Germans. For example, during a visit as Prime Minister to the United States in 1916, he expressed the sentiment of many Australians in this regard when he charged the Germans with the intention of taking over the Australian continent.[2]

During the immediate pre-war years, Australian apprehensions over their security were further heightened by the British decision to concentrate their naval power in the North Atlantic as a means of countering the growing strength of the German home fleet. With the Royal Navy thus "held down in home waters by European tensions, Australia was exposed for the first time to the possibility of an invasion."[3] Moreover, that development was accompanied by a general tendency on the part of the British to pay

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[2]Ibid., p. 135.

[3]Neville Meaney, "Australia's Foreign Policy: History and Myth," Australian Outlook, XXIII (1967) no. 2, p. 174.

increasingly less attention to the far-reaches of the Empire as the position of the British Isles grew less secure.

The British rationale for their behavior was deceptively simple and hauntingly persuasive. They rebutted Dominion criticism of their actions with the "center of the Empire" thesis--the notion that if the center of the Empire held, all else would be safe. This was an argument which the Imperial authorities would repeat over and over again in future years.

While most Australian officials found it difficult to differ with the position of the Imperial authorities, they remained uneasy about their own strategic position. Insight into the intensity and focus of this Australian apprehension was contained in Alfred Deakin's final speech as Australian Prime Minister. Speaking before the Australian Parliament in 1910, he declared that:

> Australia in spite of herself is being forced into a foreign policy of her own because foreign interests and risks surround us on every side. A Pacific policy we must have. (Great power colonial activity in the islands) affect our business more and more. We must be observant like every other nation, providing buffers to prevent shocks and placing intervals between us and danger centers.[4]

Realizing the limitations on Britain's ability to come to Australia's aid, Deakin had turned to the United States and arranged for a visit to Australia of the "Great White Fleet." This proved to be a success, and in 1909 he

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[4]Ibid., p. 175.

proposed to the Imperial authorities an extension of the protective guarantees of the American's Monroe Doctrine to the South Pacific. When the British put Deakin off and nothing came of his initiative, the notion that Australia should follow the American lead and build their own navy in response to the erosion of the British power gained increasing acceptance among the Australian populace. Contributions to the Royal Navy no longer sufficed. Australia had to have her own navy, manned, maintained, and controlled by the Australian people.

At that time, however, the Imperial authorities were opposed to any such notion which challenged the doctrine that the defense of the Empire was best served by a single fleet centrally controlled and directed. Consequently they strongly depreciated the value of Dominion navies. The position of the Imperial authorities was considerably altered, however, during and immediately following the great naval "scare" of 1909. Sensing a shift in the world balance of power against themselves and recognizing a means of increasing Dominion contributions to Imperial defense during a period of crisis, the British became more amenable to pressures for the creation of Dominion forces.

Eventually, the British compromised their previous position and concluded an agreement with the Australians whereby it would acquire its own navy. Central to the arrangement, however, was an Australian agreement that their

control over this navy would be transferred to the Imperial authorities whenever Britain was at war. This arrangement was an excellent example of the classic political compromise. It enabled the British to maintain their doctrine concerning the unitary nature of the Imperial defense, while at the same time it increased Dominion contributions to Empire defense and assuaged Dominion apprehensions regarding their security.

Australia took this new arrangement seriously, and by 1914 Australia possessed a naval unit consisting of a battle cruiser, three light cruisers, six destroyers, submarines and supporting vessels. Moreover, it had given tentative approval to an ambitious twenty three year naval procurement plan which would have given Australia a very substantial Pacific Fleet including eight battle cruisers and 15,000 men.[5] At about the same time they were consenting to the creation of an Australian navy, the Imperial authorities decided that it was time that Australia's land forces ought to be put in order. Although the disposition of Australian forces had been the responsibility of the Australian colony since 1870, and even though one of the principal rationales for federation had been the need to overcome the fragmentation of these forces, little had been accomplished after federation to determine how an Australian army should be raised, organized, and what strategic doctrine

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[5] Ibid., p. 176.

it should follow. Subsequently, Lord Kitchner was sent out to Australia in 1911 as a visiting defense expert to assist the Australians in organizing their land forces.

Following his assessment of Australia's strategic situation, Kitchner made two major recommendations to the Australian government. With regard to strategic doctrine, he quickly recognized the strategic importance of the Australian deserts and made them a principal focus of his recommendation. He recommended that the Australian government adopt a continental defense plan which would enable the Australians to both exploit the strategic buffer zone qualities of the desert and enable them to concentrate their limited forces in front of any invading force. Thus, his recommendation implied that the deserts should remain undeveloped, thereby allowing the Australians to proceed on the assumption that any aggressor would most likely attack Australia on the northern Queensland coast and then attempt to move southward toward the population centers in the southeast. Having thus limited the area of probable attack on Australia, Kitchner recommended that the Australians concentrate their land forces somewhere north of Brisbane--at a point which later became known as the "Brisbane Line." That doctrine became the core of Australian continental defense policy and remained so until well into World War II.

Kitchner's other major recommendation concerned policy governing recruitment of the Australian army.

Having been apprised of the sensitive nature of this issue among many Australians of Irish stock as well as those active in the labor movement, he suggested that Australia adopt a form of qualified conscription: compulsory service being limited to home defense while overseas service remained on a voluntary basis.[6] Although the Australian Government subsequently adopted this recommendation, thereby becoming the first country in the English speaking world to adopt such legislation in peacetime, implementation of the compulsory aspects of the policy met with widespread resistance among the independent minded Australian populace.

On the eve of World War I Australia had demonstrated a particular concern with strategic problems arising in the Pacific basin and had sought intermittently to influence British policies in that region. When those efforts met with only varying success the Australians undertook, in close cooperation with the British, to assume more of the responsibility for their own defense. Throughout the period, however, Australia defense policy was characterized by an ambivalence arising from a desire to assume new responsibilities in the security field, but no unlimited responsibilities, for ultimate assurance of Australian security remained a function of the defensive shield afforded her by the Royal Navy.

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[6] C. Hartley Grattan, A History of the Southwest Pacific Since 1900 (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1963), p. 46.

AUSTRALIAN PARTICIPATION IN WORLD WAR I

When war broke out in Europe during 1914, Australia became a belligerent because the nation was a British Dominion. There was no serious or organized effort on the part of the Australians to separate their declaration of war from that of the British. On the battlefields the Australians fought with distinction, established a precedent of fighting as identifiable units under Australian command, and fashioned a symbol of national pride during the blood letting at Gallipoli. At the level of strategic doctrine, however, little progress seems to have been made during the war. The controversy that surrounded the conscription issue demonstrated that Australian strategic thinking was still blurred by traditional loyalties and emotions. It suggested that the formulation of a distinctly Australian strategic doctrine still lay some years away.

Although Australia emerged from World War I a proud member of the victorious allies, both the course and outcome of the war had profoundly altered Australia's strategic position. Most importantly, the course of the war served to accelerate the decline in Britain's relative power position. Not only did the further decline in British power tend to weaken Australia's ultimate "buffer" against the uncertainties of world politics, but the treaty which ended the war also further compromised Australia's security position by enabling the Japanese to deploy their military forces

much closer to Australian shores than was previously possible. What all this meant was that the fundamental basis of Australia's security, namely Australia's strategic isolation, had been seriously eroded. As a result of that development, Australia was for the first time confronted by the traditional dilemma of small or middle-range powers: that of seeking, in the absence of an effective international security organization, security through an alliance with one or more friendly powers. It was this problem which tended to monopolize Australian strategic thinking throughout the inter-war period.

In attempting to adjust to the new balance of power in the Pacific, the Australians not surprisingly made the British the focus of their attention. Little, if any, serious consideration was given to the establishment of defense arrangements with any nation outside the British Empire. The prevailing perception of Japan as the "enemy of the moment" precluded alliance overtures in that direction while the isolationist mood of the United States seems to have discouraged the Australians from undertaking initiatives in that important direction--a rather serious omission in light of the American strategic position in the Pacific Ocean. Consequently, Australian defense policy was rarely separated, even for the purposes of debate, from her position as a geographically isolated and exposed member of the British Empire

who would have to depend at any time of crisis upon British assistance.

There was, however, a qualitative difference in the post war Australian perception of their continued dependence on the British security guarantee. Prior to the war the Australians seemd to have more or less taken the British guarantee of their seucirty for granted and largely to have accepted the sanctity of the Imperial defense doctrine. Following the war, Australian apathy was replaced by anxiety and heightened interest in the conduct of Empire defense policy. They sought both greater access to Imperial decision-making councils and to regularize their contribution to Empire defense.

In seeking a larger voice in the determination of Empire defense policy, the Australians repeatedly demonstrated that they were fully willing to shoulder the greater responsibility this would entail. They demonstrated that they were prepared to share in both the direction and cost of Empire defense. Throughout the inter-war period Australia spent more by any measure (per capita, percent of national budget, percent of national income) on defense than any other Dominion.[7]

Home defense, however, was not the principal focus of Australian defense policy diring the inter-war period. Rather, the British naval base at Singapore increasingly came

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[7] Ibid., p. 135.

to dominate Australian defense policy. Singapore was conceived of both as the hub of Imperial defense in the Far East--a bastion so centrally located that it would dominate the strategic approaches to Australia and serve as a base from which Imperial power could fan out in any direction--as well as a base whose size and importance would keep the British deeply involved in Pacific affairs and insure that a sizeable portion of Imperial defense resources remained committed to the Far East.

THE INTER-WAR DEBATE OVER DEFENSE POLICY

Behind the importance the Australians attached to the Singapore base lay an important decision concerning the basic nature of military power. During the inter-war years military strategists were engaged in a world wide debate over the merits of naval power vis-a-vis those of air power. In general, the debate carried on in Australia over this issue mirrored that which took place in Great Britain. The conservatives favored placing continued primary reliance for defense on naval power (the so-called "blue water school" of strategic doctrine) while the isolationist prone laborites favored primary reliance being placed on the rather unknown qualities of air power.

In Australia, that debate involved much more than a determination of the relative merits of naval and air power. It involved basic questions concerning political philosphy and Australia's role in the British Empire. The

conservatives, who accepted Imperial leadership, adhered to the Imperial thesis that the defense of Australia followed from Empire defense. They accepted the vicissitudes of power politics which this involved and were prepared to accept war. If war became necessary, it should be conducted as far away from Australia as possible but with priority being given to the defense of Great Britain as the center of the Empire which must stand if anything was to stand. In brief, the conservatives sought to merge Australian defense policy with that of the Imperial authorities.

In contrast to the conservative's acceptance of Imperial leadership, Labour tended to continuously search for means to contract out of British policies which followed the rules of power politics. Labour was anxious to keep Australia out of all wars, including British wars, and criticized British policies which might bring on war even by inadvertance. It was neither enthusiastic about collective security (unlike British Labour) nor was it greatly influenced by the pro-war sentiment of the staunchly anti-fascist portion of its membership. In large measure, Labour's position was characterized by isolationism and pacifism.

Indicative of Labour's attitude was its 1930 announcement to the League of Nations of its decision to abolish compulsory military training. In announcing the

Labour Government's 1930 decision, the Australian delegate to the League stated that:

> Australia tells the world, as a gesture of peace, that she is not prepared for war . . . . We have drawn our pen through the schedule of military expenditures with unprecedented firmness. We have reversed a policy which has subsisted in Australia for twenty-five years of compelling the youth to learn the art of war.[8]

While Labour's actions when in Office were far less naive than this statement would suggest, the thrust of that announcement was indicative of the anti-imperial, anti-war, pro-disarmament direction in which it was tending.

In a more general sense, Labour's isolationism and pacifism were a function of its principal political concerns. Labour was preoccupied with domestic concerns--principally with insuring the economic security of the Australian worker. It did not think too deeply or too often about Australia's strategic affairs and only rarely in terms relevant to the evolving world situation of the inter-war period. On the rare occasions when it did reflect on the course of world affairs, it frequently indulged in escapism and self-deception. For example, in commenting on Japan's invasion of Manchuria, Labour's spokesmen on defense matters deplored the aggression but noted with satisfaction that:

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[8]Attorney-General F. Brennan, cited in Paul Hasluck, The Government of the People, 1939-1941 (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1952), p. 42.

> . . . the only nation from which Australia has anything to fear is engaged today in an almost impossible task, which will keep it fully occupied for the next 40 to 50 years.[9]

In other words, what Labour really sought during this period was to keep the affairs of the world as far removed from Australia's shores as possible in order to enable it to carry forward its program of socializing the Australian society with a minimum of interference from the outside world.

As the world strategic situation began to deteriorate at an alarming rate during the 1930's, the differences in political orientation between the conservatives and Labour came more and more to focus on the British base at Singapore. Judging Australia's geographic isolation on the outer marches of the Empire to be a distinct liability which pointed to the necessity of continued reliance on naval defense, the conservatives made Singapore the point on which Australian collaboration with the Imperial authorities would turn. They persistantly pressured the British to proceed with construction of the base and strictly followed Imperial thinking about the strategic value of the base.

By the 1930's however, financial considerations had led the Imperial authorities' to alter their conception of

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[9]Mr. A. E. Green cited in Harper and Sissons, op. cit., p. 26, quoting from Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, Canberra, (hereafter cited as C.P.D.).

the Singapore base from that of a bastion housing a British fleet capable of dominating the strategic picture in the Far East to that of a base to which a British fleet could be sent East in an emergency. Echoing that doctrine, R. G. Casey, formerly Prime Minister Bruce's "liaison" in London and lately Member of Parliament, summarized the Australian conservatives' appreciation of Singapore by observing that:

> Our policy generally . . . is based on the belief that the British fleet, or some appreciable portion of it, will be able to move freely eastward in case we in Australia get into trouble in our part of the world.[10]

From that expectation of British assistance, it was concluded that Australia's local defenses should be primarily naval, because:

> . . . if Australia's markets were closed and her imports and exports stopped by enemy action, she could be forced to sue for peace without a single soldier coming within sight of her shores.[11]

Consequently the navy was conceived as Australia's "first line of defense against agression" while the air force and standing army were to offer a "second line of defense." In short, where the British led in defense policy, the Australian conservatives followed.

Because of its orientation, Labour tended to see Australian defense problems somewhat differently. It seized upon Australia's traditional responsibility for home defense

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[10]R. G. Casey, "Australia in World Affairs" International Affairs (London), XVI (1937), no. 5, p. 704.

[11]Defense Minister Sir. George Peace as cited in Paul Hasluck, op. cit., p. 42.

and placed its emphasis there. Labour asserted that the most useful contribution Australia could make to Imperial defense was through strengthening its ability to defend itself, thereby reducing the burden of Imperial defense in the Far East. While Labour did not deny the conservative argument that Australia was ultimately dependent upon Imperial assistance for security, they criticized the conservatives emphasis on naval power and were far less receptive to British reassurances that the Singapore base would be made "impregnable."

Viewed in retrospect, both the conservatives and Labour were wrestling with the same strategic dilemma. Where they differed was in which part of the problem they chose to emphasize. On the one hand, the conservatives correctly recognized that only a naval power could pose a serious threat to Australian security and that Australia would have to rely for its ultimate defense upon the assistance of a friendly great power. Their solution to that problem was to move closer to the British and collaborate in the naval oriented defense policy adopted by the Imperial Conferences of 1923 and 1937.

On the other hand, Labour correctly recognized that the success of the conservatives' policy was almost entirely dependent upon the ability of the British to come to Australia's assistance. They raised the serious question of what sort of defense establishment Australia would need

if a menace arose in the East while Britain was heavily engaged in a war in Europe and consequently proved incapable of reinforcing its Eastern fleet, thereby placing Australia beyond British help. This was an extremely damaging argument and one which the conservatives feebly attempted to anwer by stating that "any world movement that appears to threaten the ability of the British fleet to move freely eastward would be of great concern to us in Australia."[12]

Furthermore, Labour was critical of the conservatives' adherence to the thesis that defense of Britain, as the center of the Empire, should take precedence over all else. They argued that this thesis unduly complicated Australia's strategic dilemma by committing Australia to the defense of Great Britain as well as the homeland at a time when Japanese actions were becoming increasingly menacing. In other words, Labour foresaw a situation in which Australians might have to chose between defense of Great Britain and defense of their homeland. It wanted to make sure that in such an event, a decision would be made in favor of defense of the Australian continent and that the Australians possessed the means to defend themselves.

While Labour was skeptical about the "impregnability" of Singapore and Britain's capacity to reinforce the base as well as being equally doubtful that Australia could ever afford a navy big enough to defend itself, it believed that

[12]Casey, op. cit., p. /02.

Australia might be able to defend itself if it emphasized air power and domestic material production. This, of course, was a very questionable assertion. It was the weakest point in Labour's argument, for it tended to assume that Australia could possibly disassociate itself from dependence on a great power to insure its security. Hence, while Labour was rather adept in pointing out the weaknesses of the conservative defense posture, it also proved incapable of developing a fully adequate and strictly national Australian defense policy which could be justified in terms of Australia's position in the Pacific Ocean.

In the low-key strategic debate carried on in Australia during the inter-war period, the conservatives seem to have prevailed over Labour. Not only were the conservatives in power throughout most of the period, but they also enjoyed the advantage of being supplied an externally formulated (Imperial) argument which they merely had to reiterate--an argument which they wrapped in the mantle of the Union Jack and supported with fervant invocations of "loyalty" to Great Britain.

On the eve of World War II, therefore, Australian defense policy was heavily conditioned by Imperial thinking. Where Britain led, Australia continued to follow. While they were convinced of their vulnerability to Japanese attack, the Australians followed both the British and the Americans in seriously underestimating both Britain's

power and ability to give direct assistance to Australia.

In reviewing this episode in Australian history, two major themes in Australian strategic thinking are discernable. Foremost among these is the fact that prior to World War II, Australia had enjoyed unusually large increments of security in comparison to other nation states of comparable size and power. At the same time, however, Australian security was an extremely fragile entity because it was almost wholly dependent upon the ability of Australian officials to preserve Australia's strategic isolation from the uncertainties of world politics.

Efforts to insure Australia's strategic isolation dominated Australian defense planning prior to World War II. During Australia's colonial period when the _Pax Britannica_ enabled Australia to enjoy a condition which might be termed "absolute security" there was little need to think about strategic matters. In the inter-war period when their geographic isolation was seriously eroded, the Australians for the first time had to adjust to a condition of limited security.

Both major political groupings in Australia responded to that development by advocating policies intended to strengthen or underpin Australia's strategic isolation. Where they differed was over how this common goal could best be realized. On the one hand, the conservatives demonstrated anxiety over Australia's geographic situation

and sought to keep the centers of world conflict as far removed as possible from Australia's shores. Consequently, the British naval shield which insulated Australia from the uncertainties of world politics became the focus of conservative concerns. On the other hand, Labour tended to be less anxious about Australia's geographic situation and advocated policies which would more-or-less exploit that situation by building a "fortress Australia." In other words, the goal of both the conservatives and Labour was the same: that of insulating Australia from the uncertainties of the external political environment. The conservatives sought to achieve this end by participating in world politics within the Imperial framework, while Labour sought this same end by withdrawing as far as possible from participation in world politics.

The second theme which is discernable in this review is that on the eve of World War II, the Australians had not clearly thought out the problems inherent in the conduct of alliance politics. The conservatives responded to Australia's dependence on external security assistance by blindly rushing into the arms of the British. Rarely, if ever, did they recognize or admit that Australia's national interests might differ from those of the British. Wherever the British led, the conservatives followed; as a consequence they made all the same mistakes that the British made and more. Labour's record in this regard was

equally unsophisticated. Confused by their own socialist dogma concerning the evils of a "capitalist" external environment, Labour demonstrated a compelling desire to contract out of world politics at the precise moment in history when the world was becoming increasingly interdependent. Only *ex post facto* when the thrust of another world war brought conflict alarmingly close to Australia's shores did either Labour or the conservatives come to grips with the basic Australian strategic dilemma.

Chapter 5

AUSTRALIA AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LEAGUE

After World War I, several important new themes and concepts surfaced in the conduct of foreign affairs. In one way or another, most of these new developments were incorporated into the structure and functions of the League of Nations. Therefore, an analysis of any nation's policy in or toward the League offers the student of world politics a valuable and relatively reliable means of assessing that nation's response to those emerging themes in the course of international relations. This is particularly true when the country under consideration is a British Dominion, for both the League and the Conference which paved the way for its establishment provided the Dominions with their first real opportunity to express their views on world foreign affairs outside of the confines of the Imperial circle.

By international consent, Australia and the other British Dominions were accorded independent representation at the Paris Peace Conference and in the League of Nations. In neither case, however, did Australia violate the principle concerning maintenance of the diplomatic unity

of the British Empire. While differences of interest quite naturally arose between the British and Australian delegations, these were resolved in conference and a common Empire front was maintained at both Paris and Geneva. In short, where Britain led, again, Australia followed.

The Australian delegation to the Paris Conference was led by Prime Minister W. M. Hughes. For reasons that will be discussed later, Hughes immediately became embroiled in a series of personal clashes with President Woodrow Wilson of the United States. Not only did Hughes question the right of the American President to forecast the shape of the post-war world, he also rejected the thinking implicit in Wilson's proposals. A firm believer in the "blood and treasure" approach to peace-making, Hughes possessed a rancorous distate for the Wilsonian world-view.

> In his judgement the peace as made at Paris was 'spoiled', not by haggling and the element of vengeance in it, but by the Wilsonian corruption that survived in it. In international outlook Hughes was something of a social Darwinist, long teeth, sharp claws, and all.[1]

A principal focus of divergence in world views of Hughes and Wilson was the latter's scheme for international cooperation. While Wilson was an idealist and a confirmed internationalist who saw the institutionalization and facilitation of international cooperation as the path to mankind's salvation, Hughes was a practitioner of power

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[1]C. Hartley Grattan, A History of the Southwest Pacific Since 1900 (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1963), p. 62.

politics, an ardent nationalist and a skeptic about the chances for success of any international organization.

While those differences in political orientation or philosophy might not necessarily have led Hughes to oppose Wilson's ambitious League of Nations proposal, his fear that establishment of the League might compromise Australia's security and sovereignty produced outright Australian hotility toward what the American President was proposing. On the one hand, Hughes apparently believed that the universalism inherent in Wilson's proposal would interfere with the exercise of British sea power, thereby endangering the keystone of Australian security. On the other hand, as a spokesman for a nation groping toward a more independent stance in the world, he felt that Wilson's draft for an international organization savored too much of world government, a development which might threaten Australian sovereignty and independence even before it was fully realized. He eschewed the notion that either a part or the whole of the League had the right to pass binding resolutions. He feared that the League proposal would involve the creation of an organization invested with the power to legislate new international law. Like his fellow countrymen, Hughes "was perfectly satisfied with international law as it stood, grounded firmly on the principle of state sovereignty as the basis of the

international community."[2] Therefore, he was generally critical of the proposal for creation of the League. After recognizing that he couldn't head off the proposal, he then sought to minimize the importance of Wilson's draft by suggesting that the proper role of the League would be no more than that of a

> . . . standing international Conference or an organ of consultation. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the large body (the Assembly) is not a Legislature, and the small body (the Council) is not an Executive . . . both are organs of international consultation.[3]

While the major issue at stake in the League of Nations proposal was a determination of the future role and function of international organizations in the conduct of world politics, several other important issues were invovled in this proposal. Among those was the issue of providing for small power security in a world largely governed by great power politics. Central to that issue was a determination of whether the goal of world-wide security was more likely to be realized by according the great powers a privileged position of primacy in any international security organization, or by structuring any such organization in such a way that it would inhibit or minimize the power and capriciousness of the great powers.

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[2]Norman Harper & David Sissons, Australia and the United Nations (New York: Manhattan Publishing Co., 1959), p. 15.

[3]Ibid., p. 10, quoting Hughes from David H. Miller, The Drafting of the Covenant (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1928), I, 363-68.

In the debate over that issue, Australian statesmen aligned themselves with those who argued that the great powers should be accorded a privileged position in the League security machinery. Having committed themselves to the British Empire in particular and to power politics in general, as well as being ever fearful of any development which might hinder the ability of the Royal Navy to come to their rescue, the Australians regarded great power pre-eminence in the League Council as not only being proper but also as absolutely necessary to insure world peace in general and Australian security in particular. In short, permanent seats on the League Council should be given only to "those great powers with world-wide interests and great responsibilities--powers that would be able to view all questions with a full sense of their own responsibilities and obligations."[4]

AUSTRALIA AS A MANDATORY POWER

Another important issue raised by the League of Nations proposal was the status of dependent peoples. That issue was raised by the inclusion in President Wilson's draft of machinery designed to insure native welfare and provide for international supervision of dependent peoples. Since Hughes wanted to annex the former German New Guinea territories outright, he strongly resisted the mandates

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[4]N. Harper and D. Sisson, op. cit., p. 16.

proposal and deemed that annexation of New Guinea was both justified by Australia's contribution to the Allied victory and absolutely necessary "in the interests of Australian security." Since Hughes was "concerned only with Australia's welfare, not with native welfare or native progress,"[5] he attacked the philosophical basis of the mandate system. For Hughes, the more direct the government, the better that government would be. He contended that since "the Australians were on the spot: Australia knew what New Guinea wanted far better than any League of Nations."[6] Eventually a compromise was reached in which German New Guinea was turned over to Australia as a special or C-class mandate--a compromise designed to save the principles of trusteeship and concede Australian demands for effective possession. Hughes' reaction to that arrangement was summarized by his statement that the mandate differed "from full sovereign control as a ninety-nine year lease differs from a freehold."[7] Moreover, "there could be no open door in regard to those islands near Australia. There should be a barred and closed door--with Australia as the guardian

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[5]C. Hartley Grattan, op. cit., p. 62.

[6]Harper and Sissons, op. cit., p. 11, citing Hughes from U. S. Dept. of State, Foreign Relations of the United States: The Paris Peace Conference, Vol. III, (Washington: G.P.O., 1936), p. 787.

[7]C. Hartley Grattan, op. cit., p. 63, quoting Hughes.

of the door."[8] Hughes accepted the mandate with the worst possible grace, and the only restriction which he was willing to accept on Australian control over the territory was the prohibition against fortifying mandated territories because it also prohibited Japanese fortification of the former German island territories north of the equator.

Throughout the inter-war period the Australians continued to demonstrate their opposition to the trusteeship principle. For example, the very first ordinance passed in New Guinea after establishment of the mandate applied the (Australian) Commonwealth Immigration Act to the mandated territory. Even more revealing was Australia's subsequent performance as a mandatory power.

As a mandatory nation Australia was obligated to keep the territories unfortified, observe a number of humanitarian injunctions, and submit annual reports on her administration to the League Council, on whose behalf the reports would be examined by a Permanent Mandate Commission. With the exception of leaving the mandate unfortified, Australia demonstrated both an unwillingness as well as an inability to fulfill those obligations.

In general the reports Australia submitted to the Mandate Commission were noteworthy only for their

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[8]Harper and Sissons, op. cit., p. 12, quoting Hughes from Enerst Scoot, Australia During the War, Vol. XI of The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918 (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1936), p. 787.

imprecision and vagueness. So inadequate were the reports that on several occasions the Commission tried to elicit a statement of Australia's general policy in New Guinea, but enjoyed negligible success.

> As late as 1938 (the Chairman of the Mandate Commission) asked if it would not be useful, not so much for the edification of the Commission as for the benefit of the administration, to 'formulate a general policy indicating the objectives, both material, social and humanitarian, of its colonial administration.'[9]

Due to limited manpower and financial resources and a lack of colonial experience as well as a restricted view of the mandate as a security buffer Australia never did develop a coherent and comprehensive administrative policy for New Guinea. Only after World War II did the Australians turn their attention to this subject.

In the area of financial policy toward the mandate, the then orthodox rule of colonial self-sufficiency was employed; "there was no thought of promoting development by the deliberate intervention of (Australian) finance."[10]

While that policy did not of itself trouble the Mandate Commission, the manner in which the Australian administration expended the mandated territories' revenues did elicit considerable criticism. The real issue, according to the Commission, was the degree to which expenditures served native welfare as compared with private

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[9]W. J. Hudson, "Australia's Experience as a Mandatory Power," Australian Outlook, XIX (1965), no. 1, p. 39.

[10]Ibid., p. 37.

economic interests in the territory. The Commission was particularly critical of the administration of education in the territory. It criticized the Australian administration's policy of leaving education in the hands of missionary schools which received little subsidy or supervision, and in 1936 the Commissioner's report questioned if the one percent of the territories' budget ear-marked for education was sufficient.[11] At the same time the Australians persisted in making pessimistic estimates of the capacity of the New Guinea natives to participate in administrative or political institutions.

While some criticism of mandatory policy was inevitable due to the structure of the League's accountability system, Australia received more than some criticism for its administration of the New Guinea Mandate: in fact, the Australians largely ignored the criticism and went their own way, stopping only to state that "the main problem facing the Australian people is an internal one: that of the development of our continent."[12] About the only aspect of the criticism which seems to have disturbed the Australians was the source of that criticism.

The principal source of the criticism, of course, was the Permanent Mandate Commission. Since the Commission

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[11] Ibid., p. 41.

[12] Ibid., p. 46, quoting Sir Frederic Eggleston.

consisted of a Council of nominated experts and not representatives of states, it might have seemed that a mandatory power would have little to fear from that Commission. The administrative style of the Commission developed, however, was such that it could easily be jarred by crude diplomacy, and at this stage in their history, the Australians were budding experts at the practice of crude diplomacy. Subsequently, no rapport was built up between the Commission and the Australian representatives, and the Commission remained suspicious of Australia while the Australians remained generally hostile toward the Commission.

What was particularly disturbing to the Australians about the Commission's criticism was the fact that until at least 1933 the Commission was comprised overwhelmingly of British staff. Failing to comprehend the concept of an international civil service, the Australians frequently interpreted Commission criticism of their policy as British criticism of that policy. This so perplexed the Australians that at least on one occasion the Australian High Commissioner in London (and frequent representative to the League) attempted to get the British member of the Commission disciplined by the Colonial Office.[13]

Still another source of criticism was the former German nationals still residing in the mandated territory.

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[13]W. J. Hudson, "The New Guinea Mandate: The View From Geneva," Australian Outlook, Vo. 22, (1968), no. 3, p. 312.

In this regard, the Australian Government was unsettled by Germany's unremitting campaign for the return of her colonies and had vigorously opposed the League Council's 1923 decision to allow the Mandate Commission to receive petitions from mandated territories. Typical of the Australian response to the source of criticism was their submission, in response to the Commission's request for "authentic information" to balance against criticism pouring in from German sources, of a hostile tract on White Australia and the Navigation Acts.[14]

Perhaps the source of potential criticism over which the Australians demonstrated the most sensitivity, however, was that which was offered by the non-Western and less developed nations. Australia demonstrated a strong disinclination to accept criticism from "lesser breeds" like Ethiopia--a situation which foreshadowed post World War II Australian trusteeship policy. Therefore, when Ethiopia's application for admission to the League raised the possibility of altering "the white man's club," character of the League, the official Australian reaction to that development included an expression of doubt about the admission to the League of a slavery-tainted country which, as a member:

> ". . . would be in a position to criticize those countries, such as New Guinea, where the conditions

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[14] Ibid., p. 314.

> of life are much more favorable. Abyssinia might examine and criticize countries whose civilization was more advanced than her own."[15]

Viewed in retrospect, Australia's record as a mandatory power was characterized by ambivalence toward the League and not infrequent hostility toward the principle of trusteeship. It is fairly clear that Australia's primary interest in the New Guinea territory was based almost solely on security postulates: Australia's policy toward New Guinea was essentially a function of its desire to keep foreign influences and sources of potential conflict as distant as possible from Australia's shores. Consequently Australia's mandate policy was characterized by diligent efforts to keep all foreign influences out of the territory whether they be economic or political in nature, or national or multi-national in origin. Having achieved sufficient control over the territory to neutralize any threat to White Australia and to deny, apparently, the deployment of foreign military power in the islands to their north, the Australians were inclined, over the next two decades, to pay a minimum of further attention to the New Guinea mandate.

Still another important issue raised by the establishment of the League of Nations was the future of multilateral approaches to the solution of international

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[15] W. J. Hudson, op. cit., p. 43, quoting the Australian Delegate, Sir Joseph Cook.

economic and social problems. In general, Australia chose in this regard to follow a policy of opposition to any expansion of League activities in that realm. The roots of policy apparently are traceable to Australian efforts to protect White Australia and exclude foreign interests from the New Guinea mandate as well as the Imperial and primary commodity orientation of the Australian economy. Together, those considerations produced a reluctance on the part of the Australians to narrow or limit the national prerogatives inherent in the concept of "domestic jurisdiction."

At any rate, the Australians took a firm stand in support of the proposition that national tariff and economic policies were and should remain matters subject to strict domestic jurisdiction. Throughout most of the League's life, the Australian government participation in the organization's sponsored economic and social activities was minimal. This position was later modified, however, under the impact of the world depression. After 1935, when the futility of tariff and exchange-rate wars had become obvious, Australia demonstrated a much more firm inclination to associate itself with proposals to coordinate and expand international economic cooperation through the League's machinery.[16]

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[16]Harper & Sissons, op. cit., p. 16.

THE LEAGUE'S COLLECTIVE SECURITY MACHINERY

Fundamental to any discussion involving the League of Nations is the concept of collective security, for security was a primary concern of the League. The various Australian positions concerning League activities were primarily responses to the concept of collective security.

Throughout the life of the League, Australia demonstrated considerable opposition to the collective security thesis. That opposition was most noticeable in the military field. As suggested elsewhere, the major thrust of Australian strategic thinking involved an attempt to insulate or isolate Australia from the uncertainties of world politics. Since the collective security thesis ran directly counter to the thrust of Australian strategic thinking by posing the issue of a possible Australian commitment to participation in security operations in regions or areas of only marginal or indirect interest to Australia, or conversely, of a possible paving of the way for the entrance of a whole host of foreign interests into the Southwest Pacific region, Australia was wary of the League's collective security machinery.

Therefore, successive Australian Governments sought to minimize and limit the collective security functions of the League. Arguments concerning the indivisibility of security were simply wasted on the Australians. Moreover, they displayed a clear unwillingness to restrict national

sovereignty in such crucial areas as disarmament, the declaration of war, and the imposition of economic sanction. According to Hughes, the suggestion that the League Council was authorized to dictate to a member its scale of armaments was "a position which can hardly be contemplated."[17] In this regard Australia held that each member of the League must decide for itself to what extent it could participate in the collective resolution of threats to world security. It opposed all systems of regional or general security guarantees and insisted upon the right to decide each security case on its own merits; Australia insisted upon the ultimate exercise of a veto in all matters involving enforcement actions.[18]

During the two great "tests" of the League, the hallmark of Australian policy was caution and restraint. It supported the League action not on the grounds of collective security but out of loyalty to Great Britain. Despite a growing Australian concern over the growth of Japanese power, the Japanese invasion of Manchuria evoked little comment in the Australian Parliament, least of all over the impact of that development on the collective security arrangements of the League, and from no quarter in Australia came any suggestion that a firm line should be taken against Japan. Mr. J. Scullin, the Labour Leader

[17] Ibid., p. 11, quoting Hughes.

[18] Ibid., p. 23.

epitomized the Australian response to this development with his suggestion that:

> . . . we shall be wise if we do not anticipate trouble, and refrain from making statements that might aggravate the present strained relations between China and Japan.[19]

Therefore, when a special session of the League Assembly was called in March, 1932 to discuss the Manchurian issue and the majority of the smaller powers emphatically condemned the Japanese aggression, Australia and New Zealand remained silent while Canada and South Africa supported the majority. During the Ethiopian crisis, Australia substantially followed the British lead without criticism. In concert with Britain, Australia imposed incomplete sanctions against Italy and then withdrew these when they proved ineffective.[20]

Throughout the inter-war period the Australian Labour Party displayed an ambivalent attitude toward the League of Nations. In fact, the Australian Labour Party was the only labor party in the entire British community which was not enthusiastic over collective security. As suggested earlier the principal thrust of Labour policy was a desire to keep Australia out of any war. It was this desire which in large part determined Labour's approach to the League.

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[19]Ibid., p. 20, quoting Scullin from C.P.D. CXXXII (1931), p. 709.

[20]Ibid., p. 21.

During its more radical phase in the 1920's, Labour tended to regard the League as a "capitalist club" established to further intensify and universalize capitalist exploitations of the working class.[21] Later, during the 1930's, Labour modified its position and became pro-League as a conciliator, but not as a wielder of war-risking sanctions. It was never enthusiastic about collective security or any other policy which promised to bring on war even by inadvertance.

Labour's real concern throughout the period was with domestic issues, not with foreign policy. It did not think too deeply about Australia's world position and unlike many of the Labour movements within the British Empire, its socialism never evolved into socialist internationalism. Labour's main objectives--protection and advancement of the working classes and their organization, the encouragement of Australian nationalism, and the prevention of Pacific and Asian immigration--all acted to preclude active interest in world affairs. Subsequently the Irish nationalism which played such a dynamic force in the Australian Labour movement seems to have bred (among the Australian Labour Party) attitudes characteristic of Irish neutralism.

All this is not to suggest that Australia was totally hostile toward the League of Nations. Rather it is to observe that the Australian appreciation of the League

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[21]Ibid., 25-28.

and its functions must be viewed against the backdrop of Australia's position in the British Commonwealth of Nations. Starting from the proposition that only British naval power could insure their security, the Australian's generally concluded that, in the absence of American participation in the League, the capacity of that organization to insure international security would depend in the last resort on the exercise of British power.

It was this concern over the exercise of British power that led the Australians to oscillate between a hesitant support for the League's activities and rather exclusive reliance upon the British imperium. On the one hand they feared that the League might restrict the exercise of British power and limit the ability of the British to come to Australia's rescue by involving the British in areas and issues of only marginal concern to Australia. On the other hand the League was perceived as being capable of serving Australia's interests by assisting in the smooth functioning of Imperial relations and by preventing Britain from becoming exclusively preoccupied with European affairs.

Support of the League was conceived as a complement to a strong British Empire. Aware of their strategic weakness and isolation, the Australians sought to make the League more universal and more oriented toward the Pacific while at the same time insuring members full freedom of decision on the vital question of enforcement. Although the League was

clearly of only secondary importance to Australia's quest for security, Australia did give general support to the new international organization in the hope that it would demand of its membership only limited and occasional aid yet somehow contribute to general world security.

A realization that a "vast ocean separates us from Europe" and an appreciation of their own lack of power precluded solid Australian support for the League. Australia was under-represented at Geneva throughout the life of the League and generally pursued a weak policy therein. Subsequently, unrestrained Japanese aggression in China, apprehension at the weakening of effective British power in the Far East, the continued absence of the United States in the League, and the breakdown of the Washington Naval treaties combined to produce in Australia an inclination to support appeasement rather than collective security as a means of enduring the deterioration of the international security climate of the late 1930's.

Chapter 6

FIRST STEPS IN DIPLOMACY

PRIME MINISTER HUGHES AT THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE

Prior to World War II, Australia did not maintain an independent foreign policy. While such a development would have been constitutionally impossible before World War I, the removal of constitutional restrictions during the inter-war period presented Australia with the opportunity to pursue an independent course in world politics. Throughout that period, however, the Australians were not looking outward, but inward, their energies seemingly consumed by the task of forging a nation out of a harsh and hostile land.

This is not to suggest that the Australians took no interest in world politics prior to World War II. Rather, it is to observe that Australian foreign interests were only marginal and intermittent during the period. In fact, what little interest the Australians did demonstrate in world politics seems to have been an expression of a desire to prevent the course of world affairs from imposing upon them and distracting them from their primary interests. In an attempt to achieve that end, the Australians pursued a course which would place few external demands on themselves and

require only minimal Australian participation in world politics. In short, the Australians idealized the isolation they enjoyed during the _Pax Britannica_. Out of a desire to preserve and later reconstruct that political environment they deliberately refrained from developing an independent foreign policy.

This did not mean that Australia was without national interests during the pre-World War II period. What it did mean was that the expression of those interests would be muted. In fact, on rare occasions Australian officials _did_ feel compelled to act in a more-or-less independent manner in order to protect uniquely Australian interests. In general, that seems to be what occurred whenever the course of world politics appeared to impinge on Australia's immediate or vital interests, or when the Prime Minister took an active interest in foreign affairs.

Through an accident of history both of these conditions prevailed during the immediate post World War I period. During those years the Australians not only believed that they had a vital stake in the post-war process of political adjustment, but in W. M. Hughes they also had a Prime Minister who took both an active interest in world affairs and a man who was fully prepared to take advantage of the opportunities to express Australia's interests by participation in the series of international conferences held at the conclusion of the war.

As suggested elsewhere, when it came to matters of foreign affairs, W. M. Hughes was an ardent activist--a quality which set him apart from both his immediate predecessors and successors. After Hughes' keen interest in foreign affairs had been intensified further by his emotional involvement in the war, he set out after the war to have Australia's voice heard loudly and clearly in world politics. In the annals of pre-World War II Australian diplomatic history, nothing rivals in importance, color or activity Hughes' performance at the Paris Peace Conference. He arrived at Paris determined to have his voice heard and to leave his imprint on the peace settlement--no small task for a man representing a remote country with a population of only four million.

What Hughes accomplished at Paris was to forcefully articulate the major lines of pre-World War II Australian foreign policy. While the content of that policy was not entirely new, and while the political tactics Hughes employed at Paris were open to serious question, he must be credited with having been the first Australian Prime Minister willing and perhaps capable of setting forth Australia's foreign policy interests in a forum larger than the traditional Imperial councils. Since discussions within the Imperial circle were not open to public or outside scrutiny, Hughes' activities at Paris thereby served the important function of announcing to the world at large Australia's position with

regard to the principal issues on the international political agenda. In fact, the increased recognition and stature Hughes achieved for Australia was perhaps his most important accomplishment at Paris, since in matters of substantive policy he enjoyed only limited success in influencing the final peace document.

As set forth by Hughes during the Paris Peace Conference, Australia was pursuing three major lines of policy: maintenance of Australia's restrictive immigration policy (better known as "White Australia"); the strengthening of Australia's security positions in the islands to its north; and assistance in economic recovery through war reparations. While Australia obviously held an interest in the other issues on the Conference agenda, Hughes and his fellow countrymen were preoccupied with those which touched on the three above-mentioned concerns.

The concern Hughes expressed for maintenance of Australia's White Australia restrictive immigration policy was far from new or original. From the earliest days of the Australian colonies, the Australians consistently sought to maintain Australia "white" against all odds. Indeed, the need to insure the racial and cultural homogeneity of Australia had been and continued to be one of the few issues upon which there had been any wide-scale and lasting national concensus. As is always true in such cases, the rationale for the White Australia policy covered a wide

spectrum of views, including racial prejudice, fear of economic competition, uncertainty over the ability of immigrants to assimilate and their impact on the prevailing standard of living. During Australia's colonial period a mixture of those arguments acquired widespread acceptance by persons of all political outlooks and White Australia was elevated to the status of a semi-sacred national dogma.

The White Australia policy became an issue at the Paris Conference in a rather indirect manner. In fact, there is little evidence to suggest that the issue would have ever arisen at the Conference had not the Japanese proposed that a clause embodying the principle of racial equality be inserted in the Covenant of the League of Nations. To the Japanese, their proposal seems to have been important (in and of itself) because it apparently represented nothing more than expression of Japanese national pride and honor. As such the manner in which the proposal was handled by the Conference almost inevitably would influence Japan's attitude toward the entire peace treaty. In other words the Japanese proposal was in part an indicator of whether they would pursue either a status quo or a revisionist policy in the international arena. On the one hand, acceptance of the proposal might indicate to the Japanese that they would be accepted as equal within the international political system and be capable of playing a role therein which would accord them an interest in preserving the treaty being drafted by

the Conference. On the other hand, rejection of the proposal might suggest to the Japanese that they were to remain racial outcasts in a Western world political system and lead them to the conclusion that they had no stake in the maintenance or preservation of what was accomplished at Paris. In short, the Japanese were apparently employing their proposal as a test to determine whether they would seek their place in the sun either inside or outside the prevailing international system.

Considerations of this nature seem to either never entered Hughes' thinking or were totally wasted on him. Hughes was a fanatical adherent to White Australia. When he heard of the Japanese proposal he was immediately alarmed by it and launched into such a flurry of activity in opposition to the proposal that his actions must have left the other delegates aghast with disbelief. The basis of Hughes' alarm over the proposal was his rather extreme interpretation of the proposal as an assault on White Australia. He concluded that if the proposal went into the Covenant, the White Australia policy would collapse and thousands of Japanese would pour into Australia and destroy its racial/cultural homogeneity.[1]

Hughes' interpretation of the Japanese proposal was rather extreme and distorted to say the least. While there

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[1]C. Hartley Grattan, The United States and the Southwest Pacific (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 135.

may have existed genuine uncertainty concerning the effect the porposal would have on racially discriminatory immigration legislation, the historical record would suggest that there was little evidence that passage of such a proposal would destroy the well established and generally conceded right of nations to determine the racial composition of their people. The sort of development Hughes was forecasting would have involved either the highly unlikely movement of nations toward some form of world government or an equally unlikely and drastic revision of those portions of international law pertaining to domestic jurisdiction, or a combination of both of these developments.

Hughes was impervious to arguments of this nature. To Hughes and most of his countrymen, White Australia was a sacred item, an item in which they passionately believed. Hughes was unwilling to accept an assault on that policy even by inference or inuendo. As a consequence, his opposition to the Japanese proposal was characterized by a total absence of caution and an unwillingness to even entertain the moral imperatives inherent in the proposal or the probable practical consequences it might have on the relations between nations. He believed that he had to defeat the Japanese proposal at all costs.

Hughes' initial reaction to the proposal was to resist it vehemently as poisonous nonsense. Thereafter, when the Japanese undertook efforts to devise a compromise

formula acceptable to all the assembled nations, he remained adamant and rejected them all. He "was not disposed to consider anything, least of all this, which might by any possible subtlety of logic or turn of unpredictable circumstances lead to a challenge of White Australia."[2]

This set the stage for one of several clashes that occurred at Paris between Hughes and President Wilson. The sort of dispute Hughes and Wilson carried on over the Japanese proposal was perhaps inevitable, for in both political style and philosophy these men were opposites. Wilson was a scholarly internationalist seeking to overcome the implicit limitations of the nation-state as well as being a dignified adherent to diplomatic graces and etiquette. By contrast, Hughes was a product of the rough and tumble of Australian labor politics. In foreign affairs he tended toward a double barrelled nationalist-imperialist chauvinism, and dignity simply was not in him; he was a stranger to moderation or diplomatic subtleties.

As the debate over the Japanese proposal dragged on, Hughes increasingly came to see Wilson, a strong supporter of the proposal, as a prime obstacle to its defeat. Subsequently Hughes attempted to bring about political pressure which would diminish Wilson's enthusiasm for the proposal.

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[2] ________, The Southwest Pacific Since 1900: A Modern History (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1963), p. 65.

He sought to undermine Wilson's position by unscrupulously stirring up American newpapermen from the West Coast with his interpretation of the proposal and having them cable home stories forecasting a flood of Japanese immigrants into California if the proposal was accepted by the Conference.[3]

Although Wilson was obviously annoyed by Hughes' actions, he maintained his composure, refused to be intimidated, and pressed forward for passage of the proposal. Eventually, the proposal reached committee and was about to be voted upon when the British unexpectedly withdrew their support for it. Although the majority of the Committee voted in favor of the proposal, Wilson ruled that since it was to become a part of the League Covenant it had to receive unanimous acceptance. Therefore, he proclaimed that the proposal had failed, and on that technicality Hughes won his victory and proceded to play the role of a triumphant champion.[4]

While any effort to arrive at conclusions concerning the long-term consequences of Hughes' action with respect to the Japanese proposal would involve a great deal of speculation, two observations are worth making in this regard. First, although Hughes won his victory he obviously lost his fight to rally world opinion to his position. He certainly

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[3]Ibid.

[4]Grattan, The United States and the Southwest Pacific, op. cit., p. 136.

hadn't put Australia's best foot forward. Second, Hughes' efforts to defeat the Japanese proposal probably contributed to the loss of the peace the Allies attempted to construct in Paris, for one result of the proposal's failure was that Wilson had to concede the Japanese position on Shantung, a concession which he deeply deplored and one which contributed to a breakdown of the balance of power in Asia and the eventual outbreak of war in the Pacific.[5]

NEW GUINEA

The second major Australian interest in world affairs which Hughes pursued at Paris was concern over the disposition of the former German island territories in the Pacific. Australian interest in the Pacific islands, particularly those to their immediate north, was longstanding. Long before they possessed the constitutional authority to formulate their own foreign policy, the Australians had expressed a concern over how the presence of foreign powers in the Pacific islands would affect their security position. That concern had led the Australians to pressure the British to annex all the remaining unclaimed islands as a means of insuring the "maritime supremacy of England" and of "keeping bad neighbors from coming near them."[6]

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[5] ________, The Southwest Pacific Since 1900: A Modern History, op. cit., p. 66.

[6] Amry and Mary Belle Vandenbosch, Australia Faces Southeast Asia (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1967), p. 19, apparently quoting Sir Thomas

However, the Imperial authorities had not shared the Australian concern over the activity of other nations in the islands. Unlike the Australians, whose security concerns were largely regional, the Imperial authorities in London viewed security developments in the Pacific islands from a world-wide perspective. This had led the British government to regard the islands either as further unwarranted burdens on the Imperial exchequer or as pawns to be traded off with other great powers in order to further British interests in areas of more direct concern to the Imperial authorities, such as those in Europe, the Middle East, India, etc. "The British, far from wishing to monopolize the outer world . . . wanted only fair competition and low tariffs."[7]

Eventually the determination of who would annex the remaining unclaimed islands was resolved (in early 1885) when the Germans deliberately staged a colonial conflict with England over the partition of New Guinea. In actuality, the Germans had only a marginal interest in the South Pacific islands. They forced the New Guinea issue only as an auxilliary of their European policy. What they were attempting to do at that time was to shift the balance of power in Europe by forging a Franco-German entente against England. To achieve that end they attempted to provoke the British to take steps which would hopefully be interpreted

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[7]A. J. P. Taylor, <u>The Struggle for Mastery in Europe</u> 1848-1918 (Oxford: <u>The Clarendon Press, 1960</u>), p. 297.

by the French as demonstrating that the British were (as the Germans were insisting) attempting to monopolize the outer world and freeze France and Germany out of the colonial race. New Guinea was an excellent place to apply that policy, for even if they failed to achieve their primary objectives, the Germans would be able to drive a wedge between the British and their Australian colonies. Indeed, "the topic of dispute was no doubt chosen in order to exasperate the British colonialists in Australia . . . ."[8] In the end, the British wisely resisted this provocation and acceded to the German desire to annex the northeast quarter of New Guinea, thereby demonstrating that the maintenance of a favorable balance of power in Europe was of far greater importance to them than monopolization of the Southwest Pacific region.

In later years, the British moved to assauge the Australian fear of neighbors by annexing the remaining southeast quarter of New Guinea and ceding it to Australia (in 1906) following the federation of the colonies. Still later, during the early stages of World War I, Australia strengthened its position in New Guinea when Australian troops occupied the German portion of the islands as well as the adjacent smaller islands.

When Hughes arrived at the Paris Peace Conference he was anxious to annex the former Germany territory. While he

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[8]Ibid.

was at least partially motivated by some ill-founded economic considerations, his principal concern was strategic. He had long argued that "whoever controls New Guinea controls Australia."[9] Moreover, not only would annexation of German New Guinea be a large step toward creation of the long-sought-after British Imperial monopoly in the islands to Australia's north, but would also enable the Australians to extend the White Australia policy to New Guinea, thereby keeping the much feared Asians that much further away from Australia's shores.

In the debate over the determination of the former German colonial territories, Hughes again clashed with President Wilson. Specifically, he took issue with Wilson's policy of no annexations--a policy which blocked his ambitions regarding New Guinea. In contrast to the clash over the Japanese proposal (when world public opinion had characterized his position as extreme and lacking any wide-spread support) on this issue Hughes found that he was not alone. Among the other Dominions in particular, he found strong support for his position, for Australia was no less anxious to annex New Guinea than the South Africans were to annex South West Africa, or the New Zealanders were to annex Eastern Somoa.

In general, Hughes' dispute with Wilson over the disposition of the former German colonial territories

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[9]Grattan, The United States and the Southwest Pacific, op. cit., p. 134.

centered not so much on transfer of control over these territories as on the means by which the transfer should be achieved. Hughes insisted that the territories should be annexed outright as spoils of war, while Wilson was concerned with creating international machinery designed to protect native welfare and supervise dependent peoples. After a long struggle over the issue, during which Hughes fortified his assault on Wilson with some of Theodore Roosevelt's "evidence" against the American President, a compromise was reached in which the former German New Guinea territories were turned over to Australia as a special or C-class mandate; in a compromise solution designed to preserve the principle of international supervision as well as concede Australian demands for effective possession.

REPARATIONS

The third line of policy set forth by Hughes at Paris dealt with the subject of war reparations. At the Paris Peace Conference, Hughes had joined a British delegation packed with men with little understanding of international economics--men who were intent on eliminating Germany competition from world markets and on "making Germany pay." Hughes became chairman of the British Empire delegation to the Reparations Commission and subsequently vice-chairman of the Commission itself. To Hughes' dismay, his work on the Commission once again flew in the face of a Wilsonian principle. In this case it was Wilson's effort to

frame a peace treaty which would neither be punative in nature nor determine the guilt of any nation for the outbreak of the war. Hughes would entertain none of that. He was adamant in his belief that the Germans were responsible for the war and should pay for their crime against civilization by bearing the entire cost of the war: "The crime is theirs and they must pay!"[10] As Australia's share of the expected reparations Hughes submitted a bill for £464,000,000. According to Wilson's approach to the issue, that claim (and those of all other nations) would automatically have been reduced by three/fourths.

After much haggling, the reparations issue was finally resolved when the Council of Four rejected the Reparations Commission's proposals and adopted a different scheme. When this latter scheme eventually collapsed in 1932, Australia had received little over one percent of what Hughes had originally hoped for.[11]

At the conclusion of the Paris Peace Conference, Hughes returned to Australia with mixed results to show for his efforts. Although he had successfully defended White Australia and won virtual sovereign control over former New Guinea for Australia, everyone of the positions he had taken at the Conference was sooner or later eroded away or

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[10] Grattan, The Southwest Pacific Since 1900: A Modern History op. cit., p. 62.

[11] Ibid., p. 63.

redefined in a manner favorable to his opponents. This so disturbed him that he proclaimed a "Monroe Doctrine" for the Australian region. He declared that, "While the Monroe Doctrine exempts the two Americas from jurisdiction of the League of Nations we would not allow anything relating to our sphere in the Pacific to be regarded as a proper subject for submission to the tribunal."[12]

Perhaps of more importance to any evaluation of Hughes' performance at Paris is an appreciation of the price he had paid in international prestige and respect in order to realize these limited results.

While few of his countrymen realized it at the time, the image Hughes had set forth at Paris was that of an extremist, a reactionary, and a nationalist, whose political views were more akin to those of Clemenceau than anybody else. The crude methods and bad manners he had demonstrated in his relations with President Wilson seem to have taken even Clemenceau by surprise. Although Clemenceau had been favorably impressed by the outspoken tenacity of all the British Dominions at the Conference and had referred to them as "Lloyd George's savages," he reserved a special compliment for Hughes, whom he liked, by suggesting that the Australian Prime Minister was a "former cannibal."[13]

All this suggests that in 1919 the Australian approach to world politics was characterized by immaturity

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[12]Ibid., p. 64. [13]Ibid.

and a wanton lack of understanding for the changes occurring in the international arena. By demonstrating a willingness to defy world opinion in pursuit of their foreign policy objectives, the Australians had exhibited a wholly inadequate appreciation of the increasingly interdependent nature of world politics. Moreover, by adhering to the classical "blood and treasure" argument throughout the Paris Peace Conference they demonstrated an inability to comprehend the serious consequences that could result from policies which tended to make at least one great power an outcast in such an interdependent world. The Australians seem to have failed to understand the real meaning of the war. If nothing else, the war revealed the urgency for statesmen to augment or complement the international security machinery with new mechanisms and processes. Lacking an understanding of that need, the Australians tended to look backward and resist the efforts of those who sought to respond to the need by forging a new world order.

THE POST-WAR SETTLEMENT IN THE PACIFIC

The Paris Peace Conference had focused its attention on adjustments necessary to insure European security. In large measure it left untouched matters involving the security of the Far East and the Pacific region. Post-war adjustment in the security of this region was delayed until 1921 when the Washington Conference on the Limitations of

Armaments was convened for that purpose. Since the Australians possessed a major stake in the security of the Pacific region, the convening of the Washington Conference provided still another opportunity for Mr. Hughes to bathe in the international limelight.

Prior to the convening of the Washington Conference, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance had served as the keystone for the balance of power in the Pacific region. Originally entered into during 1902, the Alliance was directed against Russia, and after the Russo-Japenese War, it was turned against Germany. It was conceived of by the British as a means of stabilizing the balance of power and strengthening their position in the Far East by turning over a portion of their role as the "world's policemen" to the Japanese.

The Australians' overall view of the Alliance appears to have been characterized by ambivalence. Not being inclined toward a close study of world politics, the Australians were not sure that when first made the Alliance was altogether to their advantage, although that is the view they eventually chose. The source of their concern was the fear that in efforts to resolve "the Eastern problem" the British might conclude that Japanese friendship was of more importance than Australia's welfare--a development which might lead the British to support a Japanese assault on the White Australia policy. As a consequence of that fear, dark references were not infrequently

heard concerning the price Australia might have to pay for the protection of Great Britain's "nigger empire" in Asia.[14] Later, when the Alliance was renewed in 1911, the Australians expressed concern lest the Alliance might bring the Americans down on their heads in the event of an American-Japanese conflict. During World War I Australian reaction to the operation of the Alliance was also mixed. On the one hand they were reassured by Japan's assistance in conveying Australian troopships and sharing in the burden of naval patrol duties. On the other hand they were not pleased when Japanese participation in liquidation of Germany's Micronesian territories brought them uncomfortably close to Australia's shores.

By the time the Treaty came up for renewal after the war, however, the Australians were strongly in favor of renewal since by that time they had worked themselves around to the view that the Alliance had come to be regarded as an integral part of Australia's security system. Subsequently, when the Alliance was discussed at the 1921 Imperial Conference Hughes was the most forceful advocate of renewal.

Unfortunately, changes which had occurred in the international environment made renewal of the Alliance difficult if not impossible. By that time the British were growing acutely aware of the crippling effect which the war

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[14]Grattan, The United States and the Southwest Pacific, op. cit., p. 137.

had on their world wide power position. In an effort to shore up their position, the British were pursuing a policy intended to introduce American power into the world balance of power on Britain's side--a continuation of the policy which had proven successful in the war. Therefore, as long as the British viewed the friendliest possible relations with the United States as indispensible to their welfare, the future of the Alliance would essentially be determined by the Americans.

When informed of that situation, Hughes attempted to insure the renewal of the Alliance by proposing that it be converted into a tri-partite treaty by inclusion of the United States. He reasoned that such a solution would not only strengthen Anglo-American relations, but also resolve any lingering Australian fears about the operation of the Alliance, and bring about a relationship which would enable the Americans to exert a restraining influence on the Japanese. Once again, Hughes' ambitions ran into resistance from the Americans, who eventually took the position that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance should be terminated.

At the 1921 Imperial Conference the American position with regard to the Alliance was set forth by the Canadians--the perrenial champions of closer Anglo-American relations. In responding to the Canadians, Hughes did not deny the importance of American good will and although he professed to understand Canada's anxiety to meet American wishes, he

argued that termination of the Alliance might be too high a price to pay for insuring that good will.

At the time of the Imperial Conference, Hughes' thinking about the security of the Pacific region seems to have been characterized by ambivalence toward the Americans and a lack of adequate knowledge about Britain's power position. While he recognized that American good will was valuable, his experience at Paris appears to have colored his attitude toward the United States. He seems to have felt that since the United States entered the war late it had not paid the price or earned the right to be a principal architect in the shaping of the post-war international environment. He could not bring himself to accord the United States the status of a great power. Moreover, it is unlikely that Hughes realized how seriously British strength had been drained by the war. At any rate, he was not of a mind to look favorably upon any proposal which tampered with Britain's increasingly tenuous position in the Far East.

Subsequently Hughes judged the abandonment of the Alliance to be detrimental to Australia's security interests. In his view it was more important to restrain Japan than to conciliate the United States. In the end the Imperial Conference arrived at no decision on the Alliance and it remained in force until its fate was formally determined by the Washington Conference on the Limitation of Armaments (1921-22).

The preliminaries leading to the convening of the Washington Conference were marked by a curious comedy of errors concerning the question of Dominion representation. Predictably, Hughes sought full representation for Australia at the Conference. Consequently, he pushed for the use of the Paris Peace Conference model of Dominion representation at the Washington Conference. After much hesitation, indecision and confusion, it was decided that the Paris model would not be employed; the Dominions would not be accorded separate representation at the Conference but instead would act merely as a member of the British Empire delegation. Although the British were primarily responsible for that development, it was indicative of Hughes' attitude toward the impending work of the Conference and the United States that he chose to blame the Americans for this bypass. They had "slammed the door on the Dominions."[15]

When the Washington Conference concluded its work, it had produced a network of treaties intended to stabilize the balance of power in the Far East, protect the Open Door policy, insure the integrity of China and regulate the size of the world's navies. Strategically those arrangements left Japan the preponderant naval and military power in the the Western Pacific, restrained by various self-denying agreements, and the United States the preponderant power in the Eastern Pacific. While the Australians more or less

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[15] Ibid., p. 139.

acquiesced in the conclusion of those arrangements, they regarded them as a poor substitute for the old Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Thereafter their appreciation of Australia's security position came more and more to focus on the British base at Singapore.

Following increased disaffection with his policies on the part of members of his own Government, Hughes resigned from his office on 9 February, 1923. He was replaced as Australia's Prime Minister by S. Melbourne Bruce. With this change in leadership a virtual silence fell over Australia's voice in world politics. The direction of Australian foreign policy passed to a series of "Kings' Men" who closely followed the British lead in world politics. The intense activity and restlessness which had characterized Australian foreign policy under Hughes' stewardship faded into the background and was ultimately replaced by a quiescence which would last until the outbreak of World War II.

Something of the mood which fell over Australia following Hughes' fall from power is derived from an analysis of the structural changes which occurred in Australia's foreign policy machinery prior to World War II and the nature of the foreign policy debate carried on in Australia during the inter-war period.

Although a Department of External Affairs was established as a separate, fully constituted Department of the

Federal Government at the time of federation, both prevailing political sentiment and Imperial restriction on "Dominion activity" in world politics limited the work of the Department during its first fifteen years to essentially a consideration of Australian-British relations. The establishment of the Department was somewhat premature and the overseas representation of Australian interests remained in British hands. In 1916, owing to both the shortage of work and the inclination of the then Prime Minister (W. M. Hughes) the Department was abolished and its work was divided between the Prime Minister's Office and the Home and Territories' Ministry.

Responding to the increased foreign policy demands placed on his Office during the immediate post-war period, Hughes strengthened and reorganized the foreign affairs section of his Ministry and in 1920 he even proposed that an Australian High Commissioner (higher in rank than a Trade Commissioner, lower than a Minister) be sent to Washington. This latter proposal was promptly attacked in the Australian press as threatening the diplomatic unity of the Empire and involving an unjustifiable expense. Shortly thereafter, Hughes dropped the proposal.

Hughes' immediate successors as Prime Minister saw little reason to change the administrative structure of Australia's foreign policy machinery. They were inclined and content to leave the conduct of Australia's foreign

policy in the Office of the Prime Minister. They had expressed concern over the direction which Hughes had been leading Australia in the foreign policy realm and were anxious to return to the closed, personal private-club atmosphere which had characterized the conduct of Australia's foreign policy in the pre-Hughes era.

During the mid 1920's the issue of separate Australian overseas representation again arose when the more adventurous Dominions began to establish their own missions outside the Empire. The Australian response to that development was characteristically much more cautious. While they did not deny the need for the Dominions to be more fully informed about world affairs, the Australians concluded that this problem could be solved without running the risk of disturbing the diplomatic unity of the British Empire. Instead, the Australian solution to this problem involved the more limited measure of appointing a "liaison officer" (Mr. R. C. Casey) to London to facilitate the flow of information between the British Foreign Office and the Australian Cabinet. As Australian interest in foreign affairs intensified during the late 1930's, this arrangement was expanded into a form of limited overseas representation through the appointment of Australian liaison officers (Counsellors in Charge of Australian Affairs) to the more important British overseas missions.

Although that system of overseas representation was considered adequate and preferable to separate Australian representation, it stood in rather marked contrast to the approaches of the other Dominions to this issue. Most noticeable in this regard was the differing character of their representation in Washington. By the mid 1930's the Canadians, the Irish, and the South Africans were all represented in Washington by Ministers, while the Australians (and New Zealanders) continued to adhere to the belief that their interests were adequately cared for by Britain's avowed policy of maintaining friendly relations with the American Government.

Moreover, it was not until 1935, during the period when Japan was throwing off the restrictions of the Washington Naval Treaties, that the volume and importance of Australia's foreign relations were judged sufficient to warrant the reconstitution and re-establishment of a separate Department of External Affairs, and the appointment of a Minister in charge. This did not mean, however, that the Minister of External Affairs was allowed to assume primary responsibility for either formulation or implementation of policy. That power remained in the hands of the Prime Minister and his Cabinet while the Minister for External Affairs and his staff apparently served the function of administrative technicians. Not until approximately 1937, when, coincidentally, W. M. Hughes assumed the

portfolio of Minister of External Affairs, did the Department begin to assume the characteristics of a modern foreign affairs office.

In general, Australian thinking on the subject of overseas representation seems to have been obsessed throughout the inter-war period by the notion that if only the other Dominions could be shown the folly of the direction in which they were tending, a common British Commonwealth foreign service would eventually evolve and enable the Dominions to share more fully in the direction of the Empire. While that notion may appear to have been rather anacronistic even to the world of the 1930's, it was rather indicative of the foreign policy debate carried on in Australia during that period.

What little discussion of foreign policy which did occur at that time tended to involve a growing recognition of the United States' role in the Pacific and Australia's particular interest in the Far East. Even though the nature of the security role which the United States played in the Pacific came into more clear perspective during this period, that role was not yet considered important enough to precipitate an abridgement of the "single voice" theory of Imperial relations. Closer coordination of United States-Australian relations was conceived as being achievable through the maintenance of close friendship between Britain and the United States. Nor did Australia's particular

interest in Far Eastern Affairs generate a willingness to abandon the accepted pattern of Imperial relations. Although an effort was made to distinguish Australia's interest from those of the British in the Far East that effort never progressed beyond a tacit agreement early in the inter-war period that Australia had distinguishable Imperial interests in the Far East.

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As the 1930's drew to a close, then, a comfortable feeling of geographic isolation pervaded Australia's relations with its external political environment. The notion that "a vast ocean separates us from Europe"[16] reinforced by the Washington Treaties, continued to lull Australia into a false sense of security and forestall the emergence of a truly independent Australian foreign policy. Although Australia had earlier been preoccupied with the great debate over the constitutional evolution of the British Commonwealth, it later parted company with the more adventurous Dominions which undertook the obligations of formulating independent foreign policies within the Commonwealth and as members of the League of Nations. Rather, Australia concluded that the implications of equality of status but

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[16] M. Danduand (a Canadian delegate to the League of Nations) in Gwendolen M. Carter, The British Commonwealth and International Security: The Role of the Dominions, 1919-1939 (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1947), p. 117, cited by Harper and Sissons: op. cit., p. 22.

not of power of function had led to the creation of a British Commonwealth in which the Dominions were "free but not equal."[17] Subsequently, Australia in large measure was content to establish the principle of equality of stature within the Commonwealth and to entrust the actual formulation of its foreign policy to Great Britain. It "accepted through choice rather than through constitutional necessity British direction of foreign policy,"[18] and avoided the expanded foreign policy prerogatives which should have been a logical consequence of the Balfour Report.

Although Australia gave general support to the League of Nations and hoped that somehow it would provide world security, the Australians were never converts to the doctrine of collective security. Acutely conscious of their geographic isolation and remoteness, they were guided by the notion that "We do not want to bother anybody else and we do not want to be bothered."[19] This adherence to the principle of "live and let live" produced a strong Australian reluctance to be drawn into European affairs and aversion to activation of the League's collective security provisions. R. C. Casey described this entire situation extremely well before a British audience during 1937. Speaking in terms that would have been echoed by the vast majority of his fellow countrymen he observed that:

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[17]Ibid., p. 29. [18]Ibid., p. 10.

[19]Richard C. Casey, "Australia in World Affairs," International Affairs (London), XVI (1937), no. 5, p. 702.

> We know of the antipathies and jealousies, the hopes and fears that have developed in Europe over the centuries, but these things do not mean very much to us out there--they do not enter into our feelings and our imaginations. We read in the Press about the troubles in Europe, but we find it extremely difficult to take it all at face value. I was myself for six years, from 1924 to 1930, intimately concerned with foreign affairs; I was here in London in active and daily contact with the Foreign Office, and when I went back to Australia at the end of 1930 reasonably well equipped to be able to follow from Australia what was going on in the world, I found, I admit greatly to my surprise, that when I had been back in Australia for six months, the reality of things on this side of the world began to fade very rapidly indeed. I read the Press, I got letters from friends about what was going on, and yet the whole European stage seemed to be behind a veil, rather misty and unreal. Now, if that could happen to somebody who had had six years of active contact with foreign affairs, how much more so must it be the case as regards the average Australian, ninety-five per cent of whom has never been outside the shores of Australia, and only reads about these things in the Press. I want to stress the fact that these thingswhich are very close to you, and naturally very real to you, seem very much less real to people who are half the world away."[20]

It was this situation that led Harper and Sissons to correctly conclude that in 1939 "there were Australians' attitudes toward or opinions about foreign policy--but no foreign policy as such."[21] Only after the Anglo-French disaster in Europe during 1940 and the Japanese bombs that fell on northern Australia dramatically shattered the old sense of isolation and remoteness did Australia belatedly fashion a truly independent foreign policy.

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[20]Ibid., p. 699.

[21]Norman Harper and David Sissons, op. cit., p. 30.

PART II

LABOUR DIRECTS AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Chapter 7

WORLD WAR II

FIRST STEPS IN DIPLOMACY

The year 1937 seems to have marked a major turning point in the course of Australian foreign policy. Prior to that time, Australian statesmen had enjoyed general success in insulating their nation from the uncertainties of world politics, and as long as the external political environment had placed few demands upon Australia, they had been content to have Australia play an essentially passive role in world affairs. Since they had seen no reason to abandon the dogma concerning the "diplomatic unity of the Empire" or to expand Australia's diplomatic machinery beyond that necessary to carry on "consultation" with the British, Australian foreign policy had remained British foreign policy. In other words, during the first four decades after federation the Australians had remained firmly committed to the preservation of the _status quo_ in world politics. They had been extremely reluctant to engage in any activity which might have altered, even by inadvertence, the prevailing nature of world politics or the traditionalist interpretation of their Dominion status.

During the late 1930's, however, the traditional foundations of Australian security and well-being had undergone serious erosion. In the Pacific the breakdown of the Washington Naval Treaties had produced an unrestricted naval race among the great powers, while in Europe the rearmament of Germany and the emergence of a new political orientation with the rise of the Rome-Berlin Axis had seriously compromised the position of the traditional guarantor of Australian security. In response to those developments, Australian officials demonstrated an increasing awareness of the important changes taking place in the world arena and somewhat belatedly concluded that those changes might impinge on vital Australian interests.

What particularly disturbed the Australians during the closing years of the decade was unchecked Japanese aggression in China. As long as the Japanese had confined their encroachment on China to Manchuria, the Australians had taken only a distant interest in that situation. When the Japanese expanded the scope of their aggression, however, and began to encroach on British interests in China, Australian sentiment underwent a dramatic change. Although Australian sentiment toward the Chinese *per se* remained unchanged in light of expanded Japanese aggression, the inability of the British to check Japanese encroachments on their interests in China (a clear demonstration of the further weakening of British power in East Asia) led many

Australians to take increasing cognizance of their deteriorating security position. Furthermore, there was evidence of a growing realization that Japanese energies, while heavily engaged in China, would in all likelihood seek further release through a probable southward expansion. By the end of 1937, they had come to the general conclusion that Australian interests were irreconcilable with any Japanese ambitions which involved any southward course of expansion.

This assessment of Japanese intentions and an awareness of Australia's vulnerability to attack led Australian officials to undertake several diplomatic initiatives in defense of the international status quo. The first of those initiatives was implemented solely within the Imperial framework. In 1937, the British convened an Imperial Conference to discuss the world security situation and invited the Dominions to submit items for discussion. Australia was the only Dominion to respond to that invitation. At that Conference, the Australian delegation introduced and strongly supported three major recommendations. The first of these envisioned increased Imperial defense cooperation in the Pacific region. Not surprisingly, the focus of any increased cooperation would be the British base at Singapore. The second Australian recommendation amounted to an expression of fear on the part of the Southwest Pacific Dominions that Great Britain's world-wide commitments,

particularly those in Europe, would leave her unprepared in the Pacific. In order to forestall any such eventuality, the Australian delegation proposed the adoption of measures which would enable the Dominions to play a larger role in the making of Imperial foreign policy and thereby hopefully insure that Pacific as well as European affairs received their fair share of attention. The third Australian recommendation was the creation of a Pacific Pact, to include the United States, which would offer an alternative assurance against Japanese agression.

Of the three Australian recommendations set forth at the Imperial Conference, the Pacific Pact proposal was unquestionably the most important. In general, the proposal was an expression of several important Australian concerns. It expressed a growing feeling among Australian officials that British diplomacy was lethargic and ineffectual in countering disturbing trends in world politics. By suggesting that it was necessary to devise a Pacific security system in which the United States rather than Great Britain would play a dominant role in order to correct that situation, the proposal represented one of the first important indications of a growing Australian realization that Imperial unity and Dominion national interests might be incompatible. Furthermore, the proposal was indicative of a growing Australian awareness that the "X" factor in the Pacific balance of power equation was the United States.

It signaled the beginning of a long Australian campaign to draw the United States out of its isolationist mold and take a firm stand against further Japanese southward expansion. Moreover, the Pacific Pact proposal represented an important shift in substantive Australian policy. As indicated in Part I, the Australians previously had opposed any system of regional or general security guarantees. Australia previously had insisted upon the right to decide each security issue on its own merits and had reserved the right to exercise a veto in all matters related to the enforcement of collective security measures. The thrust of the Pacific Pact proposal represented an important reversal of that policy and suggested the growth of new Australian awareness that world or at least regional security indeed was indivisible.

Unfortunately, the Pacific Pact proposal had been neither carefully formulated nor fully developed. The proposal met with a cool reception from all the Pacific powers and eventually was dropped. With the collapse of this proposal Australia reverted to its traditional diplomatic stance. It increased military collaboration with Great Britain, expanded its own defense program and urged rapprochement between Britain and Japan. In the end, then, the Pacific Pact proposal was important not for what it achieved, but for what it represented. It represented a growing Australian disatisfaction with their traditional

security arrangements and an increasing awareness that it was no longer possible in the mid-twentieth century to achieve national security by simply abstaining from involvement in a world that was becoming progressively more interdependent. Although neither of these developments led to a break with the dogma concerning the diplomatic unity of the Empire, they were indicative of a maturation in official Australian attitudes and did serve as the basis for a cautious effort on their part to adjust to the changing requirements of Australia's external environment.

In 1937, the Australians also undertook to strengthen their own ability both to assess and participate in foreign affairs. Most important in this regard were the Government's decisions to up-grade the Department of External Affairs to independent Cabinet rank, the appointment of W. M. Hughes as Minister of External Affairs, and sponsorship of Parliament's ratification of those sections (2, 3, 4, 5, 6) of the Statute of Westminster which repealed the principal British colonial laws for the six territories designated by the Statute as Dominions and permitted them "to make laws having extra-territorial operation."[1] It is important to recognize, however, that these decisions did not in and of themselves represent a major shift in either the content or conduct of Australian foreign policy. Rather, they seem

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[1]The text of the Statute of Westminster can be found in: Nicholas Mansergh, ed., Documents and Speeches on British Commonwealth Affairs 1931-1952 (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), I, 1-3.

to have been largely an exercise in contingency planning intended to place the country in a better position to pursue a more independent policy only if and when the course of world events might make pursuit of such a policy incumbent upon Australia. For example, during the Government's effort to secure Parliamentary ratification of the Statute of Westminster, Mr. Robert G. Menzies, then Attorney General in the Lyons Government, argued that what the Government sought was only to bring Australia in line constitutionally with Canada, South Africa, and Ireland. And according to Menzies, this involved no breach of the diplomatic unity of the Empire. Speaking before the Australian House of Representatives, Mr. Menzies argued:

> I know that quite a number of responsible people are troubled about the proposal to adopt the Statute of Westminster for the reason that they feel it may give some support to the idea of separatism from Great Britain . . . I think that the business of devising the Balfour Declaration in 1926, and the business of devising and drafting the preamble of the Statute of Westminster in 1931 were both open to grave criticism . . . I believe that the 1926 declaration . . . was, in substance, a grave disservice. But that does not prevent me from saying that these things have been done . . . I want to suggest (that) those who are troubled about this legislation, are now too late. That is why I said I was referring to them as a matter purely of historical interest, because for better or worse we have the Balfour Declaration and the history of 1926 and 1930 . . . I think, and suggest to the House, that having regard to these circumstances, we ought at this stage to recognize the facts and to come into line uniformly with the other dominions. I think that on all these matters of constitutional doctrine and practice, as much

> Uniformity as possible throughout the British world should be aimed at.[2]

However, when Parliament refused to follow Mr. Menzies' line of reasoning, largely as a result of state government protests that any change might adversely alter their constitutional positions, the ratification effort failed and the federal government found itself where it had always been without even the benefit of the technical uniformity it had been prepared to accept.

IN DEFENSE OF APPEASEMENT

Following the collapse of Prime Minister Lyons' Pacific Pact proposal, the Australian Government became a firm advocate of appeasement as a means of reversing the trend toward collapse of the world security situation. In general, Australian support for appeasement sprang from several foreign policy attitudes: the habit of following the British lead, traditional isolationist sentiment in Australia, and a general fear that British involvement in a European war would leave the Empire unprepared to contain further Japanese aggression in the Pacific. On this important issue, however, the Government did not always speak with one voice, and it was only after much intra-Cabinet debate that a clear Australian position surfaced.

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[2]C. Hartley Grattan, The Southwest Pacific Since 1900 (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1963), p. 142, citing Mr. Menzies from C.P.D.

On the whole Prime Minister Lyons' Cabinets were probably the most discordant in Australian history, and the one he led during the prelude to Munich was probably the most divided of all. In fact, one of the major reasons Lyons continued in office despite poor health was because he alone proved capable of holding the discordant factions of the Government together. In that Government, Lyons himself supported appeasement. His support was probably more a matter of emotion than conviction, however, since he was an emotional pacifist. The pragmatic political defense of appeasement came more from Mr. Menzies than anyone else. He emerged as Australia's most extreme and consistent advocate of appeasement. He repeatedly lavished praise on the policies of Stanley Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain, and, following a trip to Britain and Germany, he assured the Australian people that Germany's intentions were purely defensive and not aggressive. Moreover, on occasion Menzies even went so far as to blame the earlier treatment of Germany for the rise of Hitler, to praise German economic achievements and efficiency, to insist that there were two sides to the Sudetenland issue, and to suggest that Germany had a "prima facie" case in the Polish Corridor dispute.[3]

The opposition to appeasement within the Government was led by W. M. Hughes. An old political activist who

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[3]E. M. Andrews, "The Australian Government and Appeasement," Australian Journal of Politics and History XIII (1967), no. 1, p. 34.

always had regarded world affairs as the lawless realm of power politics, Hughes took the position that only strength and the confidence that it inspired could enable those opposed to fascist aggression to avoid vacillation and weakness--two qualities he considered to be inexcusable blunders in diplomacy. What was particularly interesting about Hughes' attack on appeasement, however, was the nature of the principal line of argumentation he employed. In general the thrust of his argument was a derivation of an older theme in Australian foreign policy. He suggested that those individuals who gave either open or tacit approval to Hitler's revisionist policies in Europe were endorsing a line of action which might lead in the near future to a compromising of Australia's position in New Guinea. Hughes suggested that it would be only a short step from approving German territorial claims in Europe to endorsing German claims to their former colonial territories. Hughes hammered away on this theme, raised the spectre of German bombers based in New Guinea within range of major Australian cities, and declared that the loss of New Guinea would involve loss of the only tangible benefit Australia had derived from participation in World War I. Since the future of New Guinea was one of the few issues on which anything like a foreign policy concensus existed in Australia at the time, the conclusion which Hughes drew from his analysis--"what we have we hold"--struck a responsive note

among the Australian public.[4] All this moved Lyons to announce in November, 1938, that irrespective of its support for appeasement, the Government had no intention of handing New Guinea back to Germany. Unfortunately, few Australians seemed to realize that the arguments Hughes employed so effectively in moving the Government to head-off any German claims to New Guinea applied with even greater force to the situation in Europe.

During this important pre-World War II debate over foreign policy, Menzies eventually prevailed over Hughes. Hughes lacked both the personal capacity and political support necessary to rally and lead a sustained opposition to the policy of appeasement. He was past his prime, distrusted by key factions of his party, and his crude politics repelled many uncommitted individuals. Thus, Australia continued to follow the British lead in counselling a policy of appeasement toward Hitler and the Japanese.

As the world political crisis deepened during the summer of 1938, Australian support for appeasement seems to have followed less from the old habit of following the British lead than from an independent assessment of Australia's precarious security position. Since at least the mid-1930's, the Australian Government had believed that hostility toward Germany and Japan would make war with both more certain and that as long as both threats to peace

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[4]Ibid., p. 42, citing Mr. Hughes from C. P. D.

existed simultaneously, Great Britain would not be able to offer assistance to a strategically exposed Australia. In other words, the Australians feared that if war broke out in Europe while the strategic situation in East Asia remained uncertain--or *vice versa*--Australia might find itself in the worst of all possible situations; that of being constitutionally and emotionally committed to fight in a war in Europe while at the same time being confronted with aggression on its own door-step. It was that fear which eventually led the Australians to take a position in favor of appeasement even stronger than that taken by the British. The Australians simply did not consider such questions as the Sudetenland as being worth risking war, at least not in the world of 1938. Rather the victims of fascist expansionism were to be urged to make sacrifices in "the general interest of peace."[5]

Although the exact nature and extent of Australian participation in British decisions leading up to the Munich Agreement is not fully a matter of public record, it is known that early in that process Australia informed the British that whatever decisions were arrived at with regard to the disposition of the Sudetenland, the Czechoslovak Government should be consulted: that is, "the government at Prague should itself contribute to the settlement by making proposals."[6] Having thus made a

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[5]Ibid. [6]C. P. D., (1938), CLVII, p. 326.

gesture in support of the principle of consultation, the Australian Government not only endorsed British policy toward Czechoslovakia, "but also positively urged the British Government to bring pressure to bear upon the Czechoslovak Government to offer "the most liberal concessions' to Hitler."[7]

MUNICH

On September 28, 1938, at the height of the Sudeten crisis, Prime Minister Lyons rose in Parliament to deliver a much delayed statement on the international situation. In reading a speech which Mr. John Curtin, Leader of the Australian Labour Party, aptly described as "a most extraordinary anti-climax,"[8] Mr. Lyons concluded with the following words:

> It will be seen . . . that what the Government of Great Britain has been doing, with the support of the Government of Australia, has been to make every effort to preserve the world's peace . . . . If war is to come to the world it will not come by reason of anything that any British nation has done or failed to do. Our hands are clean. We have done our best to keep the peace. We have no selfish interest to serve. Even as the clouds gather about us we still hope that peace may be preserved.[9]

Two days later, immediately after word of the Munich Agreement arrived in Australia, Lyons sent the following message to Prime Minister Chamberlain:

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[7]Alan Watt, The Evolution of Australian Foreign Policy, 1938-1965 (Cambridge: The University Press, 1967), p. 4.

[8]C.P.D., op. cit., [9]Ibid., p. 312.

> My colleagues and I desire to express our warmest congratulations at the outcome of the negotiations at Munich. Australians in common with all other peoples of the British Empire owe a deep debt of gratitude to you for your unceasing efforts to preserve peace.[10]

The Australian Labour Party's reaction to the Government's announcement was indicative of both its thinking during the final pre-World War II years and suggestive of the future course of Australian foreign policy. Mr. Curtin critized the Government for having "said either too much or too little" throughout the Sudeten crisis.[11] On the one hand, he charged the Government with having "had no policy on foreign affairs, that it was silent as to any contributions it might have made to the discussion of any of these matters . . . ." On the other hand, he wondered whether the Government had "made certain commitments gravely affecting the future of the Australian people and had said nothing about them."[12] The concern which precipitated this charge was crystal clear. In light of the Government's well known interpretation of Australia's constitutional obligations in the event that Great Britain became a billigerent, Labour feared that Mr. Lyons had made a committment to assist the British militarily if war broke out in Europe.

Throughout this episode, Labour continued to maintain that Australian continental defense should take priority

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[10] Ian Macleod, Neville Chamberlain (London: Frederich Muller, 1961), p. 270, cited in Watt, op. cit., p. 3.

[11] Ibid., p. 2. [12] C.P.D., op. cit.

over Imperial defense. In defending this position in Parliament on October 5, Mr. Curtin restated an argument which had been heard in Australia twenty years earlier:

> . . . the interests of Australia can best be served by giving paramount consideration to the safety of our own people and the safety of our own soil. The defense of this nation is best served by a policy of national self-reliance rather than one which embroils us in the perennial disputes in Europe . . . I say that the Labour Party in Australia is opposed in principle and in practice to Australians being recruited as soldiers in the battlefields of Europe . . . . We believe that the best service which Australia can render to the British Empire is to attend to its own business, to make certain that we manage Australia effectively, so that we shall have the necessary population and be able to rely upon ourselves in the event of an emergency.[13]

Thus, Labour never suggested that either the British or the Australian Governments should have given greater support to the Czechoslovak Government or have opposed Hitler more firmly.

The Government's rebuttal to Labour criticism was set forth by its principal theoretician, Mr. Menzies. In rebutting Curtin's charge that the Government had no policy of its own, Menzies questioned whether a Dominion should formulate a foreign policy and announce it irrespective of whether that policy was in line with British policy, for

> . . . to adopt such a line of conduct would be suicidal . . . not only for us, but also for the British Empire as a whole . . . I have always believed . . . that the British Empire exercises its greatest influence in the world . . . when it speaks with one

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[13]Ibid., pp. 393-394, also see J. J. Dedman, "The Return of the AIF from the Middle East," Australian Outlook, XXI (1967), no. 2, p. 151.

> concerted voice . . . (but) we ought to have minds sufficiently informed and sufficiently strong, positive and constructive, to be able to say useful things at the right time to the Government of the United Kingdom . . . . But that means that that policy in relation to any individual matter has to be expressed to the Government of the United Kingdom.[14]

With respect to the question of Australia's status if Great Britain should become a belligerent, Menzies was clear and emphatic:

> My doctrine in relation to the position of Australia has been stated over and over again . . . that so long as the British Empire is constituted as it is today, it is not possible for Australia to be neutral in a British war . . . . But the extent to which Australia may participate in a war, the means by which she may participate, and the question whether Australian soldiers shall fight on Australian territory or on foreign soil, are matters for determination by Australia or, may I say, of the enemy.[15]

During the immediate post-Munich period, official Australian foreign policy statements were characterized by relief and optimism. The only major dissenter from that mood was W. M. Hughes. Since he held that the League of Nations and all treaties were nothing but words which would be pounded into the dust by the use of force, Hughes argued that what was urgently needed in world affairs was for the "peace-loving nations" to unite against the facists' use of force, or suffer the fate of being beaten down one-by-one. Because of his persistence in this view, Hughes deserves most of the credit for the important, although limited, rearmament measures Australia adopted in the months immediately prior to the outbreak of war.

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[14]Ibid., p. 429. [15]Ibid., p. 431.

While Hughes was stressing the need to be firm with the fascists, Menzies continued to support the policy of appeasement. When Hitler made demands on Poland, he again took the position that there were two sides to every issue and urged sympathetic consideration of the German claim to Danzig. In so doing, Menzies was slower than the British to recognize the failure of appeasement. Whereas the British had lost faith in appeasement and resolved to "draw the line" against Hitler after he took Prague, Menzies only hardened his remarks after that development. He still urged negotiation and apparently had hopes for its success. He urged the British to encourage the Polish Government to negotiate, but added that this was conditional upon Germany being reasonable and signing a general European settlement. In the end, Hitler's invasion of Poland finally revealed to Menzies the truth which some of his critics were much quicker to realize.

It is rather clear, then, that Menzies' support for appeasement went too far. No matter how unprepared either Australia or Great Britain were for war, it was unnecessary for him to defend the internal policies of the Nazi regime and continually praise German industrial efficiency. By so doing, he often gave the impression that the Nazi regime was praiseworthy and that the German side in the international disputes it provoked was the better one. Like many other conservatives throughout the world, he apparently

fell into the trap of seeing Hitler as a bulwark against communism. Thus, during the confusion of the immediate pre-war years, Menzies failed to understand both the causes and nature of the Nazi challenge.

In fairness to Mr. Menzies, it should be noted that he does not bear sole responsibility for the weakness in Australian policy during the immediate pre-war period. That weakness was at least partially traceable to the awkward position Australia found itself in with regard to acquiring vital information about the quickening pace of world politics. Located 12,000 miles from London and lacking its own foreign service, the Australian Government found that it could neither influence events in Europe nor, in periods of immediate and acute crisis, even keep abreast of them. Years of neglect and emotional climate in Australia rather than Mr. Menzies, or any other single individual, were primarily responsible for that situation.

MENZIES AS PRIME MINISTER

Although most of the foreign policy debate in Australia during the immediate pre-war period involved a discussion of political developments in Europe, it was actually Japan's ambitions which were really the focus of growing Australian concern over the growth of disturbing trends in world affairs. As Labour's position clearly showed, much Australian interest in the course of events

in Europe essentially sprang from wondering how developments in that region would affect the security situation in the Pacific. After all, Japan posed a clear and present danger to Australia, while Germany did not. Whereas Germany could indirectly compromise Australian security by tying down the guarantor of that security in Europe, Japan could directly threaten Australia. Subsequently, it was suspicions, deductions and forecasts about future Japanese actons, and not really German actions, which led the Australian Government to contemplate fundamental changes in the nature and conduct of its foreign policy. More specifically, it set the Government to thinking about problems of continental defense, the urgent need to strengthen the Imperial base at Singapore, and the inadequacy of its knowledge about American foreign policy.

In turning its attention to those considerations, it was with regard to information about American policy that the Australian Government found itself most lacking. Unlike Canada, South Africa and Ireland, Australia had not chosen to establish separate diplomatic representation in Washington after enactment of the Balfour Report and the Statute of Westminster. As a consequence, if Australia wanted confidential information about American foreign policy, or if it wanted representation made on its behalf to the United States, it had to rely on the facilities of the British Foreign Office and diplomatic service. It was

a rather dangerous state of affairs to allow to continue in a period of acute international uncertainty during which Great Britain was becoming increasingly preoccupied with European affairs. It not only meant that the assessment of world affairs Australia received was filtered through British interests, but also raised the possibility that in areas where Australian and British interests differed, the British Government might withhold important information as a means of influencing Australian policy. In 1939, the Australian Government hesitantly and belatedly moved to correct that situation.

On April 7, 1939, Mr. Lyons died. After a lengthy political struggle within the Government, Mr. Menzies narrowly defeated Mr. Hughes for leadership of the United Australia Party and the Prime Ministership of Australia. Menzies took office on April 26, and in his first message to the Australian people as Prime Minister he reviewed the state of world affairs and announced several important departures in the course of Australian foreign policy. In this important message, he stated that:

> In the Pacific we have primary responsibilities and primary risks. Close as our consultation with Great Britain is, and must be, in relation to European affairs, it is still true to say that we must, to a large extent, be guided by her knowledge and affected by her decisions. The problems of the Pacific are different. What Great Britain calls the Far East is to us the near north. Little given as I am to encouraging the exaggerated ideas of Dominion independence and separatism which exist in some minds, I have become convinced that in the Pacific Australia

> must regard herself as a principal providing herself with her own information and maintaining her own diplomatic contacts with foreign powers. I do not mean by this that we are to act in the Pacific as if we were a completely separate power; we must, of course, act as an integral part of the British Empire. We must have full consultation and co-operation with Great Britain, South Africa, New Zealand and Canada. But all those consultations must be on the basis that the primary risk in the Pacific is borne by New Zealand and ourselves. With this in mind I look forward to the day when we will have a concert of Pacific powers, pacific in both senses of the word. This means increased diplomatic contact between ourselves and the United States, China and Japan, to say nothing of the Netherlands East Indies and the other countries which fringe the Pacific.
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> It is true that we are not a numerous people, but we have vigour, intelligence and resource, and I see no reason why we should not play not only an adult, but an effective part of the affairs of the Pacific.[16]

Those were rather shocking words when uttered by a pre-war Australian conservative. They were not intended, however, to imply a declaration of independence from British foreign policy. Rather, the principal purpose of Menzies' statement involved an "attempt to distinguish an Australian interest from a British interest, not on the assumption of hostility between them but rather on the assumption that a peculiarly Australian interest might not be given the same weight and importance in London as in Canberra, because it was not so vital to London as to Canberra."[17] Of course, a statement of that nature was bound to elicit protest from large numbers of Australia's more fervent imperialists.

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[16] Mr. Menzies from the Sydney Morning Herald, 27 April, 1939, cited in Alan Watt, op. cit., p. 24.

[17] C. Hartley Grattan, The United States and the Southwest Pacific (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press 1961), p. 149.

In anticipation of such a development, in the same address Menzies moved to avert criticism from Australia's most ardent supporters of anything British by restating that in matters of war and peace,

> (Great Britain's) peace is ours; if she is at war, we are at war, even though that war finds us not in European battlefields, but defending our own shores . . . . The British countries of the world must stand or fall together.

By suggesting that in the event of war the Australian contribution to Empire defense might be made on Australian shores rather than in Europe, Menzies was hedging, of course, on the more traditional interpretation of Australia's Imperial obligations. And this was a development which Labour naturally welcomed.

The recognition that Australia had an important stake in the affairs of the Pacific basin was not equivalent, however, to establishing that Australia should have her own foreign policy, especially if that policy were to differ either in emphasis or substance from British policy. Before the Australian Government could contemplate the formulation of a more independent foreign policy, it first had to redefine Australia's Dominion status, and this was to prove an extremely difficult undertaking in "a mental and emotional context in which the traditional Australian position was defended as 'loyal' while proposals for autonomous action were stigmatized as 'anti-British.'"[18]

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[18] Ibid.

Nevertheless, the public announcement that henceforth Australia must regard herself as a "principal" in the Pacific; that she required separate diplomatic contacts in the Pacific; and that those contacts should provide her with "her own information" represented an important and major step in the process leading toward the emergence of an independent Australian foreign policy. The mere fact that the need to follow this course of action was set forth by "a man who considered himself a 'vessel for the salvation of British civilization'"[19] amounted to an important symbolic break with the mode of thinking that had precluded that development for so many years. Furthermore, in proposing that Australia provide herself with her own diplomatic information, the Government was actually embarking on a course of action which in all likelihood would hasten the emergence of an independent Australian foreign policy by providing Australia with information which would lead to more independent Australian judgements about the nature of world affairs. Indeed, when the Australian Government eventually did send diplomatic representatives overseas, it chose as Australia's emissaries men of such high calibre that they "could not fail through independent reports to influence the formulation of Australian policy in directions unlikely to be identical with British policy."[20]

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[19]Manning Clark, A Short History of Australia (New York: New American Library, 1963), p. 222.

[20]Watt, op. cit., p. 25.

Therefore, even though Menzies' announcement was not followed by any dramatic changes in the Australian foreign policy formulation process, it did contribute to laying the foundation for future such changes. It was an important part of a process in which the Government came to realize that Australia's vital interests demanded something more in the field of foreign policy than intelligent suggestions to London, based primarily on British sources of information, as to how the United Kingdom should conduct, on behalf of the British Commonwealth as a whole, a policy which the constituent members felt able to endorse. And it signalled the start of a slow process of change which in all probability would lead, irrespective of Mr. Menzies protestations to the contrary, to an abridgement of the dogma concerning the diplomatic unity of the Empire.

In early 1939, then, a new imperative had surfaced in Australian foreign policy. By that time, it was clear that Australian knowledge about the strategic situation in the Pacific was sorely lacking. What had become particularly important for Australia was the acquisition of more specific information about American policy toward Japan. Although the Australians were aware that the American Government was opposed to further Japanese expansionism, such generalized information proved inadequate for defense planning. The information which was crucial to Australia in that regard was some indication as to the probable American response in event that the Japanese proved astute enough to by-pass

American possessions in the Western Pacific during any thrust southward. In other words, it became imperative for the Australians to learn what the American Government "would regard as a cause for war, and to them that was the hub of the matter."[21]

It is also clear that during the first half of 1939, and for several months thereafter, the Australian Government did not consider the acquisition of more detailed information about American policy to be an urgent necessity. The unnecessarily long delay which followed the announcement to establish separate Australian diplomatic contacts and when those relations were eventually established (R. G. Casey presented his credentials at the White House on 5 March, 1940, Sir John Lathan did not arrive in Tokyo until the end of 1940, and Sir Fredric Eggelston did not take up his appointment in Chungking until 1941) suggests that the Government saw at this time no urgent need to hasten the collection of its own information about developments in the Pacific. The Australian Government apparently still assumed that its strategic position was reasonably strong and secure. Therefore its increased diplomatic activity amounted to little more than an effort to further insure Australia's strategic position in light of certain imaginable although presumably remote contingencies.

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[21]C. Hartley Grattan, The United States and the Southwest Pacific, p. 157.

What finally heightened Australian involvement in world affairs was the course of events in Europe. It is probably not an exaggeration to state that Australia was forced into the world of diplomacy against its will only after Hitler's ambitions eventually posed a grave threat to the vital interests of the British Empire.

WAR IN EUROPE

When war broke out in Europe in September, 1939, the Australian Government adhered to the traditional position that when Britain was at war, Australia was automatically at war. It did not act, as did the Canadian Government for example, to declare war on its own. That policy was not only in keeping with the Government's interpretation of Australia's Dominion status, but also followed from the Government's assessment of Australia's national interests and was in conformity with its view of international morality. As Mr. Menzies explained it,

> We in Australia are involved, because in plain English, the destruction or defeat of Great Britain would be the desctruction or defeat of the British Empire and would leave us with a precarious tenure of our independence.[22]

In strategic terms, the outbreak of war in Europe confronted the Australian Government with the dilemma it long had feared and sought to avoid: that is, it was faced with having to decide whether to send its military strength

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[22]C. Hartley Grattan, The Southwest Pacific Since 1900, p. 143.

to Europe in support of the British or with conserving its forces in Australia for a possible Pacific war. When that decision was finally made, it was in favor of supporting the Imperial war effort in Europe. Of the four army divisions Australia mustered for overseas service prior to Pearl Harbour, three (the 6th, 7th and 9th) were sent to the Middle East to participate in defense of that key link in the British supply line while the fourth (the 8th) was sent to reinforce the Imperial garrison at Singapore.

In part, the decision to deploy the bulk of Australia's military strength in the Middle East was predicated on the traditional belief that Australia's defense was inseparable from Imperial defense. As suggested by Menzies' April 26 statement, however, that consideration alone would not necessarily have led to the decision to send a substantial portion of Australia's limited military strength half way around the world at a time when the situation in the Pacific remained extremely uncertain. What was of equal importance in the determination of the decision was the Government's willingness to engage in a calculated risk based on the assumption that the principal threat to Australian security emminated from Europe. Although the extent of German-Japanese collaboration was not known at that time, the Australian Government shared in the widely held belief that Germany and not Japan posed the greatest threat to world security. Accustomed to following

the British lead, it adhered to the thesis that if the German threat could be repulsed, the Japanese threat could easily be snuffed out, possibly without a shot being fired. Therefore, the Australian Government elected to give "all out" support to the Allied effort against Germany in Europe while simultaneously seeking to maintain a peaceful international environment in the Pacific. In theory, the Australian Government's analysis of what should have been done was logically correct. Unfortunately, it followed from serious and wide-spread misconceptions as to both the strength and intentions of the Axis powers.

Throughout the period of the "phony war" in Europe, Australian diplomatic activity continued to be characterized by a surprising degree of complacency over the strategic situation in the Pacific. Two considerations were largely responsible for that situation. First, prior to the fall of France, it appeared that the gamble involved in the Government's decision to send the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) to the Middle East was not only succeeding, but also that its assessment of Australia's strategic imperatives was the correct one. Second, the myth surrounding the strategic importance and invulnerability of the Imperial base at Singapore undoubtedly led to faulty conclusions about the situation in the Pacific. Although Australian military officials had expressed skepticism over the strength of Singapore since at least 1934, the image of that base held

by many Australians was more a product of wishful thinking than hard strategic analysis. As one comtemporary Australian historian has observed, Australia was one of the principal victims of the myth about Singapore. For most Australians,

> . . . the British had only to reach Singapore to insure Australian security, even though it lacked a battle squadron . . . in time of uncertainty and ignorance about what the future held, Australians grasped the most immediate symbol of British might . . . and invested in it, to the end, all the emotions they could muster. The stern of a British battleship, lying guard in the harbour of Singapore with guns trained north towards the aggressor was probably a mental picture many Australians had nursed in comfort.[23]

How pervasive a role this image played in Australian strategic thinking is difficult to assess. What is certain, however, is that the decision to send the AIF to the Middle East was based in part on the conclusion that the Singapore base would serve as a deterrent against the outbreak of full-scale war in the Pacific, or failing that it would at least prove capable of containing any future hostilities north of Australia along the so-called Malay Barrier.

What this entire approach to insuring Australian security failed to account for was that when war broke out in Europe, the strategic situation in the Pacific underwent a fundamental change. With the British both tied down in Europe by German aggression, and lacking the resources to

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[23] V. D. Cruz, "Menzies' Foreign Policy, 1939-1941," Australian Quarterly, XXIX (1967), no. 3, p. 38.

fight a two-ocean war, the determination of future developments in the Pacific largely had passed to the Japanese and the Americans. The failure of the Australian Government to recognize that important change in the situation in the Pacific, or at least its failure to act upon any recognition of that change was the principal weakness of Australian policy prior to Pearl Harbour.

Indicative of the Australian Government's misconceptions about the strategic situation in the Pacific was the continued caution and hesitancy with which it approached the United States. As indicated earlier, almost a full year passed between Menzies' announcement of his Government's intention to send a separate Australian diplomatic emissary to the United States and the time when Mr. Casey presented his credentials at the White House. Furthermore, in undertaking that action, the Government had felt it necessary to stress that the exchange of diplomatic representatives "was not to denote any departure from the diplomatic unity of the Empire."[24]

The Australian Government's persistence in this line was unfortunate for it contributed to their further suffering from what Grattan has termed "low visibility" in Washington at the very time when it was incumbent upon Australia that a strong and independent voice from the Southwest Pacific be heard there. By adhering to this self-imposed restraint

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[24] C. H. Grattan, The United States and The Southwest Pacific, p. 163.

on their diplomatic independence, the Australian Government unnecessarily compounded the formidable difficulties it soon would encounter in influencing developments that threatened Australia's very survival.

THE FALL OF FRANCE AND THE SEARCH FOR SECURITY

Although the fall of France in June, 1940, aroused a new sense of urgency in Australian diplomatic activity, the magnitude and importance of that disaster was only slowly recognized by the Australian Government. What the fall of France really meant for Australia was the collapse of its security system. Since success of the strategy which had led the Government to send the AIF to the Middle East was dependent upon the continued ability of the British to play a major security role in the Pacific, that strategy was part of the wreckage left on the beaches at Dunkirk. As a telegram from London received in Canberra on June 28, made clear, "the whole situation has been radically altered by the French defeat," and in a forecast of things to come, the telegram went on to suggest that "because we cannot spare a fleet for the Far East at present" it was all the more important to try to improve the land and air defenses in Malaya.[25]

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[25]Lionel Wigmore, The Japanese Thrust (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1957), p. 19.

As is well known, the Allied reverses in Europe during the summer of 1940, precipitated the predicted intensification of tensions in the Pacific. More importantly for Australia, it led to the Japanese decision to place the war in China in abeyance and redirect the major thrust of their aggression southward toward the largely unprotected Southeast Asian colonies of the defeated European metropolitan powers. It was this development which at long last brought some of the fundamental differences in Australian and British interests to the foreground. What occurred has been astutely summarized by Grattan's observation that:

> . . . while the Far East was ever more obviously becoming a first priority for Australia, for Britain it was third on the list. In terms of defense, the Australians were contributing to the defense of Britain, the first priority of the United Kingdom, and the concentration of their effort was on the second, the Middle East, but Britain's third priority (which was becoming Australia's first) was being neglected by both.[26]

In responding to the intensification of tensions in the Pacific, the Australian Government theoretically had several options open to it. First, Australia could have broken out of the Imperial framework, brought at least a portion of the AIF home, and intensified its efforts to increase coordination in defense planning with the Americans. Although the imperatives of the situation in the Pacific suggested that something of this nature be done, as long as the United States continued to follow an isolationist

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[26]Grattan, op. cit., p. 172.

policy, the Australian Government deemed such a line of policy to be of dubious and questionable merit. In any event, Mr. Menzies' Government was not likely to be convinced of the wisdom of such a policy. In addition to being personally a staunch imperialist, Mr. Menzies led a Government that was internally so divided that it is unlikely it could have survived any break with British policy at a time when Imperial loyalties still ran high in Australia.

Alternatively, the Menzies Government might have intensified Australia's own war effort and either strengthened its continental defense preparations or made further contributions to the defense of the Malaya Barrier. But this course also would have proven difficult politically. Although Menzies demonstrated a personal awareness of the need to pursue such a course of action,

> The objective of 'total' war never reached anything like 'total' intensity. It was carried to about the point where no (further) intensification was possible without a frontal invasion of the civilian economy and the standard of living, but not beyond.[27]

Neither the Australian Parliament nor the Australian public at large saw at all the need to undertake the sort of committment suggested by Menzies. Although it was dangerous to allow that situation to persist, it is difficult to see how Menzies or any other Australian statesmen could have corrected it. The Australian people were simply not

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[27]Grattan, op. cit., p. 145.

accustomed or prepared to accept or understand the arguments of the men who were desparately trying to rally their nation to meet a threat of the magnitude which loomed.

The Menzies' Government responded to the European precipitated deterioration of the strategic situation in the Pacific by merely intensifying what it had been doing all along. On the one hand, it stepped up its consulation with the British, particularly in regard to the situation at Singapore. About the only substantive result which followed from that effort was a categorical assurance from Mr. Churchill that if,

> . . . Japan set about invading Australia or New Zealand, I have the explicit authority of the Cabinet to assure you that we should then cut our losses in the Mediterranean and sacrifice every interest, except only the defense and feeding of this Island, on which all depends, and would proceed in good time to your aid with a fleet able to give battle to any Japanese force which could be placed in Australian waters, and able to parry any invading force, or certainly cut its communications with Japan.[28]

Those were hardly reassuring words coming from a Government which clearly had its back to the wall and indeed was encountering extreme difficulty defending and feeding its homeland. But in a period of confusion and uncertainty, the statement seemingly had its intended impact on the Australian Government. On the other hand, the Australian Government undertook to insure that the focus of future Japanese aggression would be kept as far to Australia's north as possible

[28]Wigmore, op. cit., p. 24.

by giving selective, staunch support to British efforts to appease Japan. By this time, it no longer suffered from any illusions about the policy of appeasement. Rather, it counselled appeasement of the Japanese in an obvious attempt to buy time Munich-style in the hope that the international situation might develop more favorably to the Allies, and to delay any show-down with the Japanese until the pattern of the extremely important Japanese-American negotiations became clearer. For example, in a replay of the Munich strategy, Australia endorsed and even pressed for the British decision to close the Burma Road in mid-1940. In so doing, Australia sought to buy time, albeit at another country's expense, by supporting an action designed to encourage the Japanese to reverse their decision to place their aggression in China in abeyance and move southward. At about the same time, however, Australia sought to insure that if the Japanese did not respond to the Burma Road gambit and as a result moved southward, the crucial show-down between the Allied and Japanese forces would occur somewhere to Australia's north, by urging the British to independently inform Japan that any encroachment on Thailand would mean war.

This was a rather ambitious and delicate policy for any nation of Australia's size and power to be pursuing. Moreover, the success of that policy was almost wholly dependent upon the ability of Australian officials to

influence their British counterparts with respect to developments in the Pacific. Furthermore, it was a policy doomed to failure because in pursuing a course of action to insure Australian security which was predicated almost solely on its ability to influence the British, the Australian Government increasingly found itself in the awkward position of attempting to relate to a nation which was playing a progressively more passive role in the Pacific. Not only did the British lack the resources to do more in the Pacific, but following the fall of France, Churchill passed responsibility for the direction of Allied policy toward Japan to the United States. This was the crux of the problem the Australians were encountering, but only belatedly did they recognize the nature of the problem.

It was early in 1941, when the Australian Government finally recognized the full magnitude of its dilemma. Aware that something was seriously amiss with the old consultation mechanism, Menzies decided during the spring of that year to go to London to impress upon the Imperial authorities the gravity of the situation in the Pacific. Seemingly, his mission was undertaken in the belief that either a lack of will, concern or information--but not a lack of resources--was responsible for the British failure to take a stronger stand against the Japanese. While Menzies was in London, the whole matter of consultation was further exacerbated by the ill conceived and inadequately supported Imperial

venture in support of Greece. Being some of the best forces available at the time, the burden of executing a large portion of that venture fell on the ANZAC forces stationed in the Middle East. Throughout, however, the operation was characterized by the lack of adequate, efficient and candid consultation between British and Australian officials. Therefore, when the operation failed, it created the impression that the British were wasting away Australia's limited military forces on ineptly handled adventures of questionable value while their homeland remained virtually defenseless save by the Singapore base.

What Menzies learned during his sojurn in London is not fully known. What is a matter of public record is the fact that he felt it necessary after the venture in Greece ended in disaster to raise with the British War Cabinet the entire business of consultation. While the minutes of those meetings have never been made public, Paul Hasluck states that after his return to Canberra from London,

> Menzies . . . while extolling Churchill's great qualities, felt obliged to tell his colleagues both in the War Cabinet and the Advisory War Council of his (Churchill's) unsatisfactory attitude of mind towards questions in which Dominions interests were involved. Menzies considered that Churchill had no conception of the British Dominions as separate entities and, furthermore, the more distant the problem from the heart of the Empire the less he thought of it.[29]

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[29]Paul Hasluck, The Government and the People 1939-41, (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1952), p. 347.

Those were harsh words indeed for Mr. Menzies to use when talking about the political leadership supplied from the "heart of the Empire."

Of much greater importance, however, was Mr. Menzies realization while in London that regardless of the status of British concern over the situation in the Pacific, they simply did not possess the resouces at their command to do more in that region. Having finally recognized the true gravity of Great Britain's military situation, Menzies arrived at the same conclusion which the British had reached at least a year earlier; namely, that in the East Asian and Pacific regions "nothing (in any respect) could be achieved without the United States."[30] Whether the British had failed to inform the Australians on this matter or whther the Australians had simply proven impervious to their warnings is not clear. It has been reported, however, that on his return to Australia, Menzies advised his Cabinet that "it is now evident that for too long we readily accepted the general assurances about the defense of this area."[31] Correctly seen, this much delayed realization that the United States was after all the preponderant power in the Pacific marked a major turning point in Australian foreign policy. Although not fully appreciated at the time, it signalled the beginning

[30]C. H. Grattan, The Southwest Pacific Since 1900, p. 152.

[31]J.J. Dedman, "Defense Policy Decisions Before Pearl Harbour," Australian Journal of Politics and History, XIII (1967), no. 3, p. 343.

of a process which eventually would lead to the formulation and implementation of a truly independent Australian foreign policy.

By mid-1941, then, the Menzies Government had placed Australia in a precarious position. Having placed support of Great Britain in Europe ahead of national defense, instead of in balance with it, the Government found itself in the dangerously exposed position of having committed its principal military forces in Europe without being able to command adequate support from Europe for its own defense. In an effort to compensate for that ambiguity in Australia's strategic position, members of the Menzies Government increasingly focused their attention on a singular foreign policy objective: that of preventing Australia from finding itself at war (in the Pacific) without America at her side. In pursuit of that objective the Australian Government followed two parallel lines of policy. In the belief that a strong American commitment in the Pacific might forestall war altogether in that region, the Australian Government on the one hand sought to buy still more time in anticipation of such an American commitment by playing a tranquillizing role there. It attempted to sustain the diplomacy between the Americans and the Japanese. On the other hand, the Australian Government sought to act as a catalyst in a process which hopefully would culminate in the establishment of an American "presence" in Southeast Asia.

In large measure, the pursuit of a stronger American presence in Southeast Asia was conceived of by both the British and the Australians as involving the immediate and prospective use of Imperial military bases in the Southwest Pacific and Southeast Asia. Both Governments undertook diplomatic initiatives to commit the United States to the use of those bases. The Australian Government's motivation in this regard was two-fold. On the theoretical level, it hoped that such a strategy would insure that all British and American military operations in the Pacific would be collaborative, thereby enabling Australia to avoid any breach of Imperial unity should joint Australian-American action become necessary. On the more practical level, however, both the Australian and British Governments were attempting to maneuver the United States into a position where the American Government would be provided a _casus belli_ in the event that all efforts to deter Japan failed. In other words, they attempted to move the military forces of the Pacific's preponderant but neutral power into the probably line of further Japanese aggression.

Not surprisingly, this Anglo-Australian effort centered around an attempt to commit the Americans to the use of the Singapore base. Although accounts differ as to how strongly the Australian Government favored an approach to the Americans which stressed the strategic importance of Singapore, it is clear that at least some prominent

Australian officials believed that "Singapore was vital to the United States,"[32] while others probably would have preferred that the approach concentrate on bases in the "outer islands" to Australia's immediate north. In any event, the Americans were never convinced by arguments about the Imperial bases in the Pacific being vital to their interests nor were they ever induced to accept the British thesis about bases. Therefore, they rejected the offer for use of Singapore with almost rigid consistency.

In attempting to maneuver the United States into a position between Australia and the probable line of future Japanese aggression, the Menzies Government encountered major diplomatic osbtacles, some the result of past neglect while others were not. By far the greatest difficulty it encountered arose from the fact that it was attempting to influence a nation whose President also was preoccupied with events in Europe. Mr. Roosevelt simply did not clearly see the possible predicament of a remote Dominion of the Empire, such as Australia, if the Japanese attacked. Since the strategy of his military advisors not only failed to appreciate adequately the nature of the Japanese threat but also was focused on defensive positions in the Philippines, few people in Washington believed that Japan either could or would carry the war south of the equator.

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[32]C. H. Grattan, The United States and the Southwest Pacific, p. 159.

Indicative of the difficulties the Australian Government encountered in its attempt to influence American policy was the fact that in its approach to the United States Government it suffered from the disadvantage of having to deal almost solely with the American Secretary of State. Although Mr. Hull was a capable and competent man, he was not at that time the principal architect of American foreign policy. Since his "world view" or approach to world politics differed greatly at times from that of his President, something approaching a division of labor in the foreign policy realm apparently had been worked out between these two men during the period in which the United States slowly emerged from its isolationist mold. In that arrangement, Mr. Roosevelt took under his own supervision matters he considered to be of primary or immediate concern, while those he considered to be of secondary, residual, or future importance were assigned to Mr. Hull. Not infrequently, communication between the two men broke down, and often one or the other of them was, for the most part, unaware of the other's activities. Therefore, the fact that Mr. Hull bore primary American responsibility for handling negotiations with the Japanese was not only indicative of the importance President Roosevelt assigned to the situation in the Pacific, but also suggestive of the difficulty the Australian Government encountered in having its case heard where it really counted in Washington.

In addition to finding itself placed at a disadvantage by the European orientation of American policy, the Australian Government also encountered diplomatic obstacles arising from its past neglect of relations with the United States and its failure to have fashioned an independent foreign policy. The nature of those problems is clearly discernable from the nature of Mr. Casey's activities in Washington during that period. According to Alan Watt, who was on the scene at the time, Mr. Casey was charged with two principal tasks to perform. On the one hand, he was to

> . . . build up in official and private circles in the United States a favorable 'climate' of opinion towards Australia, and an understanding of its position and its substantial contribution to the war effort in the Middle East and elsewhere.[33]

In carrying out that task, Mr. Casey apparently was quite successful. On the other hand, Mr. Casey was to attempt to insure that any American and British activity in the Pacific would be collaborative. In fact, he devoted a great deal of time to the improvement of Anglo-American relations during a period of some difficulty between the two great powers. Mr. Casey was an ideal choice for this task. He was always a gracious host and was adept at starting and guiding conversations dealing with thorny issues.

The problem with Mr. Casey's instructions was that in terms of having Australia's voice heard and recognized

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[33]Watt, op.cit., p. 38.

in Washington, they were somewhat contradictory. While it was obviously in Australia's interest to insure that American and British actions were collaborative, the very nature of that effort tended to perpetuate the American perception of the Australians as merely supernumeraries of the British. In other words, Mr. Casey's efforts in this regard probably resulted in the perpetuation of Australia's low posture in Washington at the very time that the strategic situation in the Pacific made it imperative that the opposite should have occurred.

What the situation in the Pacific demanded was for Australia to abandon the dogma about the diplomatic unity of the Empire and break out of the foreign policy restrictions it had imposed upon itself. Since it was by then well known that the British were incapable of reinforcing their positions in East Asia, it made no sense for the Australian Government to persist in policies based upon illusions about past Imperial power and grandeur.

Belatedly, the Anglo-Australian efforts to maneuver the United States into the path of any future Japanese thrust southward eventually began to produce results. In September, 1941, as part of a contingency plan designed to provide a backstop for their bases in the Philippines and to secure a southern sea route to those bases from Hawaii, the United States asked if a variety of air and naval bases could be made available in the islands to the north of Australia and

on the north and northeastern coasts of Australia itself--their development to be a joint undertaking. Although this was the sort of overture the Australian Government had been waiting for, there was one aspect of the American proposal which was both very disturbing and indicative of Australia's peculiar status in Washington at that time. Initially, the request for permission to develop the bases was addressed to the British and not the Australian Government even though every location mentioned was in Australian territory. Since the British were powerless to dispose of Australian possessions and territory, they passed the proposal on to the Australian Government.[34] By the time the proposal was made, it was already too late. Nothing had been done about the bases before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour.

In the final analysis, then, the Australian Government's attempt to serve as a catalyst for American involvement in East Asia and the Pacific largely resulted in failure. A precondition to the success of any such policy would have involved a basic redefinition of Australian-American relations realistically determined by Australia's security position in the Southwest Pacific. On December 7, 1941, that had not yet been achieved. And when it finally did come about, it was Japanese actions rather than Australian diplomacy which brought it about.

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[34]Grattan, op. cit., p. 176.

THE AUSTRALIAN LABOUR PARTY IN OFFICE

From the time Menzies became Prime Minister in 1939 until the general elections of 1943, Australia's internal politics followed a torturous course characterized by a semi-political deadlock that not infrequently occurs in parliamentary democracies when power is shifting from one political grouping to another. It was unfortunate for Australia that this process occurred during that period, for the nature of the times required that a strong government be at the helm of the nation. In fact much of the lethargy which was a feature of Australian foreign policy prior to Pearl Harbour is attributable to this situation, for a government which finds itself in a vulnerable political position is likely to continue or merely intensify its prior efforts than it is to undertake any major departure in policy.

In the general election of 1940, the Australian electorate had failed to give either the United Australian Party/Country Party coalition or the Australian Labour Party (ALP) a majority--the balance of power being held by independents who sided with the conservatives. As leader of the coalition government, Menzies had sought to break the deadlock by suggesting that an all-party, or national government on the British model be formed. Labour rejected that overture in accordance with its long-standing policy of

ruling alone or not at all. It countered with a proposal for the creation of an all-party National (Advisory) War Council empowered to "consider and advise the Government with respect to such matters relating to the defense of the (Australian) Commonwealth or the prosecution of the war as referred to the Council by the Prime Minister."[35] Such a Council was set up on October 25, 1940, its power being consultative, not executive, and with vicissitudes it last throughout the war.

With an all-party coalition Government blocked by Labour, Menzies was then left with the alternative of strengthening the position of his own coalition. In that effort he encountered formidable difficulties, for the prime consideration which has always bound Australia's various shades of conservatives together--namely anti-Labourism--was on the wane. In order to perpetuate the cohesion of his Government, Menzies had implemented several cabinet reorganizations designed to placate the increasingly restive Country Party members of the coalition. In those efforts, Menzies was obviously hindered by his own personality. He "lacked charisma" and was accused of being "unpopular" among the Australian electorate.[36] Moreover, his position was tragically weakened in August, 1940, when

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[35]Hasluck, op. cit., p. 27.

[36]C. Hartley Grattan, The Southwest Pacific Since 1900, p. 158.

three cabinet members particularly loyal to him were killed in an airplane accident at Canberra. Yet Menzies held on and persisted in his efforts to seek an amicable accomodation with the Country Party.

By early 1941 it became clear that Menzies' own cabinet--not Labour (which recently had closed ranks when Curtin brought the old Lang Labour faction back into the fold)--posed the most serious threat to Menzies. By that time he had given too much power to the Country Party and his opponents were lying in wait for an opportunity to defeat him. The chance they had been waiting for came during Menzies' trip to London in early 1941. His absence from the country "released the inhibitions of the cabinet" and what followed was a rather disgraceful political cabal in which Mr. Arthur Fadden (leader of the Country Party by virtual default and acting Prime Minister in Menzies' absence) defied all precedent or political reason and undertook as the leader of the coalition's junior party to displace Menzies and thus solve the problem of an uncertain government led by an unpopular Prime Minister.[37] Following Menzies' return to Australia, Fadden eventually succeeded in having the cabinet convince Menzies that he was not wanted, and on August 28, 1941, Menzies announced his intention to resign.

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[37]Ibid., p. 159.

Mr. Fadden became Prime Minister of Australia on August 29, 1941. He soon realized, however, that there was more to being a Prime Minister than being personally popular. He proved incapable of stopping the rise of Labour sentiment in Australia and on October 7, Labour, with the support of the two independents, defeated the Fadden Government's budget. Subsequently John Curtin was called upon to form a Labour Government. With that development the stage was finally set for a dramatic change in the course of Australian foreign policy.

Labour brought into the Australian government attitudes which were bound to change the emphasis of Australian foreign policy. The most significant of those was the ALP's profound nationalism. Historically, the ALP had emerged in part as a protest against Imperial control of Australian policies, and that sentiment ran high in the Party. Consequently, it was the Australian approach to Imperial relations which was most likely to be altered under Labour leadership. Moreover, Labour's victory placed the conduct of Australian foreign policy into the hands of men with distinctively different temperaments from that of the former Imperial spokesmen.

The background of John Curtin, the new Prime Minister, stood in marked contrast to that of Menzies. Born of humble origins and of Irish stock, he was essentially a self-educated man, having left school at fourteen to work.

He began his political career as a mildly radical socialist, having come under the influence of nationalists and socialists. From the excitement of radical agitation he moved into the stern practicalities of trade unionism. During World War I he had been a pacifist and took a leading part in the campaign against conscription, in which loyalty to his own people and an acquired hatred of imperialism were combined. Like many who shared his inclinations, Curtin's spirits had been aroused by the hope of better things for mankind promised by the Russian Revolution of 1917, only to have those spirits dashed in anguish over the subsequent treason trials in Moscow. After World War I, he worked tirelessly to build up the party after the anti-conscription debacle. Like most successful Labourites, he became at once a sound party man of a leftist tinge and a strong nationalist. During most of the inter-war period he had advocated a policy of isolationism for Australia while it endeavored to secure economic and social justice for itself and others. In 1935 he became leader of the Labour parliamentary party, and in the words of Manning Clark:

> . . . a man who was by birth and conviction suspicious of all policies pursued by the British Government, and who believed that men should love and comfort one another for the loss of eternal life, but who was vague and muddled on how this was to be achieved, confronted from March 1939 in Parliament a man who believed the British to be the paragons of civilization, a man who looked on those comforters that had sustained Curtin in childhood, youth and middle age with a lofty disdain."[38]

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[38]Clark, op. cit., p. 219.

It is one of the true ironies of Australian history that Curtin--"a man who once had in his heart the vision of that day when men would neither hurt nor destroy"[39] became Prime Minister when Australia was alreadily heavily engaged in war and was shortly to find itself in a battle for its very survival.

The new Minister for External Affairs (and Attorney General) was Dr. Herbert V. Evatt. No analysis of Australian foreign policy would be complete without some understanding of the personality of this distinctive man. Evatt brought an outstanding academic and legal record to the External Affairs Ministry. He was a highly educated man, having won numerous academic honors and earning a Doctor of Laws (a rare achievement in Australia at that time). After practicing as a barrister and entering Labour politics in 1925, the Scullin Government had appointed Evatt a Justice of the High Court of Australia at the unprecedented age of 36. He sat on the Court for ten years before resigning in 1940 to enter federal politics. He had not served a full term in Parliament before becoming Attorney General and Minister for External Affairs. It was, of course, unusual for a man of Evatt's training and background to achieve such high office in a party that historically displayed an anti-intellectual bent and leaned for its leadership toward the indentifiable trade unionist who had worked his way up through the ranks of the party

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[39]Ibid., p. 222.

organization. What was not surprising was that a party whose members were usually more familiar with domestic social or economic problems than international or legal problems would find Evatt's talents as a trained constitutional lawyer extremely useful in the Attorney General's and External Affairs' ministries.

In political style Evatt differed distinctively from John Curtin. Whereas Curtin was "an organization man" who was patient and benevolent in his actions, when Evatt

> . . . represented his country overseas, reactions to his style and tactics were often adverse . . . . Evatt was no man to rest content with being a power behind the throne; he sought the limelight, the full glare of favourable publicity, and, being avid for power, when acquired he used it to the full. His natural abilities certainly made it possible for him while Minister to influence events and people, but in the process he made few if any friends. The status, therefore, which he succeeded in winning for Australia during his overseas visits was diminished by his aggressive and thrusting manner which took small account of the susceptivities of other countries, including the United Kingdom.[40]

In the months prior to taking Office, Labour's criticism of the conservatives' handling of Australian foreign policy had been benign, not aggressive. In fact there are indications that Labour really possessed little interest in foreign affairs other than an ill-defined desire to stay out of war. What was really the concern of Labour was the forward movement of the socialization of the Australian economy. When war broke out in Europe, Labour

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[40] Watt, op. cit., p. 46.

had supported Australia's declaration of war and acquiesced to the subsequent defense build-up although it continued to oppose conscription even for home defense until Japan entered the war. The one foreign policy decision which did come in for a share of Labour criticism was that involving the dispatch of Australian forces to the Middle East. Labour had been uneasy over the gamble involved in that decision, and thereafter was consistently more reluctant than the Menzies' Government to take risks in the Pacific in the interests of victory in Europe over Germany. It argued that the Australian commitment to support the British in Europe has "to be determined by circumstances as they arise, having regard to the paramount necessity of Australia's defense."[41] It was not that Labour rejected participation in the European theater, in fact it gave limited support to the policy of sending Australian forces to the Middle East and reinforcing them. It was simply that Labour was less incumbered by Imperial thinking and felt that the strategic policy the conservatives pursued was unbalanced in favor of the Middle East.

In the brief period between its accession to office on October 3, 1941 and the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour, the new Labour Government followed policies broadly similar to those of its predecessor. In his first address before Parliament as Minister for External Affairs (on November 27,

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[41] Ibid., p. 5.

1941), Evatt began with the statement that "At the outset, I take the opportunity of stating that the recent change of government in this country does not imply any vital change in Australian foreign policy."[42] He went on to reiterate continued Australian support for keeping negotiations going between the Japanese and the Americans, and to reveal that Labour somewhat surprisingly also focused its defense strategy on Singapore. With regard to the AIF in the Middle East, there was no suggestion that its withdrawal was being considered. In fact, as late as November 26, 1941, the Labour Government approved plans to reinforce the AIF.

The Australian view of the situation in the Pacific immediately prior to the attack on Pearl Harbour has been expertly summarized by Mr. Paul Hasluck. According to his account the Australian Government envisioned the following developments in the event a number of hypothetical situations became realities.

> (1) If Japan intensified attacks on China, especially in Yunnan and on the Burma Road, China should be given all support short of declaring war unless American intervention was certain.
> (2) If Japan attacked Thailand, armed Commonwealth support should be conditional on American involvement; as regards the Kra Isthmus, however, we should occupy the region if the Japanese definitely threatened it by force of arms.
> (3) If Japan attacked Russia, Britain should declare war against Japan, provided Russia undertook to consider herself at war with Japan if the latter moved south and Britain were involved thereby in war with Japan in the Pacific.

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[42] H. V. Evatt, <u>Foreign Policy of Australia</u> (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1945), p. 4.

(4) An assurance of automatic armed support for the Netherlands East Indies, irrespective of the United States attitude; The Netherlands should give a reciprocal undertaking.
(5) If Japan should attack Portuguese Timor, Britain should declare war, again irrespective of the United States attitude; a reciprocal understanding should be concluded with Portugal.[43]

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of all these contingencies was the crucial role the United States would play in all of them. This suggests that in less than a year, the Australian Government's appreciation of the situation in the Pacific had undergone a belated but dramatic and important change.

THE UNITED STATES ENTERS THE WAR

Pearl Harbour was bombed on December 7, 1941. The following day the United States declared war on Japan. The reaction of the small Australian mission in Washington and that of Mr. John J. Dedman, the Australian Minister for War Organization of Industry, to the news of what the Japanese had done probably were characteristic of the entire Australian Government's response to what had happened. Recounting what occurred in Washington, Allan Watt states that

> Late on Sunday afternoon the small staff of the Australian Legation, Washington, met at the minister's residence. At that stage the extent of the damage done to the American Fleet and installations at Pearl Harbour was not known, although it was suspected that

[43]Hasluck, op. cit., p. 554.

> it had been severe. For this small band of Australians, however, regret for the loss of American lives, sympathy for relatives, chagrin that, despite all the warning information available, the American Fleet had been caught napping, merged into one dominant emotion: the United States was an ally in a war which, whatever trials lay ahead, would in the end result in the defeat of the Axis Powers.[44]

In Canberra, Mr. Dedman shared in the feelings of the Australian Legation in Washington.

> When I heard that Japan, on the morning of Sunday 7 December, 1941, had made an unprovoked attack on Pearl Harbour, I confess to experiencing a feeling of profound relief. However long it might take and whatever temporary set backs might be experienced, I now knew that the tremendous might and power of the United States made ultimate victory over the Axis powers a certainty.[45]

In other words, the Australians interpreted this development as a guarantee that the Americans would fight and as an assurance that the long sought Australian-American collaboration in the Western Pacific now would become a reality. To Australia, that was extremely important, for it mean that the Japanese had accomplished what neither British nor Australian diplomacy had been able to realize. Of more immediate importance, it meant that the United States was now at war, and the central objective of avoiding Australia finding itself at war with Japan without America at her side had now been realized.

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[44]Watt, op. cit., p. 41.

[45]John J. Dedman, "The Return of the AIF From the Middle East," Australian Outlook, XXI, no. 2, p. 151.

Although Pearl Harbour was seen by most Australians as a diplomatic windfall, Harley Grattan has interpreted the impact of that development on Australia's situation differently. He suggests that in the short run at least, it represented anything but a windfall because,

> By crippling much of American power in being . . . the attack practically guaranteed that the war could not be kept north of the equator and away from Australia. Correctly seen, Pearl Harbour was (as much) an Australian disaster as it was an American disaster. It was not so regarded by the Australians on 7 December, 1941.[46]

When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour, Australian defense planning was still based on the assumption that any general war in the Pacific would be fought north of the equator; that is, somewhere north of Singapore. Therefore, the rapidity with which the military situation deteriorated in the Pacific under the impact of the Japanese thrust came as a great shock to the Australians. Not only was the Japanese thrust utterly disporportionate to earlier estimates of their strength, but it also revealed that Australia and her associates were weaker than had yet been candidly admitted. This development confronted the Australian nation with a challenge of historically unprecedented dimensions. Heretofore war had always been a remote occurence. Now it was suddenly a challenge at Australia's doorstep, and as events unfolded many feared that it could not be contained even there.

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[46]C. Hartley Grattan, The United States and the Southwest Pacific, p. 177.

It was this fear which made the Australians think about continental defense and the pressing need for American assistance. In a short period of time, those concerns precipitated a drastic deterioration in Anglo-Australian relations. In other words as the thrust of the Japanese drive southward bore down on Australia the resultant heightening of apprehensions in Australia led to real conflicts of interest between London and Canberra.

The first portent of what was to come followed from the situation at Singapore. As early as December 2, the battleship Prince of Wales and the battle cruiser Repulse had arrived to reinforce the Imperial base. Although Australian military officials expressed concern that these ships had not been accompanied by an aircraft carrier, their mere presence at Singapore encouraged the Australians. However, the sense of relief which the Australians experienced with the arrival of the two warships was short-lived. On December 10, while on a sortie, without sufficient air cover, in an attempt to disrupt Japanese landings in Malaya, both ships were sunk by Japanese aircraft. In one swift stroke, the Japanese had rendered Singapore a naval base without a battle squadron.

The Australians received the news of the sinkings in a manner reminiscent of the 1940 reaction to the news that France had surrendered. The news was considered so alarming that the Government's initial reaction was to question its

validity. When it first came over the air, an official effort was made to keep it off Australian radios on the grounds that it was Japanese propoganda. Only after the sinkings were confirmed by the British Broadcasting Corporation was the news released.[47]

What was so shocking to the Australians about the sinking of the Prince of Wales and the Repulse was not so much the actual loss of the ships, for losses were to be expected in warfare, but the manner in which they were lost and what that foretold about the assistance Australia could expect in the immediate future from the British. Just as the Prince of Wales and the Repulse had symbolized for many Australians the British promise to reinforce Singapore in an emergency, the inability of the British to provide adequate air cover for those ships likewise symbolized that what the British could do would be far too little and too late.

As Allied resistance continued to scatter as chaff before the Japanese wind, the mood of the Australian public opinion began to change from complacency to anxiety and, in some cases, panic. The focus of that anxiety was the situation at Singapore. By the end of December the Japanese had reached the Malayan province of Johore and were preparing to cross over to the island of Singapore. In the meantime, Australia's political and military rep-

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[47]Ibid., p. 178.

resentatives in Malaya and Singapore were sending reports to Canberra stressing the need for urgent and significant reinforcements if the fall of the fortress was to be avoided. To accomplish that, they even recommended that the AIF in the Middle East be transferred to Singapore to reinforce the Australian division already there.

On December 25, the Australian representative in Singapore cabled Canberra, warning that:

> As things stand at present fall of Singapore is to my mind only a matter of weeks . . . without immediate air reinforcements Singapore must fall. Need for decision and actions is a matter of hours, not days.[48]

This was alarming news indeed, for what was at stake was nothing less than the keystone of Australia's entire defense structure. Therefore, on the same day, Prime Minister Curtin sent messages to Washington for Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt, who were conferring there, expressing the opinion that the reinforcements earmarked for Singapore seemed "utterly inadequte," particularly in regard to fighter aircraft. Significantly, he also added that if the United States so wished, Australia would "gladly accept United States command in the Pacific Ocean area."[49] Moreover, Curtin further forecast what was to come in a separate message to Mr. Casey, in which he advised the

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[48]Wigmore, op. cit., p. 182.

[49]Ibid.

Australian Legation in Washington to "Please understand that (the) stage of suggestion has passed."[50]

Churchill's reply to that message obviously did not meet Curtin's expectations. While the British Prime Minister's answer was both immediate and sympathetic, it did not take adequate congnizance of the urgent situation at Singapore. Although Churchill replied that he and Roosevelt had agreed to the diversion of Imperial ground forces to the Malayan region and further that Roosevelt was willing to send substantial American forces to Australia --where in view of the deteriorating situation in the Phillipines the United States was anxious to establish important bases--the reply was vague on the crucial issues of how many forces and when they would arrive.

AUSTRALIA ABANDONS IMPERIAL DEFENSE

On December 26, the British and Canadian garrison at Hong Kong surrendered and heightened the sense of doom which was beginning to overtake the Australian Government. The next day, Prime Minister Curtin took what was perhaps the most dramatic step in Australian foreign policy to date. He published a statement in the Melbourne Herald in which he set forth his Government's conclusions about how the war would have to be fought. The article began by stating that henceforth Government policy would take as a point of

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[50] Ibid.

departure the position that: 1) the war with Japan was not a part of the struggle with the Axis powers, but was a new war--"The Pacific struggle must (not) be treated as a subordinate segment of the general conflict" and 2) Australia must go on to a war footing. The article continued as follows:

> The Australian Government, therefore, regards the Pacific struggle as primarily one in which the United States and Australia must have the fullest say in the direction of the democracies' fighting plan. Without any inhibitions of any kind, I make it quite clear that Australia looks to America, free of any pangs as to our traditional links or kinship with the United Kingdom. We know the problems that the United Kingdom faces . . . . But we know too, that Australia can go and Britain can still hold on. We are therefore, determined that Australia shall not go, and shall exert all our energies towards the shaping of a plan, with the United States as its keystone, which will give to our country some confidence of being able to hold out until the tide of battle swings against the enemy.[51]

Those were startling words indeed, for they appeared not only to be a rousing assertion that "Australia shall not go" but also to imply repudiation of traditional Australian loyalty to Britain during a period of mutual peril. This latter implication of the statement angered Churchill, aroused misgivings in London and precipitated considerable controversy in Australia. What was particularly disturbing to the British was not so much the content of the article, but the manner in which it was released; that is, without prior consultation and in a public forum. Churchill felt that the article produced the "worst impression in

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[51]Ibid., p. 183.

American and Canadian circles" and cabled Atlee from Washington advising that "I hope there will be no pandering to this while at the same time we do all in human power to come to their aid."[52] In Australia, the controversy caused by the article focused on the emphasis which Curtin placed on the importance of Australian-American relations. For that large number of Australians who were accustomedto thinking in Imperial terms, it seemed suicidal and false for their Government to think of British support as being of less importance than that of other countries. This aspect of Curtin's announcement was widely misinterpreted in Australia, for what he was in effect announcing was nothing more than close collaboration with the United States. Not only had this been an element of Australia's policy since 1940, but it also required no abandonment of Imperial ties.

In succeeding months and years, much was written about the meaning and importance of this article--so much so that one suspects that too much has been read into it. At the risk of complicating this situation even further, however, it is necessary to make a few comments regarding Curtin's motivation in having his famous article published. Overall, it appears certain that his motives were multiple, as well as short and long range in nature. To begin with, Curtin overstated his case. In all likelihood this was

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[52]Winston Churchill, Second World War (London: Cassell, 1951), IV, p. 8.

partially a matter of deliberate policy designed to jolt the Australian public out of its apathy and alert it to the true urgency of Australia's situation. However, Curtin's hyperbole did cause him some embarrassment which he quickly moved to correct by restating his belief in the importance of Imperial ties. In spite of that, Curtin had made his point. As Hartley Grattan has observed:

> What the statement did signalize . . . was the end of Australia's unswerving allegiance to the dying dogma of the "diplomatic unity of the British Empire." That dogma is now so dead that it requires the exercise of the historical imagination to recover a sense of the operative and emotional meaning it once had to fervant dominion Imperialists.[53]

Second, the statement involved a strong public recognition on the part of the Australian Government that adequate British assistance would not be forthcoming and that the insurance of Australia's security now lay in the hands of the Americans. Although the conservatives had been feeling their way toward that position since at least early 1941, they had not made a clear public announcement to that effect nor spelled out its meaning for the Australian public. Curtin was obviously attempting to correct that situation and pave the way for public support and acceptance of the measures his Government shortly intended to undertake: that is, he was attempting to impress the fact upon the Australian public that a conception about Australia's security in which they had believed for generations had suddenly lost all operational validity.

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[53]Grattan, op. cit., p. 181.

Third, Curtin's statement involved an effort to seek the closest relations with the only nation which now possessed the power to aid in insuring Australia's survival. That involved an attempt to prepare the Australian public for the arrival of American troops and their Government's acceptance of American leadership in the Pacific conflict. In short, it was a public announcement of what had been privately agreed to two days earlier. In fact some American troops were already in Australia, having been diverted there when the military situation in the Phillipines collapsed.

In addition to these more immediate considerations, both the tone and nature of Curtin's statement was symptomatic of a growing frustration on the part of the Australian Government. The principal source of that frustration was the lack of what the Government considered adequate participation in the direction of a war effort to which Australia was making substantial contributions and on whose outcome Australia's very survival was now dependent. Australia's problem was not how to get into the war--it was in it already and too deep for safety--but how to have its voice heard at the highest level of Allied decision-making. By this time, it was obvious that Australia had not been fully informed as to the British military situation in the Far East, and if what was going on in Washington between Churchill and Roosevelt was indicative of what was to come, the Curtin Government wished to make a matter of public

record that it was going to be a very unhappy lot. Historically, Labour traditions were based on populism and it had demonstrated a strong dislike for power politics. In far more general terms, then, Curtin's statement signalled the start of what was to become a far-reaching and protracted Australian campaign to extend the principles of populism into the international realm, or more specifically, to have Australia's voice heard in the councils responsible for the direction of the Allied war effort.

During the war the major focus of that campaign was the Allied decision (made early in the war) to "Beat Hitler first." Curtin's assertion that the war in the Pacific was a new war and not to be treated as a subordinate segment of the general (world) conflict was a clear sign of Australian dissatisfaction with that decision and an expression of irritation over the manner in which it had been arrived at.

The formulation of the "Beat Hitler first" policy involved a very complex process and was the product of numerous political cross currents. That process is of sufficient importance to an understanding of Australian policy, however, that it should be pursued somewhat further. According to Herbert Fies, the origins of the policy can be traced to a memo prepared in November, 1940, by the American Chief of Naval Operations. That memo recommended that after providing for the defense of the United States and the

Western Hemisphere, any future American military efforts should be directed "toward an eventual strong offensive in the Atlantic as an ally of the British and a defensive in the Pacific."[54] That general precept was subsequently agreed to by the British and had guided the consequential Anglo-American staff conferences which were held in Washington from January 29, to March 29, 1941. On November 5, 1941, in the face of Chinese pleas for urgent military help and knowledge that Japan was about to take some further action which was likely to bring the United States into the war, the precept was reiterated in a joint memorandum sent to President Roosevelt by the Chief of Naval Operations and the Chief of Staff. The memorandum stated that:

> The basic military policies and strategy agreed to in the United States-British staff conversations remain sound. The primary objective of the two nations is the defeat of Germany. If Japan be defeated and Germany remain undefeated, decision will still not have been reached. In any case, an unlimited offensive war should not be undertaken against Japan, since such a war would greatly weaken the combined effort in the Atlantic against Germany, the most dangerous enemy.[55]

The extent to which the Australian Government was privy to this decision is a matter of much confusion. None-theless, it was certainly aware that secret Anglo-American staff meetings were taking place in early 1941. Three

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[54]Herbert Feis, Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 37 citing Mark S. Watson, Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations.

[55]Ibid., p. 38.

Australian military officers had been present at the meetings of the British delegation to those meetings, although they did not actually attend the joint meetings. Moreover, the Australian Government was informed officially during February 1941, both from London and Washington, that President Roosevelt had told the British Ambassador in Washington that the United States would have to fight a holding war in the Pacific even if it became involved in a war with Japan as well as Germany. In addition, the record of Casey's participation in the Australian-British-Chinese-Dutch (ABCD) meetings, and later in the ABD-A (American) meetings, suggests that he had access to the most intimate information, and in all likelihood would have been aware of the Europe first strategy. Further, the very wording of Curtin's statement suggests that he possessed at least general knowledge of the existence of this agreement. Yet, as late as May 28, 1942, Evatt, who was in London at the time, was to claim in a cable sent to Curtin that "the existence of this written agreement (to concentrate the Allied war effort in Europe) came as a great surprise to myself and, I have no doubt, to you." He then went on to say that "We were not consulted about this matter."[56]

Paul Hasluck, who had access to all the secret documents of that period, has concluded that there is an

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[56] Dudley McCarthy, South-West Pacific Area - First Year (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1959), p. 188, cited in Watt, op. cit., p. 52.

element of validity in both of these assessments of the situation. He observes that:

> There was considerable doubt whether Australian ministers had sufficient information about the (secret staff) discussions to be fully aware at that time of all the implications.[57]

This suggests that what actually occurred is that in response to the drastic change in the strategic situation in the Pacific, what the Australians considered as sufficient information underwent a fundamental change between early 1941 and December 27. So long as it had been believed that Japanese aggression could be kept north of the Equator, the implications of the Europe first policy did not seem so grave. After Pearl Harbour and the ensuing Allied reversals which led the Japanese closer to Australia's doorstep, however, the implications of the "Beat Hitler First" Policy became a matter of vital concern to the Australians. Only then did they come to realize the full importance of that strategy.

Actually, prior to the publication of Curtin's famous statement, the Australian Government had begun to perceive the nature of its dilemma and already had moved to overcome it by undertaking an intensified effort to insure its access to the top decision-making councils of the Allied war effort. For example, it had pressed for and welcomed the creation of the ABDA Command during December, 1941. The Australians soon were disappointed, however, to find that

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[57]Hasluck, op. cit., p. 353.

this arrangement still did not enable them to participate directly at the highest level in the decisions being made in Washington. They were chagrined to discover that they were to be given no direct representation on the ABDA Command's controlling body. It was staffed under Churchill and Roosevelt, exclusively by British and American officers. To the Australian Government it seemed grossly unfair, not to mention being derogatory to Australia's importance as a nation, that it should be asked to supply men and equipment to a cooperative effort without being asked to share in decisions related to their use. In short, it had become increasingly clear to the Australian Government that key decisions related to the conduct of the Allied War effort were being made almost exclusively by the British and the Americans, and very often solely by Churchill and Roosevelt. When approached from this perspective, the timing chosen for the publication of Curtin's article, at the very time Churchill and Roosevelt were conferring in Washington, probably was deliberate.

The timing of the article's publication also was influenced by the subject of the conversations then taking place in Washington. The loss of so large a part of the Americans' Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbour and the swift Japanese landings in Southeast Asia had upset the execution of the United States' strategic plans and precipitated a thorough review not only of the Europe first strategy but

also of the precepts which had shaped it. In short, the politics surrounding the "Beat Hitler first" policy became more fluid after the actual strength of the Japanese threat became better known. In fact, one of the principal concerns which had brought Churchill to Washington was a fear that the United States might now reverse its policy and direct its military resources primarily to the Pacific. In Churchill's own words, it was his awareness "of a serious danger that the United States might pursue the war against Japan in the Pacific and leave us to fight Germany and Italy in Europe, Africa, and in the Middle East" which had brought him to Washington to impress upon the Americans "the true proportions of the war as a whole" as he saw them.[58] Whether the Australians' were aware of this situation is not known, but both the timing and content of Curtin's statement suggest that they had been, in which case the statement was a deliberate attempt to influence in more than one regard the conversations going on in Washington.

In the months following the publication of Curtin's controversial article, two general patterns emerged in the conduct of Australian foreign policy. As was typical of those uncertain times, both of those patterns were largely determined by the course of the war and the diplomacy

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[58]W. S. Churchill, The Grand Alliance (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1950), p. 641, cited in Feis, op. cit., p. 38.

following from it. The first of the patterns witnessed a continued deterioration in Anglo-Australian relations. In large measure this grew out of differing Australian and British assumptions with regard to Japanese intentions vis-a-vis Australia. As suggested earlier, Churchill never really believed that an invasion of Australia was likely. Hence, in light of the poverty of the British resources, he put Great Britain's assistance to Australia on the rather macabre basis that it would be supplied only after such an invasion had actually taken place. Not surprisingly, it was difficult for a nation whose principal military forces were fighting far from their home in support of the British to accept that decision. In Canberra, a combination of factors--the inevitable ignorance of wartime, the inadequacy of Australia's continental defense, and historical Australian assumptions about Asian intentions toward Australia--had led the Australian Government to interpret Japanese intentions as involving an imminent invasion of Australia.

While neither the British nor the Australians were aware of it at the time, subsequent developments and captured Japanese documents later proved that the British interpretation of Japanese intentions was more accurate than that of the Australians. What the Japanese actually had in mind with regard to the Southwest Pacific was the isolation and neutralization of Australia through occupation of

of selected islands to the north and east of the continent. They had reasoned that once that had been accomplished, the United States would be denied bases in the Southwest Pacific, the lines of communication between the Panama Canal and the American west coast could be cut, and any invasion of Australia could be carried out at leisure only if and when it became necessary. Of course, this was hardly common knowledge in late 1941 or early 1942, or even for several years thereafter.

The other pattern of Australian policy which evolved during this period involved the rather rapid transformation of Australia by the Americans into a major military base. As indicated earlier, pre-Pearl Harbour American military planning for the Pacific and focused on the area north of the Equator. After December 7, however, it soon became clear to the Americans that the Japanese not only intended to overrun the Philippines quickly, but also that they were fully capable of capturing those islands. Subsequently, as early as December 14, 1941, General George Marshall had described the situation in the Pacific to General Dwight Eisenhower, then a brigadier on Marshall's staff, and asked what general line of action the United States should pursue in that area. After several hours reflection, Eisenhower came to the conclusion that:

> Australia was the base nearest to the Philippines that we could hope to establish and maintain, and the necessary line of air communications would therefore follow along the islands intervening between that

> continent and the Philippines.
> If we were to use Australia as a base it was mandatory that we procure a line of communication leading to it. This meant that we must instantly move to save Hawaii, Fiji, New Zealand, and New Caledonia, and we had to make certain of the safety of Australia itself.[59]

When Eisenhower conveyed his views to Marshall, the Chief of Staff merely replied: "I agree with you . . . . Do your best to save them"[60]

What occurred, then, was that as long as the Americans envisioned the war in the Pacific as being contained north of the Equator, they conceived of Australia only in terms of a base for supporting operations farther to the north. They sought to preserve Australia as a rear base from which to mount resistance to the Japanese, and they accepted Australia as a base before they had any clear idea of her strength as an ally. Later, disaster in the north, principally in the Philippines, forced the Americans to revise their conception of Australia as only a staging point on the way north to that of a primary base.

Militarily, what occurred after the Allied collapses in the Philippines and along the "Malay barrier" was that Allied forces were split, some driven westward into India, others southwestward into Australia. When that great dispersal of survivors took place, Australia became, by force of circumstance, the southern anchor of the American line of

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[59] Dwight D. Eisenhower, Crusade in Europe (New York: 1948), p. 23.

[60] Ibid.

defense in the Pacific. As this development unfolded, Australia welcomed the opportunity it afforded her to collaborate with the paramount friendly Pacific power, and her own strength proved to be one of the most rewarding surprises the Americans experienced during the Pacific war.

The period was not, however, without its difficulties and misunderstandings. Throughout January, 1942, the Australians continued to press the British to reinforce the base at Singapore. Australian concerns in this regard were of course, well founded, for the entire defense system of Australia was based on the integrity of Singapore and the presence of a capital fleet there. In short, the loss of Singapore would leave Australia practically defenseless. In response to that situation the British sought and received Australia's agreement (on January 3) to the transfer of two Australian divisions (the 6th and 7th) from the Middle East to the Netherland's East Indies (NEI) region of the ABDA area.[61] The same day, Churchill informed the Australian Government that he had obtained Roosevelt's promise to accept responsibility for the protection of Australia through use of the United States 7th Fleet and the stationing of upwards of ninety thousand American soldiers there. The decision to station American forces in Australia was wholely in keeping with the Australian-American military planning concerning containment of Japan's drive southward.

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[61]Dedman, op. cit., p. 155.

That planning envisioned the maintenance of a defensive line between Australia and Singapore through the NEI in the West and between Australia and the United States through the Pacific Islands in the East. Those two principal lines of communication were envisioned as linking up at Darwin.

During January, the Japanese sought to break the Allied defensive lines in the Southwest Pacific by moving into the NEI and attempting an end run of Darwin via the islands to the northeast of Australia. In the west they moved into the Celebes and Borneo, while in the east they attacked the important port of Rabual on January 4, eventually taking it on the 23rd.

All this seemed to portend a breach of the over extended Australian defensive perimeter and an invasion of the continent by way of New Guinea and down the coast of Queensland--the approach envisioned years earlier by Lord Kitchner. This caused Australian officials and those American officers who were in Australia to advance the supply of American aircraft to the NEI, to become increasingly concerned about the adequacy of Australia's continental defense.

In the meantime, the situation at Singapore continued to deteriorate, thereby straining Anglo-Australian relations even further. On January 14, in reply to a critical message from Curtin, Churchill felt obliged to point out that in Great Britain "We have sunk all party

differences and have imposed universal compulsory service, not only upon men, but women."[62] The inference of his statement was clear: a country such as Australia which had no all-party government and which had not imposed conscription was not in a strong position to criticize Great Britain, particularly after the fall of France, for not sending adequate reinforcements to Singapore. As his latter account of this episode suggests, Churchill felt that during this period of crisis the Australians simply lost their sense of proportion.

In February the Japanese continued their drive southward. By the 14th, the situation at Singapore was critical. On that day the British Commander in Chief of the ABDA area sent to London, Washington, and Canberra an appreciation of the situation in the Far East foreshadowing the fall of Singapore and the NEI, and observing that for strategic reasons there were advantages in diverting to either Burma or Australia one or both Australian divisions returning from the Middle East.[63] The next day, February 15, 1942, Singapore fell, victim of the famous Japanese approach down the Malayan peninsula and across the unfortified straits of Johore.

When the Imperial garrison at Singapore surrendered, Australia's military strategy lay in a shamble, and the

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[62] Churchill, op. cit., p. 140.

[63] Dedman, op. cit., p. 156.

Government was faced with the "grim prospect . . . that Japan would soon be in a position to invade Australia."[64] It was a tribute to leadership of Mr. Curtin that he moved quickly to pick up the pieces of this situation and forge a new defensive strategy for his nation. Since it was now apparent that the British forces would be driven back into Burma, if not all the way into India, where they could offer little assistance to Australia, the emphasis of this new strategy was almost wholly on continental defense and collaboration with the Americans. Indicative of this new orientation in Australian military strategy was the fact that Darwin was no longer the principal focus of defensive planning. Reflecting the new importance of ties with the Americans, Port Moresby, New Guinea assumed that status.

Unfortunately, the unfolding of this new strategy was not without still further controversies between Australia and Great Britain. Once again Churchill and Curtin disagreed with one another, this time over the disposition of Australia's principal military units. One the same day that Singapore fell, the Chief of the Australian General Staff (Lt. General Sir Vernon Sturdee) presented to the Australian War Cabinet a paper entitled "Future Employment of the AIF." In his appreciation of the situation in the Pacific, Sturdee advised the Government that although both Australia and Burma were now of primary importance, in

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[64]Ibid.

his view Australia was the only satisfactory strategic point from which the future offensive in the Pacific could be launched once American aid was fully developed. Pending that development, however, it was necessary to hold Australia and defend it with Australian forces. In those circumstances he recommended the diversion of the 6th and 7th divisions to Australia and the recall of the 9th Australian division and the remainder of the AIF in the Middle East at an early date.[65]

Later that same day, Curtin telegraphed Sir Earle Page, Australia's representative to the British War Cabinet, along the lines recommended by Sturdee. Apparently, both Messrs. Page and Churchill misread the meaning of Curtin's loosely drafted communique. At any rate, on the 18th, during a Pacific War Council meeting in London, Page supported a recommendation to the joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington to the effect that the Australian Government should be asked to agree that the 7th Division, already on the water after disembarking from India, should go to the most urgent spot at the moment, which was Burma, since they were the only troops which could reach Rangoon in time to make certain that the Burma Road would be kept open and China thereby kept in the fight. In the belief that he was acting in accordance with his instructions, Page cabled the Council's recommendation back to Australia recommending

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[65]Ibid.

official Australian concurrence, and advising that he had informed the Council he was doing so. He further added that the Council had agreed that the 6th and 9th Australian divisions in the Middle East should be sent back to the Australian area "as fast as possible."

The next day, the 19th, both the Advisory War Cabinet (AWC) and the War Cabinet met to discuss Page's communique. During the AWC meeting, all the principle leaders of the conservative Opposition recommended acceptance of the Pacific War Council's proposal. Labour's leadership remained unconvinced, however, and the War Cabinet decided to adhere to the earlier decision that the AIF should return to Australia rather than being diverted elsewhere. What followed was a series of acrimonious exchanges of telegrams between London and Canberra. On the 20th after previously having been wrongly advised that the Council's decision might be favorably considered by the Australian Government, Churchill asked the Australian Government to reconsider and pointed out that:

> I suppose you realize that your leading division . . . is the only force that can reach Rangoon in time to prevent its loss and the severance of commication with China . . . . There is nothing else in the world that can fill the gap.[66]

At the same time he solicited President Roosevelt's support for the Burma scheme who in turn cabled Curtin that he

[66] Ibid.

proposed to send to Australia, in addition to forces already en route, another force of over twenty-seven thousand men. However, Churchill was not content merely to secure Roosevelt's support. He went on to warn Curtin that Australia was now dependent on the United States and that if Australia refused to allow its troops to be diverted to Burma "a very grave effect will be produced upon the President and the Washington circle."[67]

In reply to that renewed request, Curtin cabled Churchill on the 22nd referring to Australian's contributions to the war effort and questioning whether what Churchill was proposing constituted a "reasonable hazard of war" and casting doubt on whether the division could be safely landed in Burma, much less "brought out as promised"--a clear reference to the British inspired debacles in which Australian forces had participated in Greece and Singapore.[68]

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[67]Churchill, op. cit., p. 140.

[67]Indeed, the historical record seems to have vindicated Curtin's analysis of the military feasibility of what Churchill was proposing. Although both Churchill and Page continued to claim in their memoirs that Rangoon would not have fallen if only Australia had allowed its 7th Division to be diverted there, both the British and Australian official histories of the war tend to contradict this conclusion. Both histories suggest that the diversion would have been too little too late. The British history indicates that what was needed to prevent the fall of Rangoon was not a further brigade but an entire army corps, for the situation was so critical there that only through a serious error in judgement on the part of the Japanese Army were the British forces able to escape the fate of the Singapore garrison. The Australian version concludes that "It is now evident that the 7th Division would have arrived in time only . . . to take part in the long retreat to India . . . ." [Lionel Wigmore, op. cit.,

To make matters worse, Churchill replied to Curtin on the same day advising that the convoy transporting the 7th Division had been diverted northward toward Rangoon pending advice of the Australian decision on his prior request. Since refuelling would now have to be undertaken, he suggested that this provided still another opportunity for the Australians to review the situation. Because this act on Churchill's part seemed to imply that he regarded the considered views of the Australian Government as irrelevant or unimportant, it was not at all well received in Canberra. However, the Australian Government did follow Churchill's suggestion to reconsider. The War Cabinet met the following day to discuss the issue again and once more decided to insist on the return of the 7th Division to Australia. Thus, Curtin cabled Churchill that "In the circumstances, it is quite impossible to reverse a decision which we made with the utmost care and which we have affirmed and re-affirmed."[69] Eventually, when it became clear that Australia could not be moved on this issue, President Roosevelt stepped in and attempted to restore calm to the situation by informing the Australians that "Under any circumstances you can depend upon our fullest support."[70]

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p. 465, and S. Woodburn Kirby, The War Against Japan (London: H.M.S.O., 1958), p. 86.]

[69]Dedman, op. cit., p. 160.

[70]Churchill, op. cit., p. 145.

What was at the heart of this matter of course, was the fact that following the fall of Singapore, the Australian Government was no longer primarily concerned with Imperial defense schemes. By that time, what was of acute concern to the Government was the more immediate task of strengthening Australia's continental defense posture in the face of a possible Japanese invasion. In later years, during the preparation of his account of the wartime diplomacy, Churchill was to appreciate this situation more thoroughly. In this later account, he observed that:

> In the remorseless tide of defeat and ruin which dominated our fortunes at this time, the Australian Government could feel very little confidence in the British conduct of the war or in our judgements at home. The time had come, they thought, to give all the strength they could gather to the life-and-death peril which menaced their cities and people.[71]

This was the crux of the matter, for on the very day that the Australian Government received Page's communique containing the Pacific War Council's request for permission to divert the 7th Division to Rangoon, the War Cabinet received an "appreciation" of Australia's military situation prepared by their Home Forces Command which forecast an imminent invasion of Australia. That appreciation had suggested that, in what was then a national emergency, it was necessary to protect Australia's most vital areas; that dispersion of forces would lead to their peacemal defeat; that the Government should determine what were the vital areas--

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[71]Ibid., p. 137.

(it recommended the coastal strip from Brisbane to Melbourne) and, that military posts outside what was decided to be the vital area should be defended, if attacked, but not reinforced.

After reviewing the Home Forces Command appreciation, the War Cabinet decided that the disposition of Australian forces was a matter for joint consideration by the Chiefs of Staff and the Home Forces Command, which should submit fresh appreciation taking into account the importance of holding Australia as the main Allied base in the Southwest Pacific, the imminent return of the AIF and the possibility of aid from the United States.

The next day, February 19, Darwin was attacked from the air for the first time--the first of more than sixty air raids it would suffer during the war. It was the first occasion in history in which hostile fire was directed against the Australian mainland by an external enemy.

Pursuant to its instructions of February 18, the Australian Chiefs of Staff submitted a statement to the War Cabinet on March 5, setting out probable Japanese moves in the Southwest Pacific. Their statement indicated that the best forecast they could make was that Japan would attack Port Moresby about the middle of the month, Darwin in early April, New Caledonia late in April and the east coast of Australia in May.[72]

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[72]John J. Dedman, "The Brisbane Line," Australian Outlook, Vol. 22 (1968), no. 2, p. 150.

In the meantime, preparations for intensive Australian-American cooperation were proceeding apace, and the Australian Government received its first experience of what it was going to be like working with the Americans. To begin with, the initial Australian overture to the Americans for assistance and acceptance of their leadership had been a joint venture undertaken in conjunction with New Zealand. Their overture was based on long-standing historical precedents and grew out of a short-lived ANZAC naval arrangement during the life of the ABDA. In short, the overture had followed from the Australian and New Zealand belief that their defense was inseparable.

When the Americans took command, however, they quickly dashed Australian and New Zealand expectations in this regard. In a decision based solely on their perception of strategic requirements for the deployment of troops, the Americans put Australia and New Zealand into complementary but different military areas without giving even the briefest consideration to Australian and New Zealand interests. In that arrangement Australia was placed in the Southwest Pacific area, which was oriented north through New Guinea toward the Philippines and Japan, while New Zealand was placed in a South Pacific area, which focused on the islands to the north and east which served as vital links in the American lines of communication and supply.[73]

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[73]Grattan, op. cit., p. 184.

Subsequently, Australia became the base of American land operations and home of the United States Army, while New Zealand became a naval base and home of the United States Navy and Marines.

To command the area where Australia was the keystone, Americans assigned General Douglas MacArthur. Although both Australia and New Zealand were willing to accept American command of military operations in the Pacific war, (they had made this clear on several prior occasions) the events surrounding MacArthur's arrival in Australia foreshadowed an abiding problem in Australian-American relations. To begin with, the dispatch of MacArthur from the Phillipines to Australia, in order to supply command to a base so adventitiously acquired, was carried out with little, if any, consultation with the Australian Government. Indeed, the accounts of this episode suggest that the Americans stole MacArthur into Australia. Their motivation in this regard seems clear; they wanted to cover MacArthur's abandonment of the Philippines during a crucial period until such time as they could make it appear that he had departed or been reassigned "in accordance with the request of the Australian Government."[74] By the time MacArthur was forced to leave the Philippines, however, those preparations apparently had not been completed. At any rate, when MacArthur arrived by air at Darwin in the midst of a Japanese air raid,

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[74]Dedman, op. cit., p. 151.

Curtin did not know either of MacArthur's assignment to Australia or the purpose of his assignment. Subsequently after MacArthur proceeded to Melbourne and the Australian Government was hurriedly informed about what was happening, it was arranged that Curtin request that MacArthur be appointed Supreme Commander (that is, ostensibly at Australia's request). His appointment was announced on March 17, and he assumed command on April 18.

In the meantime, Anglo-Australian relations were exacerbated further by the untimely British proposal to appoint the man who was perhaps Australia's most knowledgeable and skilled diplomat, the Australian Minister to the United States (Mr. Casey), as British Minister of State in the Middle East. Although the response from members of the Australian Cabinet to this proposal differed, Curtin was opposed to it and informed Churchill that a change of Australian representation in Washington at that particular juncture would be most undesirable. There followed another exchange of curt cables between the two Prime Ministers, which were made public on Curtin's intiative. In large measure their dispute was more symbolic than substantive. In the end, the issue was left to Mr. Casey, who accepted the British appointment. Some time later he was to correctly characterize this episode as one in which he "had come between the hammer of Mr. Curtin and the anvil of

Mr. Churchill, between whom there had been considerable personal feeling."[75]

Shortly thereafter, on the day MacArthur's appointment was announced, Churchill moved to reassure the Australians and improve relations with their Government. He cabled Curtin that the fact that an American commander would be in charge of all Allied operations in the Pacific area would not be regarded by the British Government as in any way absolving it of Great Britain's determination and duty to aid Australia to the best of its ability. Furthermore, he repeated the promise that if Australia were actually invaded in force, the British Government would do its utmost to divert troops and ships then rounding the Cape of Good Hope, or already in the Indian Ocean, to Australia's defense, albeit at the expense of India and the Middle East. According to Mr. John Dedman, then a member of the Australian War Cabinet, Churchill's message did not greatly impress the Australian Government, for its military advisors thought that if Japan launched an invasion, it would probably be impossible to reinforce Australia by sea-borne forces, since prevailing superior Japanese air and naval forces had already caused the retirement of British capital ships to the West African coast!

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[75]R. G. Casey, Personal Experience 1939-1946 (London: Constable, 1962), p. 97, cited in Watt, op. cit., p. 59.

Following the annoncement of MacArthur's appointment joint Australian-American planning for the defense of Australia gained momentum. On April 1, a joint appreciation of the situation facing Australia was presented to Dr. Evatt as guidance for meeting of the Pacific War Council in Washington. The appreciation suggested that attacks in force on Australia were likely at an early date; that the area vital to continuance of Australia's war effort lay between Brisbane and Melbourne, and that Port Morseby was the key to the area; that attacks were also likely on Darwin and Freemantle; and that the most urgent requirement was increased air and naval forces, including two or three aircraft carriers.[76] This subsequently became the national strategy for the defense of Australia and was in large measure the strategy endorsed by the Australian Government, MacArthur, and Roosevelt.

By the time he assumed command, MacArthur saw the situation in the Southwest Pacific in terms almost identical with the views of the Australian Government. He also perceived the importance of Australia as a defensive bastion and the urgent need for more American troops. Subsequently, there developed a very useful harmony of interests between MacArthur and the Australian Government. Both parties sought the allocation to the western Pacific of manpower and material sufficient not only to stop the Japanese, but also

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[76]Dedman, op. cit., p. 152.

to begin rolling them back toward their homeland. Therefore, if the Americans acquired in Australia an ally whose strength proved both a surprise and a valuable resource, the Australians unknowingly acquired in MacArthur a particularly capable and influential ally in dealing with the consequences of the Europe first emphasis of Allied global strategy.

Unfortunately for Australia, MacArthur's arrival did not immediately bring the new resources that had been hoped for. Therefore, when it became clear in late April that the Japanese were planning a major sea-borne offensive toward Port Moresby, Curtin again turned to the British and asked that they divert to Australia British troops then rounding the Cape of Good Hope en route to India. In response to Curtin's request, Churchill stuck to his previous position that assistance would be sent to Australia only if and when actual invasion of the continent took place. On April 28, he cabled Curtin that he would certainly "be judged to have acted wrongly if he sent to an uninvaded Australia troops needed for an invaded India."[77]

The Japanese launched their offensive during the first week in May. They were engaged on May 4, in the Coral Sea by units of the American fleet under the command of Admiral A. Chester Minitz. After four days of inconclusive battle, the Japanese retreated to safety with the intention

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[77]Ibid., p. 155.

of regrouping and renewing their offensive. Due to continued Allied pressure, however, the Japanese never were able to renew their offensive, and the Battle of the Coral Sea proved to be the turning point in that portion of World War II fought in the Southwest Pacific.

As is true with most events of this nature, it was only in retrospect that the Battle of the Coral Sea was seen as marking a major turning point in Australia's fortunes. Not surprisingly, then, the threat of invasion continued to haunt the Australian Government long after the Japanese thrust toward Port Morseby had been foiled. It was that fear which moved Curtin to write, this time to President Roosevelt, stressing the strategic value and importance of Australia as a base. Indeed, he suggested that its very qualities as a base made Australia rather than India a more likely target of Japan's next move!

On the same day that Curtin cabled Roosevelt, May 14, MacArthur also sent an important message to his superiors. In his message MacArthur sought and received permission to build air strips at Miline Bay (on the south-eastern tip of New Guinea). Receipt of that permission was an important development for both Australia and the United States. For Australia it was the first positive indication that the Allies would attempt to"defend Australia in New Guinea" and for the United States it marked one of the first steps on a long road that would eventually end in Tokyo Bay.

During the first week in June, a major naval engagement was fought between Japanese and American naval forces near Midway Island. That battle ended on June 4, in a stunning victory for the United States. It was "rightly regarded (as) . . . the turning point of the war in the Pacific."[78] One week later Prime Minister Curtin reported to his Cabinet that General MacArthur had advised him that the Battles of the Coral Sea and Midway had changed the whole strategic situation in the Pacific. For Australia this meantthat the battle for Australia would indeed be waged on the outer perimeter territories. Furthermore, Curtin's announcement marked (for Australia) the end of the extremely important creative phase of wartime diplomacy. Although much hard fighting still lay ahead, the basic framework of Australia's collaboration with Great Britain and the United States changed little during the remainder of the war.

Once the immediate threat of invasion to Australia was removed by the Battles of the Coral Sea and Midway, the Australian Government became increasingly preoccupied for the remainder of the war by the great political struggle that was shaping up over the deployment of the vast military resources the United States was assemblying. As suggested earlier, the initiative in that struggle came from those

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[78]Churchill, op. cit., p. 224.

participants in the Pacific war (e.g. Australia) who strove to reverse or compromise the European orientation of Allied global strategy. Originally Allied strategy had envisioned a "holding" war being fought in the Pacific until Germany and Italy were defeated in Europe. Later, that principle had been seriously shaken by the combined impact of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour and the unexpected speed with which the Japanese had moved south and southwest. Thereafter, Allied global strategy remained fluid for the remainder of the war with the proponents of a greater effort in the Pacific enjoying no little success in diverting American men and supplies to that theater of operations.

As early as January 10, 1942, the proponents of a greater effort in the Pacific began to erode the European orientation of Allied war strategy. On that date Churchill sent a paper to the British Chiefs of Staff in which he observed that:

> While . . . it is right to assign primacy to the war against Germany, it would be wrong to speak of our 'standing on the defensive' against Japan: on the contrary, the only war in which we can live through the intervening period in the Far East before Germany is defeated is by regaining the initiative, albeit on a monor scale.[79]

During the early months of 1942, those individuals who championed a major concentration of Allied power in the Pacific were joined by formidable allies in appointment of

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[79]Winston Churchill, The Grand Alliance (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1950), p. 705, cited in Feis, op. cit., p. 39.

General MacArthur as Supreme Commander in the Pacific, Admiral Nimitz as Chief of the Pacific Fleet, and Admiral Ernest J. King as Commander-in-Chief of the United States Fleet. Through the combined efforts of these men, the critical situation in the Pacific had received such attention that by the middle of March 1942, of 132,000 army troops which the United States sent overseas, about 90,000 were sent to stations along the line between Hawaii and Australia, with the remainder being sent largely to the North Atlantic area.[80]

Continual pressure from those opposed to the European orientation of Allied strategy precipitated still another review of basic strategy in March 1942. Although the primacy of the war effort in Europe was preserved during the review, that was not achieved without at least partially satisfying the concerns of those who were eager to push the fight in the Pacific. Indeed, the British, despite their wish to put the battle for Europe first, made their consent to an invasion of Europe across the English Channel conditional on there being enough combat strength left in the Far East to defend India and protect Australia, New Zealand, and the line of island communications leading thereto.

In May 1942, even President Roosevelt, until then one of the strongest advocates of "Europe first" also wavered under the clamorous operational demands espoused by the Navy, by MacArthur, as well as the Australian and Chinese

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[80]Ibid., p. 40.

Governments, and became disposed to send still more planes and men to Australia. Only after General Marshall intervened to argue with effectiveness that such action would destroy a cross-Channel project scheduled for either summer 1942 or the spring of 1943, did Roosevelt return to a strong "Europe first" posture. Thereupon the President withdrew the approval he had hastily granted for a greater Allied effort in the Pacific and sent the following message to MacArthur on May 6th:

> In the matter of ground strategy I find it difficult this spring and summer to get away from the simple fact that the Russian armies are killing more Axis personnel and destroying more Axis material than all other twenty-five united Nations put together. Therefore, it has seemed wholly logical to support the great Russian effort in 1942 by seeking to get all the munitions to them that we possibly can, and also to develop plans aimed at diverting German land and air forces from the Russian front.[81]

To Roosevelt this was the heart of the matter and it served as the basis of his approach to the problem of allocation of war material and military forces for the remainder of his life. However, not even Roosevelt could master the on-going struggle over war supplies. Subsequently, when the British War Cabinet drew back from the cross-Channel invasion project during July 1942 and began to revive a project for landing in North Africa, the President's principal military advisers became distressed with the British and

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[81]M. Matloff & E. M. Snell, Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare 1941-42 (Washington, D. C.: Department of the Army, 1952), p. 214, cited in Feis, op. cit., p. 42.

recommended that the United States turn the focus of its military strategy away from Europe and concentrate the American effort in the Pacific for decisive action against Japan. President Roosevelt rejected that recommendation and stated that:

> I am opposed to an American all-out effort in the Pacific against Japan with the view of her defeat as quickly as possible. It is of utmost importance that we appreciate that defeat of Japan does not defeat Germany (while) . . . . Defeat of Germany means defeat of Japan, probably without firing a shot or losing a life.[82]

In the months that followed, however, new defensive operations in the Pacific and even a limited tactical offensive there, were approved and after the cross-Channel operation failed to get underway, there was a noticeable weakening in War Department resistance to requests for more supplies and manpower from the Navy and MacArthur. Thus, even though most of the American Navy was already in the Pacific, the flow of troops and equipment to the Far East continued, and until at least August, 1942, it was actually greater than across the Atlantic. That balance changed only when operation TORCH (the North African landings) actively got underway. In fact, one year after Pearl Harbour the number of American Army forces deployed in the Pacific against the Japanese was still roughly equal to the number deployed in Great Britain and North Africa.

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[82]Robert E. Sherwood, Roosevelt & Hopkins: an Intimate History (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), p. 605, cited in Feis, op. cit., p. 43.

There were about 350,000 men in both theaters of war while about one-third of the Army aircraft outside of the United States was in action in the Pacific.[83]

Thereafter, the preponderant movement of both ground and air forces was toward Europe. But enough more were sent to the Pacific to make possible a vigorous start on the offensive against the Japanese. What seems to have emerged as the operational principal in that regard was that any increases in the forces devoted to Mediterranean operations should be roughly matched by additions to Allied forces in the Pacific. Since operations in the Pacific were necessarily naval in nature, this meant that a disproportionate number of American landing craft were sent there. So strongly maintained was the claim upon these indispensible boats for active service in the Pacific that more were engaged there than were made available for the landing operations in northwestern and southern France. Indeed, the claim by the Pacific theater of war upon landing craft was one of the main reasons for postponement of both of the European landings; the Allies waited for shipyards to build more rather than deplete the great assembly in the Pacific. Thus, while the basic grand strategy always reaffirmed that Germany was to be defeated first--and while this was in the end affected--an effort of growing size and impetus was maintained in the Pacific until the climatic period of the cross-Channel

[83]Ibid., p. 44.

invasion. In short, Australia and the other principal participants in the Pacific war fared quite well indeed during the struggle over the allocation of Allied war resources.

OLD MYTHS AND NEW REALITIES

Central to the study of world politics is the assumption that the behavior of nation-states is subject to rational and logical analysis. This does not preclude the fact that nation-states are also frequently motivated by emotional or attitudinal considerations which are irrational or illogical in origin. Among those considerations are "national myths" or historically learned "lessons" about the nature of foreign affairs. Not infrequently, the historical experiences which serve as the basis of those conceptions about foreign policy are associated with periods of national crisis or fundamental diequilibrium in the international system. In view of the tremendous political dislocations which characterized the World War II era, it is not surprising, then, that that period in history gave rise to an abundance of myths or lessons about the nature of world politics in general and the proper conduct of foreign policy in particular. For example, one need only consider the contemporary emotional connotations associated with the term appeasement in order to realize that the heritage of the World War II era still exerts a powerful influence on the current behavior of nation-states.

The impact of this sort of heritage on foreign policy is particularly recognizeable in the case of Australia. Until World War II, Australia had fought only in Imperial wars and had never fully experienced the dangers against which those battles were waged. By the end of 1945, all that had been dramatically changed. Most importantly, the war had served as a catalyst for both the emergence of a truly independent foreign policy and the rapid growth of an Australian feeling of nationhood. Having shared in a common national crisis and having weathered that crisis by resorting to assistance outside the Imperial framework, the Australian people were one as never before and their return to a pre-war foreign policy stance was out of the question.

Therefore, since Australian foreign policy was more or less "forged in the heat of battle" the myths or lessons which the Australian people extrapolated from their World War II experience have veen particularly enduring and have had an unusually strong impact on the conduct of their foreign policy. As was to be expected, the war experience affected Australian foreign policy attitudes in a variety of ways; it reinforced some traditional attitudes, generated completely new attitudes, and virtually destroyed still others.

The cluster of Australian foreign policy attitudes which was most severely undermined by the war experience was that pertaining to Imperial relations. In general, the

war forced many Australians to reluctantly conclude that the *Pax Britannica* was indeed at an end, thereby bringing to a close the period in which unswerving allegiance to dogma concerning the diplomatic unity of the Empire had been the operative norm in Australian foreign policy. In fact, abandonment of that dogma had begun early in the war. For example, when general war broke out in the Pacific, Australia did not follow the British lead in declaring war on Japan. Instead of accepting Menzies' dictum that when Great Britain was at war Australia was automatically at war, the Australian Labour Party had arranged to have Australia declare war on Japan prior to and independently of the British.

Furthermore, in late 1942, Labour sought and won Parliament's acceptance of those sections of the Statute of Westminster that the conservatives had unsuccessfully sponsored in 1937. Indicative of Labour's attitudes in this regard was the fact that ratification of those sections of the Statute was made retroactive to September 3, 1939. Of far greater importance, however, was the fact that the war had at last forced most Australian officials to realize that Australian and British national interests were not identical and could even conflict on occasion. If nothing else, the events 1941 and early 1942 had clearly demonstrated that the realities of geography could not prevent the conflicting Australian and British conceptions of their

national interests from differing. In other words, the war forced the Australians to start thinking of foreign affairs in terms of national interests rather than loyalites.

Those Australian attitudes toward world affairs which were unfortunately reinforced by the war experience were those which shaped the Australians' perception of their nearest neighbors. As suggested earlier, pre-war Australian attitudes in this regard were characterized by a latent (and sometimes not so latent) fear of the "Yellow Peril." In general, the overall Japanese effort to create an "East-Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere" seemed to validate or confirm the long-standing Australian uncertainty about their nearest neighbors; that is the "Yellow Peril" had become a reality. In particular, it was Japanese treatment of Australian prisoners of war which generated outright Australian animosity toward Asians. Both the fall of Singapore and Java had cost the Australians heavily in terms of prisoners of war--over 15,000 at Singapore, almost 5,000 in the Netherlands East Indies. The sufferings of those prisoners and others taken later, strongly fortified anti-Japanese sentiment in Australia. Indeed, it wasn't until 1957 that this sentiment had waned sufficiently to enable the Australian Government to resume normal international intercourse with Japan.

Another Australian foreign policy attitude reinforced by the war experience was that which served as the

basis of Australian thinking with regard to New Guinea. To many Australians the course of the war seemed to bear out W. M. Hughes' old strategic dictum that whoever controlled New Guinea controlled Australia. Following the Battle of the Coral Sea, when it was determined that the "Battle for Australia" actually could be fought in the outer territories, the key battle in the ensuing struggle took place in New Guinea along what is known as the Kakoda Trail. Thereafter, New Guinea was perceived to have served the function of a strategic barrier which prevented the Japanese from reaching Australian shores. Furthermore, since the best-trained and most numerous ground forces at MacArthur's command at the time this battle took place were Australian, the Battle of the Kakoda Trail was essentially fought and won by Australian forces. Subsequently, that battle came to occupy a position in Australian popular history similar to that accorded by the Americans to the exploits of their forces during the Battle of the Bulge and the landings on Iwo Jima. Moreover, the whole issue of New Guinea's strategic importance to Australia was still further dramatized by MacArthur's statement in November, 1943 that:

> . . . it was never my intention to defend Australia on the mainland of Australia. That was the plan when I arrived but to which I never subscribed and which I immediately changed to a plan to defend Australia in New Guinea.[84]

All this reinforced a belief among Australian official circles

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[84]Dedman, op. cit., p. 143.

that New Guinea was indeed vital to Australia's security.

Those Australian foreign policy attitudes which underwent the most creative change as a result of the war experience were those which served as the basis of the Australian perception of the United States. Prior to the war, the United States had been something of an enigma to most Australians. When the Americans unexpectedly--(unexpected in terms of Australia's past experience)--arrived to turn the tide of the Pacific war, it had a tremendously favorable impact on Australian public opinion. The notion that the United States had come without ulterior motives to Australia's rescue gained widespread popular acceptance. In the words of a contemporary Australian historian, what happened was that:

> With the fall of Singapore . . . came Australia's moment of great disillusionment (about reliance upon friendly great powers for its security). But only momentarily. While there would probably never again be such absolute faith in the aid another country could give, yet the poignancy of the experience was made less intense by the substitute of an American alliance after Pearl Harbour . . . . While one legend died, another was born: even if absolute reliance could not be placed on Britain again, Australia still had 'great and powerful friends.'"[85]

What was obviously lacking in the popular conception of Australian-American wartime relations was any serious consideration of the interests which had served as the basis for collaboration. As numerous recent accounts of this episode suggest, it was not friendship or cultural affinity

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[85]Cruz, op. cit., p. 39.

but the fortunes of war and American strategic interests which precipitated heavy United States wartime involvement in the Southwest Pacific. While this was probably well understood within official Australian circles, the absence of any concerted governmental effort to point out the shortcomings of the popular myth suggests that successive Australian Governments found the perpetuation of the myth to be a useful political gambit which enabled them to avoid devoting what otherwise would be deemed an appropriate share of Australia's national resources to defense.

A correlary to the myth concerning the American rescue of Australia was the acceptance in many official Australian circles of the notion that Australia possessed a lasting strategic importance for the United States as a base. This notion, of course, involved a complete reversal of the Australian conception of the strategic imperatives that followed from their geography. Whereas the notion of geographic isolation had dominated pre-war Australian strategic doctrine, the new notion of Australia as an important strategic base assumed Australia's proximity to likely centers of world conflict. This reversal in Australian strategic doctrine can be traced to the early stages of the war when the Government had undertaken a strenuous campaign to solicit the dispatch of large numbers of American forces to Australia by stressing the merits of their homeland as a base for Allied operations in the Pacific.

For example, immediately following the Battle of the Coral Sea when the direction of Japan's next move was still unclear, Curtin had sent a cable to Roosevelt giving,

> . . . reasons why, from the Japanese point of view, the soundest course would be to move against Australia and leave India until later. (Because) Australia, with its manpower and resources was the last area in the Southwest Pacific where the Japanese drive could be stopped and from which a maximum offensive could be laucnhed. Its successful defense was therefore of vital importance."[86]

An even more extreme version of this same argument was set forth by Dr. Evatt during the dark days of early 1942. Just prior to the fall of Singapore he sought to speed the dispatch of American troops to Australia by suggesting to the United States Government (which Evatt presumably assumed was totally ignorant of the facts of geography) that "Australia is the last bastion between the West Coast of America and the Japanese."[87]

The notion of Australia as a base was further reinforced by the physical presence of MacArthur's headquarters on Australian soil. Throughout the war, his headquarters served as the principle Australian source of information about American strategic thinking with regard to the Pacific. The fact that this information was filtered through MacArthur's headquarters proved to be unfortunate for Australia, for the General's strategic conception of Australia was not always

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[86] Dedman, op. cit., p. 156.

[87] Evatt, op. cit., p. 46.

in harmony with strategic doctrines being formulated in Washington. In fact, during much of 1942 and 1943, MacArthur's thinking diverged quite markedly from that of his superiors in Washington. Being a strong advocate of the Army within the long-standing American inter-service rivalry, MacArthur was obsessed with planning for a return to the Philippines, where he believed a decisive land engagement would be fought with the Japanese. In anticipation of that move, he sought to remain on the continent of Australia or in the adjacent islands until he had mustered the strength he deemed necessary to undertake successfully that course of action. In other words, in the MacArthur conception of what should be done in the Pacific, Australia would have served the function of the principal base from which the decisive engagement with the Japanese would have been launched. Consequently, MacArthur had been hesitant over an early offensive in the Pacific and had opposed the taking of Guadalcanal as well as the invasion and capture of the Mariannas--even though the capture of those islands was essential in order to secure his flank during any eventual move north to the Philippines--out of a belief that those actions would slow the movement of forces to Australia and thereby delay his return to Mainla.

What was wrong with the MacArthur strategy was that it failed to recognize the fact that geography dictated that the issue in the Pacific would be decided by sea power with

land forces largely relegated to a supporting role. Not until late 1943, however, did MacArthur finally accept the Joint Chiefs of Staff's conclusion that the Allied war effort in the Pacific should seek to minimize American casualties through the avoidance of costly land battles with the Japanese Army by maximizing American naval superiority and concentrating on capture of Western Pacific islands that would serve as stepping stones leading to Japan. It was only after the United States Navy forced the Joint Chiefs of Staff to "push (MacArthur) off the cliff" that he realized he possessed sufficient strength to go successfully over to the offensive.[88] Only then did he abandoned the strategy in which Australia was to serve the function of the principal base from which the decisive engagement with the Japanese would be launched.

The extent to which MacArthur impressed his views in this matter upon the Australian Government, and the degree to which the Government concurred in those views is not known. Judging from official Government statements of that period, however, it seems doubtful that Australia played the role of a principal in the formulation of basic Allied strategy in the Pacific. As suggested above, basic Allied military strategy in the Pacific was largely determined by the Americans, and more specifically by the United States

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[88] Walter Mills, ed., The Forrestal Diaries (New York: Viking Press, 1951), p. 91.

Therefore it would seem fair to conclude that having to rely for information upon a premier American Army General who found himself a principal in an essentially naval war added to Australian confusion over their country's strategic importance to the Americans as a base.

All this is not to suggest that Australia did not serve as a base for Allied operations during the War. Rather, it is to observe that important conclusions the Australians drew from that experience were somewhat exaggerated and inaccurate. In many respects, the Australian experience in this regard was similar to that of the British. During the war, the strategic value and political status of both Great Britain and Australia were greatly enhanced in American circles by their geographic proximity to important enemy positions; that is, the thrust of Axis aggression had placed Great Britain and Australia in the front lines of battle.

In other equally important respects, however, the Australian experience as an Allied base diverged rather markedly from that of the British. To begin with, since Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union always maintained that Germany posed a far greater threat to their interests and survival than Japan, Allied bases in the Pacific were never accorded the importance of Allied bases in the European theater of the war. Furthermore, Australia's obvious inability to equal Great Britain as a source of

crucial manpower and material mean that its defense was not as vital as that of Great Britain to the outcome of the war. What truly distinguished the Australian experience as a base from that of Great Britain, however, was geography and the differing nature of warfare in the European and Pacific theaters of war. Since the issue in Europe was decided by land and air power, Great Britain's proximity to Germany meant that its defense was essential to the defeat of the Nazi war machine. Subsequently, Great Britain served as a primary base for Allied air operations and the principal marshalling point for the opening of a "second front" in Europe. In the Pacific war, however, the issue was essentially decided by naval power and the notion of bases that was employed in Allied strategy differed from that used in Europe. In the vast expanses of the Pacific Ocean, no single base (with the possible exception of Hawaii) assumed the importance that Great Britain had in Europe. Rather, each Allied base established in the Pacific assumed only a transitory importance until it had fulfilled its role as a temporary stepping stone on the long road that led to Tokyo Bay. Therefore, both Australia's remoteness from the Japanese homeland and the nature of warfare in the Pacific served to move the front lines of battle away from Australia considerably sooner than in the case of Great Britain. Thus, although Australia did serve as an important Allied base during a cruicial stage in the early part of the Pacific war, it served "only as a

base for operations in the Southwest Pacific, and even then only as something of a subsidiary base."[89] Later, after the battlelines moved further north, "In the final stages of the war Australia (could) scarcely be counted as a major base, except for clearing operations in the Netherlands East Indies . . . ."[90]

It was only belatedly, however, that Australian officials came to appreciate the importance of these considerations. A considerable period was to elapse before they came to recognize the important fact that:

> The main naval forces used in both the battles of the Coral Sea and the Solomons came from, and returned to Pearl Harbour rather than Australian ports. Similarly, the main attacks into the central regions of the Western Pacific and eventually to Japan itself, stemmed from Hawaii and the West Coast of the United States rather than from Australia. This situation arose from a simple appraisal of the distance factor which shows that the route from America to East Asia by way of Australia is unduly round-about . . . . The main attack came from America and it came directly across the Pacific. Australia as a base was certainly not essential to the defeat of Japan."[91]

As we shall see later, belated and still incomplete acceptance of the realities of this situation produced a series of misconceptions about Australia's role in the world which at various times would lead to serious errors or ambiguities in Australian foreign policy.

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[89] A. J. Rose, "Strategic Geography and the Northern Approaches," Australian Outlook, XIII, no. 4, p. 306.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid.

A final cluster of Australian foreign policy attitudes that underwent an important change as a result of the war experience was that associated with the performance and deployment of Australia's military forces. In particular, the war had dramaticized the political leverage which could accrue from the deployment of Australia's military forces, under certain circumstances, could considerably alter the traditional nature of great power-small power relationships.

In reality of course, there was nothing particularly new about the deployment of Australian forces in support of a great power whose policies the Australia Government wished to influence. For nearly half a century Australian forces had served in various Imperial military operations in order to insure that Great Britain would be both willing and able to come to Australia's aid in time of crisis. Prior to World War II, however, the true nature of that relationship had been blurred or concealed by considerations of "loyalty." During the war this relationship was brought into much clearer perspective, and in later years that perspective would serve as an important point of departure in Australian foreign policy. In the future it would become a particularly important consideration during the cold war era when the issue of reliability of allies would come to play such an important role in the determination of great power-small power relationships.

Chapter 8

AUSTRALIA AND THE POST-WAR SETTLEMENT

GENERAL OUTLOOK AND ATTITUDES

During the early, essentially defensive phase of the Allied war effort, uniquely Australian interests in world affairs were of necessity set aside in order to give undivided attention to the common Allied effort of turning back the Japanese. Most importantly, the exigencies of the war resulted in the forging of close Australian relations with the Americans at the level of military collaboration long before the development of political relations had had time to progress beyond the embryonic stage. By late 1943 or early 1944, however, that situation was undergoing a qualitative change.

This change in Australian policy was precipitated by both domestic Australian political developments and by the general course of the war. In the general elections of 1943, Labour had won a significant victory that freed it from dependence (for a majority in Parliament) on the votes of independents. That greatly strengthened the Government's domestic foreign policy base and provided it with the oppor-

tunity to initiate new departures in policy. In the international realms, significant Allied victories in Europe, the Middle East and the Far East had placed the Axis Powers increasingly on the defensive and resulted in the rolling back of the Japanese thrust from Australia's doorstep. Together, those developments enabled the Australian Government to overcome its sense of imminent peril and to begin thinking about essentially political issues concerning the shaping of the post-war international environment. In short, they opened the way for the further development and enunciation of a uniquely Australian foreign policy.

What emerged after that period was an Australian foreign policy which not only contained elements of longstanding importance to Australia as well as a newly elevated Labour element, but also a policy which was as much a response to events as an expression of any comprehensive theoretical formulation. Generally, the thrust of this policy was traceable directly to Australia's early war experience in seeking access to those Allied Councils responsible for direction of global war strategy. Throughout the war the Australians repeatedly had demonstrated dissatisfaction with the virtual great power monopoly of these councils.

As early as February 1942, Dr. Evatt had referred to the "fundamental need for creating effective machinery to ensure there shall be not only Allied unity of command but a guarantee of a common Allied strategical plan backed by

the pooling of Allied resources and the sound allocation of these resouces to Allied forces."[1] To facilitate such co-ordination he had proposed the creation of machinery for the higher direction of the war which would give due weight to all phases of the conflict, unifying military commands, and handle reinforcements and supplies in accordance with decisions of higher authority. Evatt insisted throughout the war that Australia's efforts in this regard had been mostly unsuccessful. Although the Australian Government, early in the war, had accepted Churchill's proposal for establishment of a Pacific Council in London, despite its preference for Washington as a meeting place, it had proved unsatisfactory because "at no point whatever (did) any representatives of (Australia) meet any representative of the United States in any council, committee, or strategic body directly concerned in the controlling of the Allied war effort against Japan, or for that matter, Germany or Italy."[2] Evatt was determined not to have Australian participation in the direction of the Pacific war conducted from behind any British screen in London as Churchill had proposed. He wanted separate Australian representation at the center of decision making.

Furthermore, the Australian Government had been dissatisfied with the sort of representation it eventually was

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[1]H. V. Evatt, Foreign Policy of Australia (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1945), p. 29.

[2]Ibid., p. 32.

accorded in London. Although it felt that in time of war practically all matters of foreign policy and high policy affected all British Dominions, it had been unable to secure British assent to actual membership in the British War Cabinet.[3]

With those thoughts in mind, Dr. Evatt had left Australia on his first overseas Mission to the United States and Great Britain. He had arrived in Washington determined to "pound on doors." While in Washington, the case for an Australian voice in the higher direction of the war effort and a larger share of military supplies was pressed by Evatt in every conceivable direction--including with President Roosevelt himself. The most tangible result of that effort was the creation of a Pacific Council in Washington, on which Australia was represented along with the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, China, Netherlands, New Zealand, and later the Philippines. According to Evatt, the purpose of this Council was to "determine how best the war against Japan can be carried to the offensive."[4] However, this ambiguous statement tended to exaggerate the significance of the Council. From the outset, the Council proved to be a purely consultative body which at no time played an

[3]In London the Representative of Australia accredited to the British War Council was invited to attend meetings only when the British Prime Minister thought that matters of direct and immediate concern to Australia were under consideration.

[4]Ibid., p. 53.

important part in the making of vital decisions, whether strategic or political, or in the allocation of war materials. In spite of efforts by some members (such as Australia) to have the Council make decisions concerning military strategy and the distribution of munitions, it never did so. In short, creation of the Council did not give Australia access to those bodies where the executive decisions concerning the prosecution of war had been made. As Evatt was to admit somewhat later, it had placed Australia in an advisory position only.

Nevertheless, the Pacific War Council in Washington had provided its members the opportunity for regular access to President Roosevelt and thus the means of informing themselves as to the nature of his thinking about the Pacific war as well as giving them the opportunity to state their case directly to the man who bore ultimate responsibility for the direction of the Allied war effort in the Pacific. "Such an opportunity was a psychological necessity for the Pacific dominions, abruptly confronted with the actual danger of invasion and sensitive, especially in the case of Australia, lest their peril be overlooked in the making of global strategy";[5] that is, it helped to assuage those who

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[5]Nicholas Mansergh, Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs, Problems of Wartime Collaboration and Post-War Change, 1939-52 (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), 138-9, cited in Alan Watt, The Evolution of Australian Foreign Policy 1938-1965 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 66.

were "close to the point of danger but far from the place of decision."[6]

Creation of the Pacific War Council, however, was the high-water mark which Australia reached in its campaign for recognition and status. Separate Australia representation on the Munitions Assignment Board and on the Raw Materials Board or the Combined Joint Chiefs of Staff, was not achieved by Evatt; although due to no lack of effort on his part. Those bodies had remained exclusively Anglo-American affairs. In Evatt's own words, Australia had remained in the relation of a "petitioner" to those vital bodies. Although the principal participants in the Pacific War enjoyed considerable success in modifying the original European orientation of the Allied decision-making councils it is doubtful whether Evatt's actions played a decisive role in that process. While his presence in Washington, and later in London, and his thrusting and abrasive style obviously kept before British and American leaders the precarious position and urgent military needs of Australia, the important decisions concerning the modification of Allied global strategy largely were made by the Americans and to a lesser extent by the British.

All this suggests that much of the hostility and many of the frustrations demonstrated by the Australian officials over the direction of the Allied war effort in the

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[6]Ibid.

Pacific was a result of their failure to either understand or accept the fact that "the role of secondary powers in a major war must remain a secondary one and that no elaboration of machinery could sensibly modify a relationship determined by relative power."[7] This situation was particularly true of Dr. Evatt. An assertive and hyperactive individual whose experience in political life was somewhat limited, he lacked the patience and political sensitivity of Prime Minister Curtin. Central to Evatt's approach to world politics was an abhorrence of power politics. Both his grounding in Labour populism and his interpretation of Australia's nation interests conflicted with tenets of the sort of world order Australia was forced to live in.

As the war in the Pacific drew to a close, opposition to power politics in general, and to the secondary status such a system of politics assigned to Australia in particular, became something of a personal crusade on Dr. Evatt's part. During much of the war, Evatt's actions and statements in this regard seemingly had been moderated by Mr. Curtin. With Mr. Curtin's untimely death in July, 1944, that check on Evatt was removed. Moreover, when victory over the Japanese came within sight, much of the control which the Labour Party caucus exercised over the conduct of Australian foreign policy seems to have faded into the background. Once victory appeared to be within reach, the focus of Labour Party

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[7] Ibid.

interests returned to its more traditional domestic concerns: namely, the socialization of the Australian economy. In the absence of a well established Department of External Affairs with long-standing traditions and well established patterns of decision making, a situation emerged which was fraught with possibilities for the extreme personalization of Australian foreign policy. Since Dr. Evatt was not the sort of individual to pass up such an opportunity, it seems clear that what surfaced in the immediate post-war years was an Australian foreign policy which frequently reflected little more than Evatt's personal views. A man possessing a powerful and authoritarian personality, vigorous intellect, and with a conviction of the "rightness" of his ideas which was difficult to erode, he commenced leaving an impact both at home and abroad on Australian foreign policy which had been unequalled since the time of W. M. Hughes tenure as Prime Minister.

It was against this backdrop that the Australia Government turned its attention to the emerging patterns of post-war world politics. As this policy developed it stressed the importance of effective participation by small powers in shaping the world environment, regional defense in the Pacific, and improvement of the welfare of the native peoples of the Pacific and Southeast Asia. As Grattan has observed, that policy:

. . . was composed of three basic ingredients: nationalism, internationalism, and socio-economic concerns. It was a small-power nationalism in a big-power world, a rule-of-law internationalism against a power politics internationalism, and socio-economically it was laboristic, or, in the vague Australian-New Zealand sense, socialist. As a strategy of international relations it was designed to bring security and unalloyed national independence to Australia and New Zealand . . . . Negatively, it was against power politics and anti-capitalist. What the Australians and New Zealanders sought was national security and equality for smaller countries in a big-power world strongly disposed to power politics, accompanied by an assurance that socio-economic reforms, which they fully intended to pursue as nationalists, would have international support.[8]

FORGING A NEW INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

In general, Australian post-war foreign policy emerged in response to decisions taken by the great powers. During much of 1942 and 1943 when the threat of invasion of Australia was still perceived as real, the Australian Government seemingly had resigned itself to the necessity of great power direction of the Allied war effort. By late 1943, however, the Allies clearly had gained the initiative in the war and the "Big Three (or Four)" were increasingly turning their attention to essentially political issues associated with a peace settlement and shaping the nature of the post war international environment. The Australians were alternately encouraged and discouraged by the actions of great powers in the latter regard. What happened was that

[8] C. Hartley Grattan, The United States and the Southwest Pacific (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 189.

they responded to a situation in which the great powers, particularly the United States, were pursuing parallel policies; one which stressed rule-of-law internationalism and one which was based on power-politics.

Subsequently, the Australian Government welcomed the Moscow Declaration of October 1943, which recognized the need for a post-war international security organization based on "the principle of the sovereign equality of all peace-loving states and open to membership by all such states, large and small."[9] However, the Australian Government was greatly alarmed by the decisions taken by the great powers at the first Cairo Conference in November 1943. One of the principal issues agreed upon at that conference was the disposition of Japan's colonies. Although that was an issue in which both Australia and New Zealand held an obvious interest, neither Dominion was consulted and both learned of the decisions taken at Cairo only from the communique issued after the Conference.

The failure on the part of the Big Four to consult Australia or New Zealand concerning the disposition of Japan's former overseas territories greatly enhanced fear that post-war settlements would be almost exclusively determined by the great powers, despite the contributions to the general war effort made by smaller powers and despite the

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[9] Department of State Bulletin XI, no. 228 (November 6, 1943), 308-9.

special interests of the two Dominions in the Pacific area. It was that fear which led to a crystallization of Australian and New Zealand thinking about the post-war organization of the international environment. Eventually their thinking was given formal expression at an Australian-New Zealand conference held in January 1944. To the surprise of many in Australia and New Zealand, the issues agreed upon at that conference were embodied in a formal treaty (The Australia-New Zealand Agreement) which asserted aspirations, defined war aims and policy with regard to specific questions, and made provision for machinery to make collaboration easier and continuous in the future.

Both the initiative for this conference and the suggestions that items agreed upon should be embodied in a treaty came from Dr. Evatt. Throughout the conference proceedings, New Zealand representatives expressed uneasiness over what Evatt was proposing lest a bilateral pact should lead to criticism in the United States and weaken the spirit of unity among the United Nations. In fact, at the insistence of New Zealand's representatives, the document finally adopted was much less open to criticism than what at one time seemed likely. Not only were suggestions which would have been most likely to cause offense dropped, but also some plain speech was deliverately cut from the report of the conference that was sent to London. For example, "New Zealand refused to support a suggestion from Australia

that the administration of the Solomon Islands should be transferred to her, together with the British share, or possibly the whole, of the Franco-British condominium of the New Hebrides."[10]

The final text of the lengthy Australian-New Zealand Agreement was signed at Canberra on January 21, 1944. Its main provisions included the following points:

1) The signatories agreed to consult in all matters related to external affairs diplomatic, defense, commercial, Articles 17-23; to foster full employment and social security, (Article 35); and to establish an Australian-New Zealand Secretariat in their respective Departments of External Affairs to carry this out (Articles 38, 39).

2) With regard to armistice planning, both Governments asserted the right to "representation at the highest level in all armistice planning and executive bodies" (Article 7). Furthermore, both Governments should be associated, not only in the membership, but also the planning and establishment of the general international organization referred to in the Moscow Declaration (Article 14). Moreover, the ultimate disposal of enemy territories in the Pacific should be effected only with the agreement of Australia and New Zealand, as part of a general Pacific Settlement (Article 26). And there should be no change in the sovereignty or system of control of any of the islands of the Pacific without assent of the signatories, (Article 27).

3) Both Governments pledged their full support "in maintaining the accepted principal that every government has the right to control immigration and emigration in regard to all territories within its jurisdiction" (Article 32).

4) The doctrines of "trusteeship" was declared applicable in principal "to all colonial territories in the Pacific and elsewhere" with its main purpose being

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[10]F. L. Wood, Official History of New Zealand In The Second World War 1939-45, The People at War (Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs, 1958), p. 316, cited in Watt, op. cit., p. 74.

native welfare (Article 28). With regard to the South Pacific islands, the signatories agreed to promote establishment of a South Seas Regional Commission (subsequently established in 1947 as the South Pacific Commission) "to secure a common policy on social, economic, and political development directed toward the advancement and well-being of native peoples" (Articles 28-31).[11]

It is unlikely that these provisions, by themselves, would have caused any substantial irritation overseas. Two articles, however, did cause considerable consternation in foreign capitals, particularly in Washington. They were:

Article 13: The two Governments agree that, within the framework of a general system of world security, a regional zone of defense comprising the South West and South Pacific areas shall (emphasis added) be established and that this zone should be based on Australia and New Zealand, stretching through the arc of islands north and north east of Australia, to Western Samoa and Cook Islands.

Article 16: The two Governments accept as a recognized principal of international practice that the construction and use, in time of war, by any power, of naval, military or air installations, in any territory under the sovereignty or control of another power, does not, in itself, afford any basis for territorial claims or rights of sovereignty or control after the conclusion of hostilities.[12]

These two proposals raised objections in several quarters in the United States. First, the proposal to create a regional security pact ran directly counter to the thinking of Secretary of State Cordell Hull and his associates in the Department of State. At that time they were strongly committed to the idea of a general or universal post-war

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[11]The full text of the Agreement can be found in Current Notes on International Affairs, Australia, Department of External Affairs (Subsequently abbreviated as Current Notes), XV (1944), pp. 2-9

[12]Ibid.

international security organization and therefore apt to view regional approaches to the problem as either misguided or likely to be harmful to what they had in mind.

Thus, in spite of the suggestion in the Agreement that a regional defense pact was entirely compatible with any universal international security organization which might be agreed upon, Mr. Hull's formal comments on the Agreement stressed that it was desirable "to agree upon arrangements for a general international security system before attempting to deal with problems of regional security."[13]

Furthermore, senior American naval officials and advocates of the Navy in the Congress of the United States were disturbed by the Agreement. At that time the men active in those circles were informally discussing American post-war security requirements in the Pacific. In fact, Grattan suggests that public but unofficial talk in the United States about "retaining" bases built in the Southwest Pacific during the course of the war was the "immediate provocation" which led to the signing of the Agreement.[14] While this seems unlikely, Article 16 was interpreted in some American circles as an attempt to exclude the United States from the South Pacific. Subsequently, senior American military officers became less willing to use ANZAC forces in operations

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[13]F. L. Wood, p. 318, cited in Watt, op. cit., p. 77.

[14]Grattan, op. cit., p. 195.

against the Marshall and Caroline Islands lest this serve as the basis for an Australian and New Zealand claim for a voice in their disposal.

What caused the strongest reaction in the United States (to the Australia-New Zealand Agreement) was its presumptive nature and implied anti-American tone. To publicly suggest in a formal treaty that a regional zone of defense comprising the Southwest and South Pacific areas shall be established and should be based on Australia and New Zealand "scarcely seems the most diplomatic or effective method" for "two claimant countries without Great Power status . . . of achieving this particular objective."[15] Moreover, the tone of the Agreement could not help but be interpreted as an insult and an expression of ingratitude by the nation whose military power only recently had saved the two Dominions from possible invasion, whose resources and forces still were being expended in the defeat of Japan, and whose Government had not claimed rights which the Agreement denied.[16] After all, the authors of the Agreement were the very same individuals who only a short time earlier had gone to such great lengths to convince the United States that it possessed vital strategic interests in the Southwest Pacific.

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[15]Watt, op. cit., p. 76.

[16]Ibid.

Grattan has concluded that in addition to being a "swipe" at the Cairo Declaration, much of the Australia-New Zealand Agreement "can be read as a restatement in the context of 1944 of the old 'Islands policy' of Australia and New Zealand";[17] that is, it embodied in modern "socialist" dress the old concept of the islands as a defensive shield and reasserted the old notion that sovereignty over the islands was a primary interest of Australia and New Zealand. If this was true, and there is little reason to doubt that it was, this purpose might better have been served by the simple joint issuance (by both Australia and New Zealand) of a "statement of principles, in permissible words, in a joint communique."[18] Although both Governments had good reason to believe that a firm assertion of their views was necessary if they were to gain the attention of the great powers, "they overplayed their hand, however, both in choosing to sign a treaty and in the form of expression of several Articles, at some cost--at least in the case of Australia--to friendly relationships with the United States."[19] In this important respect, the Agreement forecast the shape of things to come in Australian policy. As will be seen from subsequent developments, during the remainder of his tenure as Minister for External Affairs, whenever Dr. Evatt was in disagreement with

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[17]Grattan, op. cit., p. 194.

[18]Watt, op. cit., p. 74.

[19]Ibid., p. 77.

American policy (and that occurred frequently and often over issues in which Australia had only a marginal interest) he would take an initial strong public position in opposition to that policy, dramatically throw himself into the fray, and then seek a hard-fought compromise. In repeatedly employing this tactic, he paid scant attention to the damage it might cause to Australian-American friendship.

In a very real sense, the signing of the Australia-New Zealand Agreement was intended to make the great powers aware of Australian foreign policy views during the planning which was gaining momentum with regard to the creation of a post-war international security organization. As the Labour Government turned its attention to that subject it was forced to re-appraise the basic tenets of its approach to the subject of international organization. Traditionally, Labour policy had been a mixture of nationalism, anti-imperialism, suspicion of British policy and a tendency to regard international organizations as capitalist clubs. A combination of those attitudes had led pre-war Labour policy to be characterized by a strong preference for isolationism.

However, Australia's war experience had dramatically demonstrated the futility of a policy of isolation. No longer could war be regarded as a nefarious contest between rival profiteers which Australia could ignore or help to prevent by unilateral action or indifference. As a result, "Labour's isolationism was broadening to encompass a limited

area beyond Australia's frontiers."[20] Thus, the issue confronting the Labour Government was to decide how Australian security could be insured in a world in which isolation or unilateral defense would no longer serve that end. Here, Labour was confronted by essentially the same alternatives which the conservatives had faced in 1918; that is, Australia could seek security either within the framework of the British Commonwealth or through the international security organization then in the advanced planning stage. Of course, this was not really an either-or proposition, nor had it ever been so, but rather a matter of primary policy emphasis.

Unlike the situation in 1918, several post-war considerations tended to mitigate against the British Commonwealth remaining the principal focus of Australian foreign policy and defense planning. Most important among those considerations was the fact that Imperial defense arrangements had only recently proven totally incapable of insuring Australian security. Of equal importance, however, was the fact that on this occasion the direction of Australian foreign policy was in Labour's hands. Not only was Labour thinking in this regard less influenced than the conservatives by considerations of loyalty to the Crown, but

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[20]Norman Harper & David Sissons, Australian and the United Nations (New York: Manhattan Publishing Co., 1959), p. 31.

also Labour's ideological orientation tended to mitigate against a return to the pre-war system of world politics. Both Labour's disdain for power politics and its tendency to interpret political phenomenon in economic terms made the idea of international security organization an attractive alternative to the old approach to foreign policy matters.

In responding to proposals that a new world security organization be established, Curtin and Evatt observed that the cardinal weakness of the League of Nations had been its lack of military capability and the emphasis it had placed on disarmament. They believed that this had been a negative rather than a positive approach to peace. Therefore, they argued that the proposed new international organization being discussed in Allied capitals had to have military force at its disposal as well as a combined military staff to apply that force. Moreover, realism suggested that the greater part of that force would have to be supplied by the great powers. Admitting the need for great power leadership in the new organization was not, however, to imply acceptance of great power dominance in the new body. Mr. Curtin was emphatic that "the pendulum must not . . . . swing too far in the other direction of 'might being right.' A corrective against such a tendency must be provided in the shape of an assembly of nations where policy could be moulded by ascertaining the highest common denomination among the options expressed."[21]

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[21] C.P.D., (1944), CLXIX, p. 36.

Moreover, Curtin and Evatt insisted that any new general international organization must recognize that prevention of war necessitated the removal of its root causes; that is, peace could not be maintained without a general improvement in the social and economic condition of the world. As Prime Minister Curtin observed:

> Conditions of social betterment are not attainable without a lasting peace, and a durable peace is not possible until the causes of war, which have their origin in wrong social and economic conditions are corrected . . . . You can only be sure of peace if you remove the temptation of national leaders to embark on acts of aggression against other countries because of internal social discontent.[22]

Therefore, the Labour Government insisted that maintenance and improvement of world wide standards of living must share equal importance with the military provisions of the new organization.

The preliminary parliamentary debates over the proposal to establish the United Nations took place in Australia during July 1944. Those debates revealed differences in both approach and attitude toward international organization between Labour and the conservatives. Although the debates revealed that both Labour and the conservatives correctly recognized that the future effectiveness of the proposed United Nations organization in the security field would depend upon the maintenance of cooperation and agreement among the great powers, they also demonstrated that their

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[22]Ibid., p. 37

expectations in that regard differed. Labour's leadership expressed an attitude of guarded optimism with respect to the post-war continuation of great power harmony. Mr. Curtin expressed the belief that:

> A prolonged period of peace is essential for recuperation and reconstruction after the war, and unanimity of the Great Powers on the need for it is, I think, sufficient assurance that it will be realized.[23]

The attitudes which the leadership of the conservatives expressed on this issue, particularly those of Mr. Menzies, were much more cautious. He could see that serious divisions were already developing among the war-time allies and that with the end of hostilities in sight, enduring differences in national interests were beginning to reassert themselves and undermine great power harmony.

The issue over which Labour and the conservatives were probably in the most fundamental disagreement was the social and economic functions of the proposed United Nations organization. Being philosophically hostile to all doctrines or arguments that smacked of economic determinism, Mr. Menzies chose to ignore those functions and simply made no reference to them. Labour, however, went to great lengths to elaborate on the potential benefits to be derived from those functions. To Labour they were of fundamental importance.

The remaining issue over which Labour and the conservatives disagreed involved the primary geographic

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[23]Ibid., p. 377.

focus of Australian foreign policy. What Labour seemed to be proposing was the creation of a Southwest Pacific regional defense arrangement as a component of a world-wide collective security system. As an Imperial statesman, Mr. Menzies was cautious about regional defense proposals of this nature, fearing that undue attention to Pacific security might blind Australia to dangers which might arise in Europe.

All this suggests that it was over the problem of power that Labour and the conservatives found themselves in basic disagreement. The conservatives tended to accept great power preponderance as inevitable and proper in any international organization, and to dismiss economic interpretations of political conflict. Although Labour accepted great power leadership, it stressed the importance of social and economic means for improving international security and emphasized the rights of small nations without foreseeing the possibility of an ultimate dilemma.

THE SAN FRANCISCO CONFERENCE

In August 1944, The Dumbarton Oaks Conference met in Washington to draft a great power version of the United Nations Charter, the text being published in October of that year. That text served as the basis for unusually intense and thorough Australian preparation for the San Francisco Conference. After attending several preliminary

conferences, Evatt arrived at San Francisco having completely mastered the Dumbarton Oaks text. At San Francisco he launched into a whirl of activity characterized by much populism and legal skill which attracted keen interest both inside and outside Australia.

Several factors accounted for the publicity Evatt received at the Conference. Both the nature and the timing of the Conference favored Evatt's political style and orientation.

> The Charter Conference was a constitutional convention held in the full glare of world wide publicity. The Second World War was not yet over. The consciousness of human suffering was so great and hopes for the successful organization of peace in the future so strong that the creation of the Charter was headline news.[24]

In other words, the Conference provided the sort of political forum in which Evatt excelled and revelled.

In the final analysis, however, it was Evatt himself who accounted for the attention his activities attracted at the Conference. Harper and Sissons describe him at San Francisco as:

> . . . a man of great intellect and dominant personality (who) subsequently emerged as one of the outstanding figures of the Conference, the champion of the smaller powers. A liberal socialist and a former member of the Australian High Court, he brought to the Conference a passionate conviction of the need for morality in international affairs, a sense of mission, and a belief in the need for world government by gradual stages.

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[24]Watt, op. cit., p. 78.

> These were combined with a devotion to legal processes and a humourless determination to establish democratic principles as the basis for the conduct of international relations.[25]

Even Paul Hasluck, then a close associate of the Minister, but subsequently a critic of his methods and eventually a political opponent, has paid tribute to Evatt's performance at the Charter Conference:

> The political credit or criticism for achieving policy . . . belongs almost solely to Dr. Evatt. For ceaseless determined activity I have never seen anything like his performance. Coming to the conference an almost unknown man internationally, he made himself one of the better-known figures in that multitude of people all striving to impress themselves on others. He made Australia the acknowledged activator and often the spokesman of the small powers.[26]

Alan Watt's assessment of Evatt tends to emphasize different aspects of Evatt's activities:

> The Australian Minister for External Affairs understood well the arts of publicity in attacking entrenched positions of Great Powers. As a member not only of the Conference Steering Committee (which included the leaders of all delegations) but also of the important Executive Committee of Fourteen, and as the most active and probably the best informed head of any delegation present at San Francisco, he established himself as the leader of the campaign against important features of the Dumbarton Oaks draft. Whether or not one agrees with the policy he pursued or with his methods, his technical achievement in influencing the Conference was a *tour de force*.[27]

In short, at the San Francisco Conference, Evatt was "a forceful personality--a leader for those who agreed with him; a

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[25]N. Harper & D. Sissons, op. cit., p. 48.

[26]P. Hasluck, "Australia and the Formation of the United Nations," *Australian Historical Society, Journal and Proceedings*, XL, Part III, p. 173.

[27]Watt, op. cit., p. 85.

most difficult man for those who did not."[28]

One of Evatt's first acts at the Conference was to hold a press conference during which he outlined amendments Australia would propose to the Dumbarton Oaks text. Together, those amendments involved a broad program designed to democratize and substantially strengthen the socio-economic functions of the proposed Charter. And "this was indeed an ambitious programme for the representative of a small or middle power to announce in the face of great power agreement on a text which would require substantial amendment if the programme was to be put into effect."[29] It also revealed that Evatt saw the United Nations principally as,

> . . . a way to escape from big-power politics, especially the use by the Big Powers of naked force to support decisions more expedient than just. His whole program was a flight from power politics, a game which he regarded as unspeakably evil and which in any case Australia could not play as an equal. Her only hope of achieving anything resembling the position of an equal was in a rule-of-law international organization.[30]

To accomplish the enormous task he had set for himself Evatt relied chiefly upon the force of his own personality, favorable publicity, and his ability to organize the small and middle powers at the Conference into strong and effective pressure groups. In that regard he was quite successful, particularly in mustering support for his positions among the Latin American countries. Indeed, one suspects that

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[28]Ibid., p. 47. [29]Ibid., p. 84.

[30]Grattan, op. cit., p. 199.

Evatt modeled his actions after those of Talleyrand at the Congress of Vienna.

In those circumstances, it was not surprising that the chief contest at San Francisco focused on the right of veto by the permanent members of the Security Council. Thoroughly versed in the universalism and equalitarianism of socialist doctrines, Evatt was anxious to limit the influence of the great powers and qualify the almost exclusive jurisdiction accorded to the Security Council over issues involving breaches of international security. He sought to achieve that end by several means. First, he sought to impose limitations on the permanent members' use of their right to veto. He proposed that its use be excluded from all arrangements relating to the pacific settlement of disputes, the process of conciliation, amendment of the Charter, and membership; thereby confining its application to decisions involving enforcement measures. Also not surprising was the fact that the great powers' reaction to the Australian proposals was almost wholly negative. They unanimously held to the position that they would not sign a Charter which did not recognize their right to veto. Nonetheless, in order to prevent a small power boycott of the Conference, the great powers did concede that the veto could not be used to prevent an item being placed on the agenda of the Security Council, or to prevent an item from being discussed. Although insuring the right of discussion in the Security Council was a small

victory, it was one which was later to prove crucial to Evatt's entire approach to world politics.

The second Australian approach to questions pertaining to the Security Council took the form of a proposal that the non-permanent members be drawn from the so-called "security" powers; that is, those powers which had proved by their past military contributions to the cause of world security that they were able and willing to carry out substantial security responsibilities. The Australian delegation's intent in this regard was clear. It clearly considered Australia and the other Dominions to be "security" powers, and sought to insure the election of Australia, or another nation with a similar world view (e.g. Canada) to the Security Council as a means of having their influence felt in the proper places. If the use of the veto couldn't be limited, Evatt hoped that by this second means Australia, or a sister Dominion, would sit on the Security Council and have access to its proceedings. Although the proposal was agreed to, it soon proved to be a hollow victory. The principle of giving special consideration to "security" powers in the election of non-permanent members of the Security Council was immediately and subsequently ignored.

A corollary of the Australian attempt to restrict the capriciousness of the great powers by limiting their use of the veto, was an Australian effort to elevate the status of the General Assembly and generally enhance its importance

vis-a-vis the Security Council. Although many smaller powers were critical of the implied subordinate responsibility of the Assembly in matters of international peace and security, it was Evatt who synthesized their feelings and joined forces with Senator Vandenberg of the United States to assume joint leadership of a movement to further democratize the powers of the Organization in this area. The major thrust of Evatt's campaign in this regard took the form of proposals designed to widen the jurisdiction of the Assembly and to invest it with the power to prevent issues from becoming frozen in the Council by the exercise of the veto. Evatt sought to head off this possibility by offering an amendment which would explicitly establish the power of the Assembly to consider and make recommendations on "any matter affecting international relations"[31] with the exception of those security questions actually being dealt with by the Security Council. Although the amendment was opposed by the Soviets, both the original and subsequent proposals of the sponsoring powers had already adequately safeguarded the Assembly's right to discuss security matters. This fact has lead Harper and Sissons to conclude that the real purpose of the amendment was to reinforce or strengthen the Assembly's right to "discuss and to make recommendations on two subjects

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[31] Documents of the United Nations Conference on International Organization, San Francisco, 1945 (New York: United Nations Information Organization, 1945), III, p. 544.

for which Australia at the time considered international cooperation and General Assembly recommendations to be essential: dependent peoples and full employment."[32] In any event, Evatt eventually accepted a compromise amendment which reiterated the power of the Assembly to discuss "any matter within the scope of the . . . Charter."[33]

Still another means by which Dr. Evatt sought to curb the capriciousness of the great powers in the United Nations was to sharpen the focus and spell out in greater detail the "domestic jurisdiction" provisions of the draft Charter. In general, he was concerned lest the ambiguity of the domestic jurisdiction provisions of the Dumbarton Oaks draft would become "almost an invitation to use or threat of force, in any dispute arising out of a matter of domestic jurisdiction, in the hope of inducing the Security Council to extort concessions from the state that is threatened."[34] As was made abundantly clear during the Australian Delegation's report on the Conference to Parliament, the more specific Australian concern in this area was to protect the White Australia policy in a world where the commonly accepted scope of exclusively national prerogatives was constantly contracting.

At San Francisco, the Australian delegation pursued a multiple approach to the question of national prerogatives.

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[32] Harper & Sissons, op. cit., p. 59. [33] Ibid., p. 58.

[34] _Documents of the United Nations Conference on International Organization, San Francisco_, op. cit., VI, p. 437.

To begin with, it sought to broaden the scope of the domestic jurisdiction provisions by elevating them from Section VIII of the original text (which dealt with peaceful settlement of disputes) to Chapter I where they would cover the entire range of the Organization's activities. Second, Australia denied the right of the Organization itself to determine the question of which matters fell under those provisions, but did state that where delay was permissible, an advisory opinion should be sought from the International Court. Third, Australia sought to expand the operational level protection of the provisions by substituting the phrase "essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state" for the words "domestic jurisdiction" that had appeared in the original text. Fourth, Australia proposed that the only United Nations activities exempt from the protection of the domestic jurisdiction provisions were those involving "the application of enforcement measures."[35] Because the United States held a strong parallel interest in an expansion of the domestic jurisdiction provisions of the Dumbarton Oaks draft, the Australian proposals in this regard were in large measure accepted by the Conference and appear in Article 2 (7) of the Charter. They represented Dr. Evatt's greatest achievement at San Francisco. As Alan Watt has commented:

> This unusual success in securing substantial amendment to a text already agreed upon by the sponsoring powers was a _tour de force_, and in some degree at least to be

[35] Ibid., p. 440.

> interpreted as a tribute . . . to Dr. Evatt's advocacy of the points of view of many Middle and Small Powers during the Conference as a whole.[36]

If the populist dimension of Dr. Evatt's basic political orientation was clearly discernible in his treatment of the great power-small power relationships implicit in the Dumbarton Oaks draft, the socialist dimension of his political orientation was equally as discernible in his approach to the proposed economic and social provisions of the draft. In general, Evatt was disturbed by the vague and somewhat perfunctory nature of the draft's socio-economic provisions. The economic and social well-being of mankind was a matter which Evatt took very seriously. Therefore, he immediately set out to put "teeth" into the economic and social provisions of the Dumbarton Oaks draft.

Here also, Evatt's approach was multi-faceted. To begin with, he sought to broaden and strengthen the draft's economic and social provisions by supporting a move already afoot to elevate the Economic and Social Council to the position of a principal organ of the Organization. A much more controversial approach fashioned by Evatt in this area was his attempt to infuse the draft with laborite ideology through the inclusion in the Charter of a pledge on the part of all signatories to maintain levels of domestic full employment.

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[36]Watt, op. cit., p. 90.

This famous Australian initiative followed from a mixture of both the philosophical orientation and the historical experience of the Australian Labour Party. Labour's philosophy had been strongly influenced by that group of British economists which had stressed the importance of full employment as the key to effective national economic policy. As the pre-war domestic controversy precipitated by J. T. Lang had demonstrated, that intellectual bent had been reinforced by Labour's traumatic experience during the depression. Furthermore, powerful Labour elements had long ascribed to the standard socialist interpretation of war being the inevitable product of "capitalist" financial manipulations. In fact, that sort of dogma generally had served as the basis of Labour's strong isolationist bent during the inter-war period. Together, that intellectual heritage strongly influenced Labour's entire approach to the subjects of peacemaking and the framing of a post-war international organization which would hopefully rid mankind of the scourge of war. Like all the other governments represented at the San Francisco Conference, the Australian Government's approach to the basic issues of peace-making was heavily conditioned by its beliefs and conclusions about the origins of World War II. On that vital issue, Labour had worked itself around to a position predicated upon the following interpretation of the events leading to to the war; in pursuit of policies whose purpose was the exploitation of the

working class, the "capitalists" in the major industrialized nations had failed to maintain levels of full employment, which had led to a sharp decline in international demand, which had precipitated a sharp fall in international trade, which had led to the world-wide depression, which eventually led to World War II. From that type of analysis, it then was logically concluded that the maintenance of a high level of employment was the key to insuring world peace and security.

As is always the case when ideology and political dogma are matters of consequence in policy formulation, however, the Australian full employment initiative also followed from more immediate and practical concerns. Foremost among those concerns was world-wide speculation over the probability of a post-war depression in the United States and on-going Anglo-American discussions concerning the post-war expansion of international trade through the reduction or elimination of all forms of trade barriers. To a nation whose economic well-being was highly dependent upon international demand for its primary products and the use of tariffs to protect its domestic markets, those developments were viewed with apprehension. To Labour in particular, they seemed to forecast the creation of an international economic system in which the large industrialized nations would be able to redouble their efforts to exploit the working classes in the primary producing nations.

To an Australian Government already acutely sensitive about the capriciousness of the great powers, the full employment pledge was viewed as a simple, practical and demonstrably sound means of both protecting Australia's economic security as well as insuring world-wide prosperity. As early as the 1944 International Labor Organization Conference in Philadelphia, Dr. Evatt unsuccessfully had sought specific assurances from the large industrialized nations to maintain high levels of employment and consumption as a prerequisite to Australia's concurrence in any agreement which would limit national prerogatives in the formulation of monetary and commercial policies. At San Francisco, the issue narrowed to a contest between Australia and the United States. After Evatt had secured the substitution of the term "full employment" for "high and stable levels of employment" in the Dumbarton Oaks draft, the contest became dead-locked when the American delegation protested that the United States Senate would reject any Charter containing such phraseology. Eventually, the Soviets, acting as honest brokers, secured agreement to a compromise provision which states that all members of the United Nations "shall" promote higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of socio-economic progress and development. Although that maneuver enabled both sides in the contest to claim they had won their point, Evatt's victory was in reality a rather hollow one, for "there appears to be no significant difference between a

pledge on a matter admitted to be essentially within domestic jurisdiction and so completely unenforceable,"[37] and mere declaration of intent.

The other major socio-economic issue which the Australian delegation focused on at San Francisco was the concept of trusteeship. In general, the proposals Dr. Evatt sponsored concerning trusteeship were sensible compromises between idealism and realism pragmatically modified during the give and take of the Conference negotiations. On the one hand, Evatt's proposals strongly suggest that what he envisioned was closer to a reconstituted Mandate system than the construction of a framework for the urgent and comprehensive attainment of independence by colonial peoples. To Evatt, good government for developing societies was still preferable to bad self-government. He was "a reformer, but still a paternal one."[38] Noteworthy in this regard, however, was the failure of the Australian proposals to make the important distinction which the British had made in defining the objectives of trusteeship as self-government rather than independence. On the other hand, Evatt's humanitarianism impulse to further the interests of the under-priveledged led him to stress the importance of the obligation which administering powers owed both to dependent peoples and the

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[37]N. Harper & D. Sissons, op. cit., p. 69.

[38]W. J. Hudson, "Australia's Trusteeship Policy," <u>Australian Outlook</u>, XXI (1967), no. 1, p. 12.

world community in general. In order to insure that those obligations were properly carried out, he proposed that all dependent territories be submitted to a universal system of accountability. In other words, the important issue of volunteerism was specifically excluded from his proposals.

The Australian approach to the entire issue of trusteeship was conditioned, of course, by its strategic interests in the New Guinea territories. In fact, on at least one occasion Evatt stated that Australia's concern for the welfare of dependent peoples, particularly those in the Pacific, sprang from the belief that improvements in the socio-economic condition of those people would assist them in becoming "fitter components in the outer defense bastions."[39] Therefore, nothing in the trusteeship proposals offered by Australia endangered or was intended to endanger the substance of the Administering Powers' control over dependent territories. Rather, the principle of the "closed door" was to be maintained, with the administration of dependent territories being vested solely in the hands of the Administrating Power with no encroachments from the United Nations.

Significantly, the Australian proposals stated that no trusteeship agreement was to be imposed on the administering authority: it could only be bound by what it chose to consent to. In short, the sort of international

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[39] Ibid.

supervision Evatt was proposing involved "no interference with sovereignty."[40] Accountability was to be achieved not by tampering with the Administering Power's sovereign rights in its dependent territories, but through the populist mechanism of opening the territories to international scrutiny and exposing the Administering Power to the full blast of world public opinion. In essence, this amounted to a reiteration of the approach which had served as the basis of the League's old Mandate system. Since that system had not worked especially well, it is difficult to ascertain why Evatt thought it would work in the post-World War II era, other than to suggest that he had concluded that the war experience had instilled the international community with a new and higher sense of internation morality.

In the course of the deliberations at San Francisco, the Australian position on trusteeship underwent several important modifications. In a departure from the older Mandate concept, Australia joined forces with the British in securing the right of Administering Powers to use the resources and manpower of trust territories for their defense. Further more, Australia acquiesced in drafting modifications which changed the nature of the Trusteeship Council from a League of Nations style body of technical experts which received, reviewed, and disseminated

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[40]Harper & Sissons, op. cit., p. 75.

information from Administering Powers to a Council composed of the representatives of member states. However, the most important modification of the Australian position on trusteeship involved the eventual acceptance of a "hands off" stance toward previously non-Mandated territories. When other colonial powers, notably the British, found the compulsory accountability provisions of the Australian porposals repugnant, Evatt subsequently accepted a trusteeship system whose authority virtually was confined only to those territories voluntarily submitted to it. Having thus failed to secure universal application of the principal of trusteeship, he then sought to strengthen the system that did emerge from the Conference by winning acceptance of the concept that trusteeship would entail the mandatory submission of reports on dependent territories to the Council. This proposal eventually became Article 73e of the Charter, and in subsequent years few other provisions in the Charter were to prove more embarrassing and troublesome for Australia and the other Administering Powers.

When viewed in its entirety, several important conclusions can be drawn from the performance of the Australian delegation at the San Francisco Conference. To begin with, it is clear that in the end Australia had to accept a Charter the broad outlines of which were determined by the great powers. Not surprisingly, the impact of the Australian delegation on the final Charter draft largely was

confined either to areas where the great powers were in fundamental disagreement or to those in which the great powers took only marginal interest. Within those limits, however, the Australian accomplishments were substantial. Dr. Evatt's initiatives had been important both in the drafting process and in organizing support for particular amendments. By consistently championing the cause of the middle and small powers, often deliberately seeking their leadership, his personal influence at the Conference was considerable. Indeed, the San Francisco Conference marked "the peak of Evatt's international influence as Minister for External Affairs."[41]

Furthermore, the substantive positions taken by the Australian Government at San Francisco suggest that in its approach to framing an international organization, it sought not only to insure international security but also to further those Australian interests which were uniquely national in origin. This inevitably led to some internal contradictions or inconsistencies in the Australian policy. For example, while Dr. Evatt obviously saw an urgent need for a new organic international organization and actively sought to institutionalize international interdependence in the socio-economic realm, he vigorously opposed any narrowing of national prerogatives in areas such as the determination of immigration policies and the administration of dependent peoples.

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[41]Watt, op. cit., p. 85.

Still another equally important development at San Francisco, was Australia's "pursuit of an independent policy as a small power."[42] As Harper and Sissons have observed, "this was in contrast to Australian policy previously and subsequently."[43] In contrast to the practice followed at the Paris Peace Conference, each British Commonwealth representative at the San Francisco Conference followed an independent approach. Although Australia had participated in several pre-Conference meetings of Commonwealth members, no pretense had been made either at those meetings or at San Francisco to hammer out a common Commonwealth policy. In fact, at San Francisco, Australia for the first time publicly opposed the British during a major international conference. This signalled that the old pre-war concept of a centralized British Commonwealth was operationally dead. It amounted to a declaration that the nature of Dominion status had been dramatically changed by the war, as well as an announcement that henceforth, Australia would determine what was or was not in its own interests. As Dr. Evatt later explained in Parliament:

> We did not belong to any bloc of nations. For instance the debate over the powers of the Assembly was mainly with the sponsoring powers led by Russia, with nearly all the other Powers supporting our view. On the other hand, on the full employment question, the Soviet supported us. On regionalism it was necessary to join issue with certain Latin-American

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[42]Harper & Sisson, op. cit., p. 79.

[43]Ibid., p. 55.

> Republics who were attempting to secure for their regional group an almost complete independence from the Security Council.[44]

RATIFICATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHARTER

Parliamentary debate over ratification of the United Nations Charter took place in Australia during August and September 1945. Because those debates tended to foreshadow the principal foreign policy thrust of both of the major Australian political factions for at least the next decade, they were perhaps the most important foreign policy debates ever to occur in Australia. Dr. Evatt began the presentation of Labour's arguments by reviewing the actions of the Australian delegation to the San Francisco Conference. He stated that Australia had made two decisive contributions to the Charter. It had contributed to the extension of the General Assembly's powers in order to "prevent the Organization from becoming," in Mr. Churchill's phrase, "a shield for the strong and a mockery from the weak," and it had played a crucial role in "breathing life into the original unsatisfactory chapters of the Dumbarton Oaks draft dealing with economic matters."[45]

Dr. Evatt returned to that theme when he introduced the ratification Bill to Parliament. He was less concerned

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[44] H. E. Evatt, Australia in World Affairs (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1946), p. 54.

[45] Ibid., p. 55.

with a defense of the principles of collective security incorporated in the Charter than he was with an explanation of the Charter as a whole and the role that Australia had played in the drafting process. According to Evatt's interpretation of the Charter, the real center of power in the United Nations should have been the democratic General Assembly, and the Australian delegation had done everything in its power to insure that the Assembly was given the fullest powers of discussion and recommendation on practically every subject within the very broad scope of the Charter. Because of the Australian initiatives, he believed that the Assembly would become the creative agency of the United Nations and the smaller powers now would be able, through Assembly action, to "help to balance and compensate the greater power vested in the permanent members of the Security Council."[46] Although Evatt again deplored retention of the veto on a wide range of issues by the permanent members of the Council, he accepted this as inevitable but cautioned that because of its retention, no member could rely completely on the United Nations' security mechanisms and each nation might find it necessary to "fall back on regional arrangements, and ultimately upon its own defenses and those of its Allies."[47] Evatt then went on to explain why the Charter did not compromise any of Australia's traditional or vital foreign policy interests.

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[46]Ibid.

[47]Ibid., p. 56.

The Opposition's rebuttal to Dr. Evatt's presentation really did not focus on any of the substantive principles incorporated in the Charter. In large measure, it found those acceptable. Rather, the Opposition's rebuttal amounted to an attack focused on Dr. Evatt's diplomacy at San Francisco, his interpretation of the Charter, and the conclusion he drew from those for Australian foreign policy.

The conservatives began their attack by criticizing Evatt's thrusting style of diplomacy and suggesting that his personal political ambitions far too often had outweighed his concern for Australia's interests. Typical of their criticism was that rendered some years later by Paul Hasluck, whose functions in the External Affairs Ministry and responsibilities at San Francisco involved him in a close working relationship with Dr. Evatt. In Hasluck's opinion, the reputation Evatt (and Australia) built up at the Conference was:

> . . . a reputation for activity and determination and aggressiveness in meeting criticism or opposition rather than for wisdom . . . . A tremendous amount of the achievement was just hammering on the door . . . (Evatt) was working for a success at San Francisco rather than addressing himself to the continuing tasks of good international relations . . . . His ambition was clearer than his policy.[48]

Hasluck goes on to suggest that even though Evatt's achievements in organizing the smaller powers against the great powers as well as his accomplishments in exploiting

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[48]Hasluck, op. cit., p. 177.

differences among the great powers may have enabled him to enjoy numerous successes at San Francisco, those successes were achieved only at the expense of the reconciliation of national interests--the process which Hasluck states is the true basis of world peace and security. Thus, he concludes that even though Australia "may have helped to make a slightly better document, I don't think we helped to make a better world situation."[49]

As was to be expected, a more specific focus of the conservatives' criticism of Dr. Evatt's diplomacy at San Francisco was the impact of his actions on Anglo-Australian relations. In general, the conservatives questioned Labour's efforts to mold the United Nations into a forum for mustering world opinion, and feared that such an approach to restraining an "evildoer" too often had and would continue to place Great Britain in that role. Thus, while Menzies felt compelled to praise Evatt's technical achievements at San Francisco, he was highly critical of Labour's "practice of carrying into the public press matters of dispute of conflict with Great Britain, which ought to be the subject of private discussions . . . ."[50]

The criticism offered by Mr. John McEwen, leader of the Country Party, was somewhat more pointed:

> The right honourable gentleman is unquestionably a man of great ability, extraordinary industry, and of notable

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[49]Ibid., p. 178.

[50]C.P.D., CLXXXIV (1945), pp. 5, 111-12.

> force of character; but with these fine qualities go an obvious burning personal ambition to be a great figure, and an insatiable desire for publicity. If ever the British Empire were unlucky enough to have at the same time a group of Dominion Foreign Ministers as well equipped as Dr. Evatt and practising the same tactics, the British Commonwealth would disintegrate like the atom."[51]

What was at the center of the debate then, was agreement on the importance of insuring Australia's ability to influence the great powers, but a divergence of views over the most appropriate means to achieve that end. Starting from an easier acceptance of the validity of power politics and skepticism over the ability of the United Nations to alter the traditional patterns of world politics, the conservatives took the position, in Mr. Harold Holt's words, that Australia's "strength arises from the fact that we can mould the policy of one of the three Great Powers of the world . . . ."[52] Therefore, the conservatives argued that no matter how attractive the pursuit of an independent foreign policy (of Labour's variety) may have been, that course was to be avoided by Australia, or any other Dominion, since it would destroy the British Commonwealth and place them all outside the ranks of the great powers.

It was this sort of political orientation which led Menzies to assess the overall importance of the United Nations Charter in the following manner:

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[51]Ibid., pp. 5, 160-1.

[52]Ibid., p. 5, 176.

> We have here in this Charter a provision for a species of alliance between the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, China, and France, to which there is attached for many useful purposes of discussion and co-operation a great number of smaller powers. The function of these smaller powers will be to influence, so far as they can, the Great Powers; and when the Great Powers have unanimously decided upon a certain course, to play their part in its enforcement."[53]

Since Menzies and his fellow conservatives believed that the essence of the United Nations was its "nucleus" of great powers, the role that the General Assembly would and should play in the Oranization was a secondary one and Evatt's claim to have "very significantly widened" the Assembly's powers was of no moment. What was of concern to the conservatives was not expansion of Australia's ability to mobilize world opinion through the General Assembly, but insuring that Australia's influence would be felt in the Security Council. Therefore, they concluded that consistent support for British policies and the strengthening of British prestige rather than the democratization of world politics should be the primary goal of the Australianpolicy within the United Nations. In short, the United Nations was conceived of by the conservatives more as a means to an end rather than an end in itself.

Accordingly, the conservatives also belittled the importance Dr. Evatt accorded to Labour's efforts to narrow the veto provisions of the Charter. Although Menzies agreed that Labour's position on that subject was in "pure theory"

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[53]Ibid., p. 5112.

correct, he felt that its attack on the veto was unrealistic, since veto or no veto:

> . . . if those five Great Powers understood each other and concur in the action that they are going to take, world peace will be kept; but if any one of them finds its interest running counter to that of the other four and adhere to them so strongly that it is going to fight about it, then world war becomes inevitable.[54]

The conservatives' greater appreciation of the realities of power politics led them to conclude that whenever the United Nations actions adversely impinged upon the vital interests of any great power, that great power would protect its interests either by immobilizing the Organization through use of the veto or by ignoring United Nations actions. On this premise, it could be, and frequently was argued that in Australia's relations with the United Nations it was unnecessary to consider nations other than the great powers since those without power could be discounted. The conservatives' view of Australia's role in world affairs was not inconsistent with that expressed as late as July 1944 by Mr. Curtin nor, of course, with the view acted upon consistently by Australian governments in the past. Of course, that line of argumentation rested on the erroneous assumption that in spite of the enormous political, economical, and technological dislocations precipitated by the war, nothing had fundamentally changed in the conduct of world politics. More specifically, the conservatives' view of

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[54]Ibid., p. 5116.

Australia's world role discounted the impact the recent development of the atomic bomb would have on world affairs, largely ignored the emergence of a non-European centered system of world politics, and failed to recognize that the war had ushered in the era of what John Herz has described as the "penetrated nation-state."[55]

In regard to the economic and social provisions of the Charter, the conservatives followed a similar tactic. They were frankly skeptical of Dr. Evatt's enthusiasm for pledges and, in the absence of enforcement authority, categorically rejected Labour assertions concerning the ability of the Organization to eliminate differential economic conditions as a means of preventing war. To many conservatives the resolution of the most urgent economic problem confronting Australia largely lay outside the scope of the Charter; that is, it arose from a need to create more effective British Commonwealth economic machinery. According to the conservatives, continued Australian prosperity largely depended on the rehabilitation of British industry and a subsequent expansion of Australia's British markets, and, as Mr. Menzies was quick to point out, the strengthening of Imperial economic ties would not be a primary function of the United Nations economic and social functions.

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[55]John Herz, "The Rise and Demise of the Territorial State," <u>World Politics</u>, IX (1957), pp. 473-93.

In general, then, Labour was more confident of the United Nations success than the conservatives. Although there was general agreement that the Charter adequately safeguarded matters which Australia considered to be matters of domestic jurisdiction, there was continuing fundamental disagreement over the long-standing issue as to whether an international organization could substitute for the British Commonwealth as a keystone of Australian foreign policy. In their approach to that issue, both major political groupings in Australia tended to lack balance and ascribe undue importance to either the United Nations or the British Commonwealth as political mechanisms for insuring Australian security. Whereas the Labour Party's approach can be criticized for unduly relying upon the as yet unproven and untried provisions of the United Nations Charter, the conservatives must be equally criticized for failing to recognize that the war had not only shattered the old concept of a centralized British Commonwealth, but also demonstrated the need for a different approach to achieving international security.

Chapter 9

AUSTRALIAN POST-WAR FOREIGN POLICY

DR. EVATT'S SEARCH FOR "JUSTICE"

Ever since the proclamation of the Commonwealth of Australia, the basic issue of international affairs as seen from Canberra has been the survival of Australia as a country of Western European cultural traditions and stock in a geographic setting off the southern rim of Asia. Prior to 1942, successive Australian Governments had sought to resolve this issue through almost exclusive reliance upon, and support for, British foreign policy. Early in that year, however, the course of Japanese aggression dramatically demonstrated the inadequacy of continued reliance upon British power as a means of insuring Australia's survival. More than any other single event, the fall of Singapore had destroyed many Australian illusions about British power and brought the Australian Government to the reluctant conclusion that protection of Australia's vital interests required that it pursue a much more independent foreign policy which on occasion might differ in both content and emphasis from that of Australia's traditional friends and allies.

The war in the Pacific had proven in a dramatic fashion that something more was demanded of Australian foreign policy than simple and exclusive support for Great Britain. Thus, while the basic issue in international affairs remained unchanged, when hostilities in the Pacific drew to a close, both the intensity of the Australian perception of that issue and the conclusions concerning what was required of the Australian Government in order to resolve that issue had undergone fundamental changes.

As suggested in previous chapters, the Australian Government had begun to feel its way toward a new approach to the problem of Australia's survival as a Western nation in a near Asian setting even before the end of hostilities in the Pacific. In keeping with positions formulated and expressed in the later stages of the war, Dr. Evatt made the United Nations the principal focus of post-war Australian foreign policy. Once the necessity of submerging particular national interests to the common Allied cause was removed by the surrender of the Axis powers, the full intensity of Evatt's populist-egalitarian and universalist approach to world politics came to the fore. Having chafed under both the great power direction of the Allied war effort and their dominance at international conferences called to forge the nature of the post-war international environment, he launched into an ambitious and protracted diplomatic campaign to insure that the

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United Nations evolved into an organization which not only would minimize the influence of the great powers and maximize that of the lesser powers, but also facilitate universal acceptance of the Australian Labour Party's conception of economic and social "justice."

Central to Evatt's undertaking was the perennial problem of determining how a lesser power can most effectively influence the policies and actions of the great powers. Prior to World War II, Australian governments had relied almost exclusively upon the mechanism of consultation with the British to achieve that end: that is, they had followed the traditional practice of aligning themselves with a great power. After the war, Evatt largely abandoned that mechanism in favor of a more egalitarian and democratic approach to influencing the great powers. Both his public statements and his actions suggest that he believed that this fundamental problem could be more effectively and equitably resolved through the mobilization of world public opinion in the United Nations and the forging of a united front among the lesser powers against the capriciousness of the great powers. In fact, Evatt's actions suggest that he was pursuing an early, although unformulated version of what has more recently come to be known as the "collective legitimization" approach to changing the

operational norms of world politics.[1] Not surprisingly, Evatt seems to have conceived of himself as the leader of that movement. In the Security Council, the General Assembly, and as one of the high officers of the United Nations (including the 1948 presidency of the General Assembly) he relentlessly followed an energetic policy to have all important international problems referred to the United Nations for consideration, investigation, conciliation or determination. In diplomatic style, he was always assertive if not actually aggressive. He simply "did not understand the value of occasional diplomatic silence, or the need to balance present successes against possible long-term losses."[2]

Theoretically, the principal weakness of Dr. Evatt's approach to world politics was that it assumed that an international organization such as the United Nations either was, or at least could be, directive rather than merely reflective of prevailing international political norms. Whether Evatt understood this important distinction is unclear. What is clear, however, is that even if he didn't believe that the United Nations could be directive of world politics, he certainly hoped it could be and acted upon that hope.

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[1] For a discussion of the concept of collective legitimization see Inis L. Claude, Jr., The Changing United Nations, (New York: Random House, 1967), Chapter IV.

[2] Alan Watt, The Evolution of Australian Foreign Policy, 1938-1965, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 105.

Indicative of Dr. Evatt's egalitarian and universalist approach to world politics was his continuing criticism of what he considered to be the undemocratic tendency on the part of the great powers to handle post-war settlements outside the framework of the United Nations and without regard to the interests of the lesser powers. He insisted that:

> There is no problem or dispute in the world which cannot be settled in terms of peace and justice; but the way to settlement is through the United Nations and not along the lines of power politics, which has no regard to the facts of justice of each dispute.[3]

In particular, he took exception to the manner in which the great powers approached the subject of making peace with the former Axis powers. In this regard he observed:

> In making peace, the desire of some major powers to reach exclusive settlements and take unilateral action must not prevail. The lesser powers cannot relax for a moment their efforts to secure for themselves as active belligerents an adequate voice at the conference tables.[4]

Therefore, during 1947, when the great powers assumed exclusive responsibility for negotiating peace treaties with Italy, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland, the Australian Prime Minister, J. B. Chifley, (who had succeeded John Curtin) took the position that the texts of those treaties:

> . . . could not be regarded as adequate to insure a just and durable over-all peace . . . (because they) denied to nations which took an active part in the war a full and just share in framing of the peace. In many

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[3]Current Notes, XIX (1948), p. 191.

[4]Current Notes, XVIII (1947), p. 408.

> respects, therefore, the treaties do not represent the democratically expressed wishes and ideals of all the belligerent nations.[5]

Dr. Evatt also referred to this theme late in 1947. On this occasion it was the great power discussions concerning a peace settlement with Germany which was the focus of his attention. When great power negotiations on this subject broke down in the early summer, Evatt proposed the convening of an "unfettered conference of all the active belligerents which should assume final responsibility for the peace settlement."[6] When this overture was disregarded and the great powers subsequently decided to convene the Big Four Council of Foreign Ministers, Evatt, in the hope that he could break the deadlock, announced that:

> Australia has always emphasized that a just peace means a peace made by truly democratic proceedings and a peace based on principles. The Council of Foreign Ministers has never countenanced a truly just and democratic procedure. It has always taken to itself more power than it should.[7]

In spite of these continuing manifestations of the unwillingness on the part of the great powers to share their power with the lesser powers or submit their actions to a majority vote of the lesser powers, Dr. Evatt appears to have concluded over a period of time that his efforts were bearing fruit and that what he had hoped for so long actually was becoming a reality. On the second anniversary of the

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[5]Ibid., p. 632. [6]Ibid., p. 392.

[7]Current Notes, XIX (1948), p. 38.

United Nations, he issued a press statement which contained the following observation:

> Gradually the General Assembly will emerge as the popular congress to which the Security Council and all other organs of the United Nations will become increasingly responsive and so responsible. That development is precisely what was foreseen by those nations like Australia, which at San Francisco were able to democratize and liberalize the original Dumbarton Oaks draft of the Charter.[8]

Dr. Evatt returned to this subject following his term as President of the General Assembly. In commenting upon the inability of the stalemated Security Council to implement the collective security provisions of the United Nations Charter, he stated that:

> The absence of physical force at the disposal of the Security Council has simply meant greater responsibilities upon the General Assembly in certain respects . . . . One result has been to give to the General Assembly a role far more important than that which was visualized when the Charter was drafted . . . . The General Assembly has gradually been building up for itself a position analogous in international affairs to the position that was built up in Great Britain during the long years of struggle by the House of Commons in relation to the executive. In the analogy, the General Assembly corresponds to the popular body and the Security Council to the executive.[9]

There was, of course, a certain surrealist quality about those latter statements by Dr. Evatt. Most disturbing is the fact that they were made at the very same time that the cold war was dividing the international arena into a bi-polar

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[8]Current Notes, XVIII, (1947), p. 488.

[9]Current Notes, XIX, (1949), p. 753.

political system. In fact, there was a certain tragic quality about Evatt's dream of world government by gradual stages. As Grattan has suggested, what was tragic about all this was not so much the ideal Evatt was pursuing, but the fact that he:

> . . . attempted to initiate his drama, and for a time actually tried to act it out, in a world rapidly degenerating into hostile power blocs polarized around the United States and the USSR. The Cold War put Dr. Evatt's world into stygian shadows. A British parliament might be adequate to contain the class war; its analogue could not contain an international power struggle of the magnitude of the one which appeared after 1945.[10]

This raises the question of why Dr. Evatt was never able to accept and adjust to the onset of the cold war. To begin with, he was probably not privy to the particular decisions on the part of the great powers which gave rise to that conflict. All the same, by the end of 1947, it should have been clear to a man who possessed primary responsibility for framing Australian foreign policy that the great power harmony which was necessary if the United Nations was to fulfill the expectations of its authors, was a thing of the past. In the end, then, we are left with the conclusion that Dr. Evatt's ideological distaste for power politics and his hopes for the United Nations simply blinded him to the significance and importance of the cold war. As time passed, he found it increasingly difficult to adapt Australia's

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[10]C. Hartley Grattan, <u>The United States and the Southwest Pacific</u>, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 200.

foreign policy to the world of the cold war with its blatant and undisguised recourse to power politics, and throughout his tenure as Minister for External Affairs he continued to turn to the United Nations as the first and best hope of securing international peace and justice.

To be sure, the United Nations was not destroyed by the onset of the cold war. But this development did make it imperative that the collective security provisions of the United Nations Charter be supplemented by other security arrangements which did not necessarily conflict with the United Nations prerogatives but which nevertheless followed from very different assumptions about the maintenance of world peace and security. The answer the principal Western nations found for this need was regionalism--or more specifically, regional collective security arrangements.

Dr. Evatt was ambivalent if not hostile toward the rise of regionalism. In general, he interpreted this development as a political force which would either compromise the effectiveness of the United Nations or downgrade its importance and status in world affairs. In this regard he commented that:

> The Australian Government had watched with deep concern the tendency among certain nations to form dominating groups and rigid blocs or alignments. Such a tendency was entirely contrary to the spirit of the San Francisco Charter.[11]

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[11]Current Notes, XVIII (1947), p. 543.

Moreover, not only did the rise of regionalism tend to downgrade the importance of the United Nations in Dr. Evatt's opinion, but it also would lead to a situation in which the importance of European affairs might be over-emphasized at the expense of all other regions. Thus, in March 1947, Dr. Evatt expressed:

> . . . fear of a tendency among some groups in the United Kingdom to become engrossed with problems of foreign policy on both sides of the Atlantic to the exclusion of problems in the Pacific and South-East Asia . . . (because) it is essential for Britain to retain and indeed develop a real awareness of what is occurring in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, where there are many general interests to be safeguarded and where things can only be achieved by the closest cooperation of Britain, New Zealand, and Australia.[12]

And in October 1948, following the announcement of the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine, the Australian delegates to the United Nations Fourth Committee continued to press that issue by observing that:

> Asia has a much larger population than Europe, it is growing in importance, population, and wealth, and its awakening is one of the major historical facts of our day. We must not allow the seriousness of the European problem make us overlook the problems of Asia.[13]

In the socio-economic field, Dr. Evatt was skeptical about regional approaches. He believed that approaches to that subject, like all other matters which had a direct bearing upon the maintenance of peace and security, were issues of world-wide concern which therefore should be dealt

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[12] Ibid., p. 396.

[13] Current Notes, XX (1949), p. 146.

with through a universal approach, for "whilst want is stalking the earth, it is the duty of every nation that can help to alleviate it to do so and thus (alleviate) not merely war but the causes of war."[14] In short, he believed that irrespective of political differences, the wealthier nations were morally obliged to assist all the developing and war-ravaged nations. Therefore, Australia opposed the liquidation of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), to which it had been the fourth largest contributor, and relentlessly pressed for the adoption of both still other universal approaches to increasing the flow of economic assistance to needy nations as well as the liberalization of trade restrictions on primary products.

In the pursuit of those objectives, however, Australia was not solely motivated by Labour's humanitarian concern for the poor and the hungry. A heavy dose of enlightened self-interest was involved in that policy. For example, the Australian opposition to regional approaches to trade liberalization for primary products, and its subsequent decision not to become a regional member of the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) followed from a recognition that in spite of their geographic proximity, the basic trade patterns of Australia

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[14]Current Notes, XIX (1948), p. 20.

and the ECAFE members were not regional. Moreover, long standing Australian anxiety over their nearest neighbors also played an important role in the decision to champion the economic cause of the developing nations. In commenting upon the rationale and origin for the White Australia policy, Prime Minister Chifley observed that:

> There is ample evidence that, long and hard though the way may be, the only way for our Asian neighbors to achieve peace and prosperity for all their nationals is through strenuous efforts in their own lands, not through immigration. At the same time, it is the task of the Western democracies to assist these countries in every way possible. By practical means, it must be demonstrated to the people of all Asian countries that liberty, democracy, and freedom mean something more than just freedom to starve . . . . It is the desire of Australia to help its neighbors in every way to develop their own countries, improve their standards of living, and overcome their problems. It is not our intention to be a party to any false idea that the troubles of Asia can be cured or even slightly improved by the immigration of Asian people to Australia.[15]

And somewhat later, economic assistance for the developing nations rather belatedly was perceived by the Australians as a means of combatting the spread of communist influences. In a 1949 speech which was reminiscent of General George Marshall's famous Harvard address, Dr. Evatt stated that:

> . . . it is important to remember that the nationalist movements in (the Asian) countries are not to be identified with the Communist movement simply because Communists adhere to them, and that the capacity of nationalists to check or to neutralize the growth of Communism will depend on the help they get from outside and unless they get that help, real stability and order cannot be expected and the process of peaceful transition

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[15]Current Notes, XX (1949), p. 646.

> from colonial to independent status, in many cases will be interrupted.[16]

Although Dr. Evatt made the United Nations the principal focus of post-war Australian foreign policy, this did not preclude the emergence of several subordinate themes in Labour's foreign policy. In fact, with the passage of time there arose within the overall framework of support for the United Nations a three-pronged Australian foreign policy that stressed the importance of Australian-Asian, Anglo-Australian, and Australian-American relations.

AUSTRALIAN-ASIAN RELATIONS

As suggested in Part I, one of the principal reasons why Australia had not fashioned an independent foreign policy prior to World War II was the absence of a perceived need for such a policy. And nowhere had that need seemed more lacking than with regard to Australia's nearest neighbors. As long as Asia remained largely under European colonial control, Australia's relations with Asia essentially amounted to a matter of relations with the European colonial powers. Indeed, the pre-war management of relations with Asia had been extremely simple for Australia. There was Great Britain, controlling the seas and ruling in her vast Indian Empire. Then there was peaceful and civilized Holland controlling the regions immediately adjacent to Australia, as

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[16] Ibid., p. 759.

well as a powerful France ruling in Indo-China. And finally, there was a weak China, divided and dominated by foreign powers. That had left only Japan as a real yet distant menace.

The war in the Pacific had changed all that. In a very real sense, the war had sounded the death-knell for the age of colonial empires and had ushered in the process of permanent contraction of European power. By the end of hostilities, Asian nationalism was on the rise and the political map of Asia was undergoing fundamental alterations. India was well on its way to self-government, the war-interrupted independence for the Philippines was rescheduled for the near future, and everywhere the European colonial powers met various forms and degrees of resistance to their return by the Asian peoples. All this created a new set of political and strategic problems which led to a new Asian emphasis in post-war Australian foreign policy.

In undertaking to shape a post-war Australian foreign policy toward Asia, the Labour Government was confronted by an important strategic dilemma. On the one hand, the continued presence of Western controlled administrations in Asia possessed certain traditional security advantages for Australia. On the other hand, the Labour Government also recognized that colonial administrations which were unwanted by their subject peoples would not constitute an effective barrier against any future renewal of Asian

aggression. Therefore, the key issue in post-war Australian policy toward Asia was the determination of what balance should be struck between support for European colonial administrations and for indigenous Asian nationalist movements.

In large measure, the Labour Government's response to that issue was predicated upon Australia's own war experience. In that regard, the vast majority of Australians had been shocked by the extension of war into the Pacific and Indian Oceans. What had been even more shocking, however, was the rapidity with which the process of political disaffection had overtaken one colonial regime after another. After all, pre-war Australian strategic planning for containing any Asian conflict far to the north of the continent had been predicated upon the assumed strength of those regimes. But only in the Philippines, and to a lesser extent in Malaya and India, had the Asian peoples rallied to support their colonial administrations. Subsequently, as the course of the war repeatedly demonstrated the inherent weakness of the colonial regimes, the Labour Government became increasingly disenchanted with the colonial policies of the European powers. By the end of hostilities, many Australians were convinced that any attempt to re-impose European authority in Asia would be futile or "like drawing a stick through water."[17]

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[17]K. E. Beagley, M.P., Canberra Times, March 3, 1966, quoted in Amry and Mary Belle Vandenbosch, Australia Faces Southeast Asia, (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1967), p. 33.

Reinforcing that conviction was Labour's long-standing anti-colonial bias: that is, Labour generally supported Asian independence movements not only because it was disillusioned with the effectiveness of colonial regimes, but also because it believed their aspirations deserved support. An essential element of that policy was a tendency on the part of many Labour members, most notably Dr. Evatt, to project into the question of the Asian nationalist movements their own prejudices and aspirations. In other words, they tended to see in Asia a reflection of an Australia suffering from capitalist exploitation under a system which was ultimately perpetuated by European bankers and share-holders.

At the end of the war, that attitude easily merged with the war-induced heady internationalism which characterized post-war world politics. To many in Labour, support for Asian independence movements involved a reaffirmation of their belief in the rights and equality of men while support for economic assistance to Asians appealed to their beliefs about human welfare. Thus, the social emphasis of post-war world politics enabled the Labour party to relate the international scene to the national scene, and is so doing for the first time convincingly broke down the long-standing Labour conviction that international relations was nothing more than a capitalist conspiracy designed to exploit the Australian working classes.

Furthermore, the rise of Asian nationalist movements was wholly in harmony with Dr. Evatt's populist approach to world politics. To Evatt, the most pure expression of public opinion was nationalism. He was convinced that nationlist expressions of world opinion would be more effective as a force for peace than either great power politics or great power unanimity in the Security Council. Therefore, in order to strengthen nationalism as a force for peace, Evatt championed Asian anti-colonial movements out of an apparent belief that they would not only strengthen and morally heighten the influence of world public opinion, but also enlarge the roles of those lesser powers which he hoped to organize into a force capable of democratizing world politics. As Donald Horne observed:

> This was the period when the Labour Party Government saw Australia as one of the consciences of the world, the literate voice of the smaller powers and an opponent of colonialism in South East Asia . . . .[18]

This is not to suggest that the Labour Government gave unqualified support for all Asian nationalist movements, for it did not. Rather, it is to describe the emphasis which Labour placed on Australian relations with Asia. Exactly what criteria Dr. Evatt employed in determining which Asian nationalist movements Australia should or should not support is unclear. Despite his championing of certain of those

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[18]Donald Horne, "Australia Looks Around," Foreign Affairs, XLIV, no. 3 (April, 1966), p. 449.

movements, he apparently was not in any general sense a militant anti-colonialist. As suggested by his approach to the issue of United Nations trusteeships, there were two aspects to Dr. Evatt's policy toward the Asian colonial peoples; one stressed gradual reform and the other Australian security considerations. His was a policy involving tutelage of dependent peoples which would lead to self-government, co-existing with alliance with colonial powers in the security field. While he certainly welcomed the independence of such states as the Philippines, Indonesia, and India for the rest he assumed indefinitely continuing protection and tutelage for what he termed "peoples who are unable to stand by themselves in the modern world"[19]--an obvious reference to Australia's colonial status in New Guinea.

More specifically, Labour's policy toward Asia was worked out in response to developments first in India and later in Indonesia. In both of those situations Labour concluded that the best Australia could hope for was the emergence of stable, strong, friendly and independent nations.

Prior to the war, the Labour Party had taken only a marginal interest in British administrative policy in India. Although it probably had sympathasized with the cause of the Indian nationalists, security considerations

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[19] W. J. Hudson, "Australia's Trusteeship Policy," Australian Outlook, XXI (April 1967), p. 12.

had made it difficult for any Australian elected official to criticize British policy. As long as India was conceived of as the keystone of British Imperial power, its loss was perceived as involving the denial to Australia of a vital source of Imperial power which in times of crisis could be marshalled in defense of Australian interests. As indicated above, however, to many members of the Labour Party that restraint on criticism of British policy in India was removed by developments early in the war. Not only had many Asian peoples demonstrated little or no support for their colonial administrations, but also the British Imperial defense system had proven incapable of protecting Australia from aggression. Therefore, during the war, when the process of disaffection which characterized the collapse of colonial regimes in the Netherlands East Indies and Burma generated fears that that process might spread to India and effect a catastrophic change in the Asian balance of power, the Australian Government had joined the rising chorus of voices pressing for a new set of attitudes and urgency in the British approach to the situation in India. It had concluded that continued suppression of the Indian nationalist movement was dangerous and that the liberalization of British policy was a vital necessity. Thus, when the British decided to quicken the pace of India's progress toward self-government, Dr. Evatt kept close to British policy and welcomed that development. On September 3, 1942, he declared that:

> We look forward to the people of India developing into a truly self-governing nation. It is hoped they will soon understand that self-governing British Dominions like Australia are nonetheless self-governing because they owe allegiance to the King or because they are associated together in the British Commonwealth of Nations.[20]

That statement was to set the tone for the Australian Government's post-war policy toward India. On the one hand it would encourage and welcome India's achievement of self-government, while on the other hand it attempted to minimize the impact of this development on Australia's security position by encouraging the Indian Government to remain within the British Commonwealth of Nations. And it is probable, as Dr. Evatt often claimed, that Australia's representations in that regard played an important part in the Indian and Pakistani decisions to stay within the Commonwealth after they had gained independence.

In the case of the Netherland East Indies, the Labour Government took even a somewhat stronger position in support of the nationalists than it had during the granting of Indian independence. When nationalist unrest began in the East Indies, Australia took the moderate position that although it would not take sides in the dispute, "an arrangement should be worked out between the Dutch and the Indonesian people whereby the Indonesians, while continuing to enjoy the advantage of the administrative ability of the

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[20]D. S. Meakin, "Australian Attitudes to Indian Independence," Australian Quarterly, XL (1968), p. 88, quoting Evatt from C.P.D.

Dutch, should be given an increasing part in the government of their own country."[21] The Labour Government maintained this impartiality, at least officially, until the Dutch resorted to repressive measures against the Indonesian nationalists.

Ten days after the Dutch resorted to their first "police" action against the Indonesians, the Australian Government brought the conflict before the United Nations Security Council, which in turn implemented a cease-fire and created a three nation Committee of Good Offices. In a demonstration of their appreciation for Australian support of their grievances, the Indonesian nationalists designated Australia as their choice to serve on this Committee, while the Netherlands chose Belgium as its choice. Subsequently, the governments of Australia and Belgium then selected the United States to serve as the third member of the Good Offices committee. From that time onward, until the Dutch and the Indonesian nationalists agreed upon terms for Indonesia's independence, the Australian Labour Government strongly supported the Indonesian position and was sharply critical of the Dutch. In fact, when the Dutch resorted to a second "police" action in December, 1948, Australia condemned the Netherland's Government, accused it of bad faith, and even suggested that it be expelled from the United Nations.

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[21]C.P.D., (1947), CLXXIV, p. 235.

What was lacking in the Labour Government's support for Asian nationalist movements throughout the post-war period was an inadequate appreciation of the nature of non-Western nationalism. Generally, Labour perceived of those movements as legitimate expressions of anti-colonialism or appeals for redress of socio-economic injustices. From that appreciation, it then was concluded that once the Asian peoples had found redress for their economic grievances through various forms and degrees of self-government, the shrillness of their diatribe against their former rulers would fade and harmonious and cooperative relations would flourish between the former European rulers and the Asian peoples. What that analysis failed to take cognizance of was the inherent anti-Western thrust of non-Western nationalism. In fact, a less ideological analysis of the process of disaffection which overtook several colonial administrations during the war would have revealed that the rise of non-Western nationalism involved much more than an expression of anti-colonialism, for in an important respect, acceptance of the Japanese by many Asians often had meant nothing more than a welcome substitution of an Eastern form of Imperialism for a Western form. That fact should have suggested to the Labour Government that the anti-Western quality of Asian nationalism would be enduring and unlikely to pass with the granting of self-government. Thus, the Labour Government clearly misjudged the intensity of anti-British feeling in

India or anti-Dutch sentiment in Indonesia, and throughout the remainder of its tenure in office Labour continued to encourage Asian nationalist movements without apparently recognizing the ultimate dilemma which that policy might pose for Australia.

Although the Labour Government's policy undoubtedly won Australia considerable Asian good will, the conservative opposition was not happy over what it considered was the price paid for that good will. Whereas Labour policy stressed the importance of social and economic justice for Asian colonial peoples, the conservatives' more ready acceptance of power politics led them to focus upon the impact which the rise of Asian nationalist movements would have upon power relationships in Asia. They tended to perceive the issue of Indian self-government as posing a question not so muchabout the people of India as about the future of the British Empire, the power which flowed therefrom, and what that all meant for the strategic position of Australia. They continued to view India as the keystone of British colonial power and urged extreme caution in the process of granting Indian self-government. Thus, when the British Government rather abruptly announced in February 1947, that India was to be elevated to Dominion status, Mr. Menzies commented that:

> . . . my first feeling was one almost of shock. Although it is true to say that for the whole of our life-time we have been looking in the direction of India's self-government, I did not anticipate that suddenly in February, 1947, the knife would come down. The future

> of India is in a very real sense linked with the future of Australia . . . . To abandon control of a people who have not yet shown a real and broad capacity for popular self-government is to do a dis-service to them.[22]

Since Menzies had judged the granting of Indian self-government to be premature, he then concluded that the withdrawal of European power from Asia would result in the political degeneration of formerly well governed societies into internecine factional feuding. Therefore, "Pakistan" was to be avoided at all costs, for partition would not end there and:

> If (the Indian) leaders persist in playing for party advantage, the India the world has long known will degenerate into a score of warring principalities, incapable of speaking with one voice, and fair play for the machinations of power politics.[23]

To the conservatives, then, good government _of_ Asian peoples by non-Asians was clearly preferable to poor self-government _by_ Asian peoples. Since they were far less optimistic than Labour about the future of the United Nations, the conservatives were reluctant to abandon the traditional Asian power relationship which had underwritten Australian security. Within that conception, the rise of Asian nationalist movements was perceived as weakening Australia's security position by replacing reliable and dependable centers of power with weak, unreliable and unpredictable governments susceptible to manipulation by forces

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[22]Meakin, op. cit., p. 88.

[23]Ibid., p. 89.

inimicable to Australian interests. In other words, the granting of self-government to Asian peoples at that time was perceived by the conservatives as involving the creation of non-powers where previously there had been important, meaningful, and friendly centers of power. While Asian self-government was held to be a commendable long-term goal, the Asia of the immediate post-war period was considered not to be ready for this. Therefore, when the Labour Government took up the cause of the Indonesian nationalists after the first Dutch "police" action, the conservatives intensified their criticism of Government policy, and Menzies characterized the Labour Government's policy as creating a situation in which:

> In plain terms, we have been assisting to put the Dutch out of the East Indies. If we continue to do that the same process will no doubt, in due course, eject the British from Malaya and the Australians from Papua and New Guinea.[24]

He later went on to state that in his view, the Indonesian dispute essentially fell within the domestic jurisdiction of the Netherlands, and that by having taken the issue to the United Nations the Labour Government was undermining the domestic jurisdiction provisions of the Charter and hence "Australia's right to maintain the White Australia policy . . . ."[25]

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[24] A. and M. B. Vandenbosch, op. cit., p. 37.

[25] C.P.P., (1947), CXCIII, p. 177.

In general, then, the conservatives' response to the emergence of Asian self-government amounted to an expression of longing for a return to the relatively simple world of anti-bellum Asia. It reflected the Imperial bias of the conservatives, and, as such, it failed to appreciate adequately the extent of the damage incurred during the war by the European colonial empires. By 1947, it should have been clear to all interested parties that the age of European empires was over and that the world had been inherited by two strongly anti-imperial super-powers.

ANGLO-AUSTRALIAN RELATIONS

Since Dr. Evatt placed such heavy emphasis on the position of the United Nations in world politics, there developed a certain measure of ambiguity in Australia's relations with both Great Britain and the United States. The principle sources of that ambiguity were questions Dr. Evatt's policies inevitably raised concerning the crucial relationship between power and responsibility in foreign affairs. More specifically, Evatt's populist egalitarianism ran counter to the accepted political axiom that in the arena of world politics the most powerful nations ultimately bore primary responsibility for establishment of the parameters of permissible conduct. This, of course, was the same issue which Evatt had raised with such vigor at the San Francisco Conference.

At the San Francisco Conference, Anthony Eden, then British Foreign Minister, sought to answer the questions raised by Dr. Evatt. Speaking in terms that would have been echoed by all the great powers, he had rejected the small powers' attack on the veto with the observation that:

> In view of the primary responsibilities of the permanent members (of the Security Council), they could not be expected, in the present condition of the world, to assume the obligation to act in so serious a matter as the maintenance of international peace and security in consequence of a decision in which they had not concurred.[26]

Although the great powers had been willing to recognize the sovereign equality of status between all nations through formation of the General Assembly--they had been unwilling to recognize the equality of stature among all nations, for at that point Mr. Eden's doctrine of responsibility had come into play. As Mr. Eden had put it in the British House of Commons during debate over the United Nations Charter, "the conception of democracy in international affairs led people to think--falsely, as I believe--that the League (of Nations) was constituted so that every nation must be regarded as exactly equal and that there was no relation between power and responsibility."[27] After World War II all the great powers were determined to prevent a repetition of that error.

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[26]Norman Harper and David Sissons Australia and the United Nations, (New York: Manhattan Publishing Co., 1959), p. 50, citing Documents of the United Nations Conference on International Organization.

[27]Ibid., citing Great Britain, Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)

In spite of these differences in approach to world politics, Australia's relations with Great Britain during the immediate post-war period generally were harmonious and cooperative. Few ideological issues separated the two Labour governments and many of the irritations which had arisen between the two nations during the early stages of the war were soon forgotten. Australia made substantial contributions to Great Britain's economic recovery and bolstered the image of Great Britain as a great power by publicizing the notion that "its (Great Britain's) contribution to victory was of the same order as that of the Soviet Union and the United States of America."[28]

This did not mean, however, that Australia was about to return to its pre-war notion of Dominion status. Here also, the impact of Dr. Evatt's egalitarianism was evident. He viewed the British Commonwealth as an association based on equality, in which Great Britain was the first among equals. From that assumption, he proceeded to the notion that each Dominion bore, within its geographic region, responsibilities for the Commonwealth of Nations as a whole:

> In certain parts of the world, some members of the British Commonwealth are, by their geographic position or special capacity, able to take a lead, and speak for other members of the British Commonwealth, though not necessarily all. In Europe, that position is occupied by Great Britain. In Africa it might be taken by other members of the British Commonwealth. In the Mid-East, Britain would naturally take the

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[28]Current Notes, XIX (1948), p. 28.

> lead, but in the Pacific, and in Southeast Asia, a special responsibility devolves upon Australia and New Zealand. I see signs of such a development already and this does not imply a weakening of the British Commonwealth, but a further development of that extra-ordinary organization.[29]

He elaborated on those "signs" during a British Broadcasting Corporation broadcast delivered on May 10, 1946:

> It should be recognized that new methods have necessarily been devised to meet new situations. One recent example of the flexibility of the British Commonwealth consultations and procedures is the appointment of an Australian to represent not only Australia, but the United Kingdom, India, and New Zealand as well, on the Allied Council for Japan in Tokyo. Again, an Australian general has been appointed as Officer commanding all British Commonwealth occupation forces in Japan. In some respects, therefore, we are reaching a stage in British Commonwealth relations at which there is a division of functions on a regional basis for certain purposes. It has become possible for a Dominion to act not only for itself but also for the United Kingdom and other Dominions as well.[30]

Although the bravado surrounding the notion that Australia and New Zealand were "trustees for British Democracy in this vast (Pacific) region" was in all likelihood not well received in London--it was strongest during the period when Great Britain was trying desperately to recover from the effects of the war and when she was still suffering the psychological shock caused by considerable loss in power and prestige--it seemingly did not have any particular adverse effect upon Anglo-Australian relations. As Alan Watt has wisely observed:

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[29] Ibid., p. 430.

[30] H. V. Evatt, Australia in World Affairs (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1946), p. 189.

> So far as Great Britain is concerned, any adverse effects (caused by Dr. Evatt's diplomacy) do not appear to have been deep or lasting. While British political leaders and officials were certainly not amused by certain aspects of the policy and methods of the Australian Minister for External Affairs, their long national experience of handling difficult children--such as the American Colonies, Ireland, and South Africa--made it easier for them to roll with the punch, maintain silence in public, pursue their own policies tenaciously, and wait until individual Australian children matured, died, or were replaced in office.[31]

AUSTRALIAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS

The impact which Dr. Evatt's diplomacy had upon Australian relations with the United States was far more important and significant than that upon relations with Great Britain. A careful reading of the public documents of this period suggests that under Dr. Evatt's leadership, the Labour Government pursued not one but a series of parallel policies toward the United States. One of those policies followed from Evatt's populist-egalitarian approach to world politics: that is, the fact that his entire diplomatic program was an escape from power politics inevitably led to a certain ambiguity in the Australian approach to the world's premier super-power.

During the immediate post-war years, the ambiguity in Australian-American relations apparently was muted by the stress which the United States placed upon the activities of the United Nations and Evatt's consequent perception of

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[31]Watt, op. cit., p. 98.

American policy as being in harmony with his program for democratizing world politics. What later brought latent differences in Australian-American perspectives to the forefront was the onset of the cold war and the subsequent American decision to shift the focus of its multi-lateral security efforts away from the dead-locked United Nations to regional security arrangements. When that shift in American policy resulted in decisions on the part of the United States Government to repeatedly by-pass the United Nations security mechanisms, Evatt grew increasingly embittered by American policy and eventually came to perceive of the United States Government as the principal obstacle to the fulfillment of his diplomatic program. As Grattan has observed:

> The wartime (Australian-American) accord early began to lose some of its warmth. It was further cooled by virtue of the fact that the United States was a central figure of the Cold War power struggle, a struggle of which Evatt disapproved and which he appeared to "blame on" the Americans, explaining Russian actions as defensive.[32]

Evatt never accepted the American rationale for its decisions to by-pass the United Nations nor did he ever share American assumptions and interpretations about the behavior of the Soviets. Although he expressed concern over the growth of communist influence within the Asian nationalist movements, he had concluded that nationalism would prove capable of checking those influences. To Evatt

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[32]Grattan, op. cit., p. 200.

the most important historical struggle of his time was not the cold war, but the democratization of world politics through the attainment of self-government by colonial peoples, the redress of economic and social injustices wrought by capitalism and the institutionalization of restraints on the capriciousness of the great powers.

The diplomatic tension which resulted from these differences in Australian and American perspectives reached its peak in intensity during 1948, when Dr. Evatt was President of the United Nations General Assembly and when Soviet-American relations degenerated into a state of absolute mutual hostility. During his tenure as General Assembly President, Evatt constantly sought to involve the United Nations and himself in matters which the United States felt he had no cause to involve either the United Nations or himself in. Those actions of Dr. Evatt with which the Americans took particular exception concerned his behavior during the 1948 Berlin crisis and developments related to the issue of Indonesian independence. Entries in the Forrestal Diaries suggest that key American officials took an especially critical view of Evatt's actions during both of those episodes.

In the case of the Berlin crisis, Dr. Evatt apparently suggested to the Americans that the impasse with the Soviets over access to Berlin was precipitated by the fact that the United States Government was "departing from

(its) original agreements"[33] concerning the post-war occupation of Germany. It was against this backdrop that Secretary of Defense James Forrestal made the following entry in his diary for November 22, 1948:

> Lunch with the President today. Cabinet plus Mr. Harriman. Marshall reported on the activities at the UN, from which it would appear that our situation vis-a-vis Berlin and the Russian situation in general, is rapidly deteriorating. Evatt, who is president of the General Assembly, is an active source of both irritation and uncertainty. The result of his activities and, to a lesser extent Bramuglia's (Juan A. Bramuglia, foreign minister of Argentina), who is chairman of the Security Council, has been greatly to undermine the American position among the neutral nations. He has succeeded in giving the impression that, after all, the Russian demands are not so extreme and unmeetable.[34]

Another diary entry for December 20, 1948, concerns the situation in Indonesia. Following the first Dutch "police action," the United Nations sponsored Good Offices Commission--on which Australia served as the Indonesian nationalist's designate--had negotiated a cease-fire settlement, known as the Renvelle Agreements, between the Dutch and the Indonesian nationalists. Dr. Evatt played an active role in the negotiations and took great pride in the Renvelle Agreements. Therefore, when the agreements eventually broke down and the Dutch resorted to a second "police action," Evatt responded as though his personal honor had been challenged. For unexplained reasons, he chose to vent

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[33]Walter Mills, ed., The Forrestal Diaries (New York: The Viking Press, 1951), p. 522.

[34]Ibid., p. 532.

his frustrations over that development by addressing a letter to the United Nations Security Council suggesting that the United States bore principal responsibility for the collapse of the Renvelle Agreements. The response of American officials to the letter is found in the following entry in Secretary Forrestal's diary:

> 20 December, 1948 Cabinet - Indonesia - Australia . . . Lovett (Robert A., Under Secretary of State) discussed Indonesia and the action of the Dutch in seizing the capital and taking into custody the governmental leaders. He expressed annoyance at the gratuitous interferences of Dr. Evatt, the Foreign Minister of Australia, who had, although not a member of the Security Council (they are members of Good Offices Commission) addressed a communication to the Security Council expressing the view that if the US had taken a firm and preventive action with respect to the intent of the Dutch government to intervene in the affairs of the Republic, the present situation might have been avoided. He (Lovett) reported that in an interview with Ambassador (Norman J. O.) Makin of the Australian Embassy, he had expressed himself in the strongest terms as to our government's dissatisfaction with this unilateral action on the part of Evatt. Makin was deeply apologetic and expressed the hope that he might be able to say to his government that we would like them to withdraw their suggestions. Lovett said he would not make such a request--that was up to the Australians themselves.[35]

At the same time that Dr. Evatt was attempting to curb the United States' prerogatives as a great or superpower, he pursued an active parallel policy of seeking an Australian-American security alliance. Although he had welcomed the post-war return of the British to Malaya and Singapore, he was not a true "King's man" and he suffered from few illusions about Great Britain's declining strategic

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[35]Ibid., p. 541.

capability. Having borne major responsibility for Australia's survival during the dark days of early 1942, Evatt fully realized that the key-stone of the post-war security environment in the Pacific Basin was American power. Furthermore, he was convinced that the absence of a pre-war Australian security agreement with the United States and other Pacific countries had contributed unduly to Australia's danger during the war. Evatt was determined to prevent a recurrence of that state of unpreparedness and he sought to regularize the improvised war-time cooperation which had characterized Australian-American security planning for the Pacific region.

Initially, Evatt's quest for a post-war Pacific regional security agreement followed from his war-time campaign against the strong European orientation of Allied strategy. His first public reference to such an agreement is found in his address before the New York Overseas Press Club on April 28, 1943. In that address, Evatt lent Australian support to the Atlantic Charter's call for a general security system to include the Atlantic and Pacific regions, but warned that:

> They reckon ill who leave the Pacific out of account. In point of fact, security must be universal or everyone will be insecure. This does not mean, however, that within a system of general world security there will not be ample scope for the development of regional arrangements both for the purpose of the preservation of that security and for the handling of ordered change within that region. When an adequate general plan is prepared for security against aggression, the United Nations in the Pacific will have to be assured of their own security.

> In this respect Australia will naturally regard as of crucial importance to its own security the arc of islands lying to the North and Northeast of our continent. While Australia will be anxious to build a universal international system of security and to play its part in the general and regional organization of such a system, it will, particularly before such a system is adequately established and proved to be in good working order, be vitally concerned as to who shall live in, develop, and control these areas so vital to her security from aggression.[36]

Several months later, on October 14, 1943, Evatt returned to this subject and before the Australian House of Representatives stated that:

> The Commonwealth Government is convinced that, in order to prevent future aggression, measures should be concerted for the permanent defense of this area as one of the zones of security within the international system that must be created.[37]

Originally, then, Evatt's conception of a regional security pact involved the notion of zones which followed from the experience of the war years, and which were envisioned as operating harmoniously within the framework of a larger or universal security organization. It was that notion which inspired Article 34 of the Australia-New Zealand Agreement, which called for the convening of an "International Conference Relating to the Southwest and South Pacific." According to Dr. Evatt, the principal purpose of that conference would be "the building up of a regional defense system covering the immediate northern

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[36] J. G. Starke, The ANZUS Treaty Alliance (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1965), p. 9, quoting from an Evatt press release.

[37] Ibid., p. 10, quoting from C.P.D.

approaches to Australia and New Zealand."[38] Although the conference never took place because of the unreceptive attitude of the United States, Evatt continued to press his notion of security zones and at the San Francisco Conference he played a prominent role in drafting those articles of the United Nations Charter which contemplated regional arrangements subject to the overriding general control of the Security Council.

By 1945-46, however, Dr. Evatt's conception of a regional security pact had advanced beyond his early emphasis on a limited sub-regional system for the Southwest Pacific. He now considered security in terms of the entire Pacific and made general references in this regard to the Pacific or Western Pacific as a whole.

From the end of hostilities in the Pacific until mid-1947, Evatt's quest for a "Pacific pact" based on American power focused on the American effort to forge a post-war defense perimeter in the Western Pacific. Preliminary American post-war strategic planning for that region took place during March, 1945, as part of a discussion concerning how the trusteeship provisions of the Dumbarton Oaks draft of the United Nations Charter would affect the American position in the islands of the former Japanese Mandates. At that time, President Roosevelt's thinking with regard to the former Japanese Mandates

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[38]Ibid., p. 11.

centered around a concept which he called "multiple sovereignty"--the notion that sovereignty over Japan's former Mandates would be vested in all the United Nations, which in turn would request that the United States exercise complete trusteeship for the purpose of international security.[39] During those same discussions, Roosevelt noted that as a corollary to the Australia-New Zealand Agreement the Australian Government had advanced the unacceptable thesis that it be allowed to take by direct acquisition all Western Pacific islands south of the Equator, while leaving those north of that line to the United States. According to the Forrestall diaries, one of the reasons President Roosevelt found that proposal unacceptable was that it conflicted with his thinking about which American bases in the West Pacific should be retained after the war. Included in that category was the great American naval base on Manus Island in the Australian New Guinea mandate. A vast natural harbor (it was freqnetly referred to as the Scapa Flow of the Pacific) which the Americans had developed at a cost of $156,000 during MacArthur's progress from Australia toward Japan, Manus was conceived by several circles in Washington as the southern anchor of the post-war American defense perimeter in the Western Pacific. Of course, any American proposal of that nature was likely to touch upon a sensitive nerve within the strongly nationalistic Australian Government.

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[39]Mills, ed., op. cit., p. 33.

What followed is not altogether clear, for a definitive account of the episode is still to be written. From what public information that is available, however, one is able to determine that the Australian Government attempted to make the conclusion of an agreement for continued American use of the Manus base contingent upon three conditions: Prior American participation in a security pact of the variety outlined in the Australia-New Zealand Agreement, prior negotiation of a trusteeship agreement for the New Guinea mandate, and prior American agreement to extend joint-user rights to Australia at an unspecified number of its Pacific bases. In other words, "Evatt was apparently trying to turn America's desire to use the Manus base into a practical guarantee of Australia's territorial integrity."[40]

In an important article recently written by the man who was Australian Minister of Defense during most of the Manus Island episode (John J. Dedman), it is stated that in anticipation of an American overture concerning the continued use of the Manus Base, the Defense Committee of the Australian Government met in December 1945, and recommended that "with regard to those islands in the Pacific on which the United States might seek agreement for joint-user rights, Australia should adhere strictly to the United Nations Charter and that any request regarding Manus should not be dealt with separately but as part of an overall security

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[40]R. N. Rosecrance, Australian Diplomacy and Japan 1945-1951, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1962), p. 59.

plan."[41] It was this same theme to which Evatt returned in Parliamentary debates during March of the following year. At that time, he declared that:

> Any consideration of plans for joint use of any bases in Australia's dependent territories should be preceded by an overall defense arrangement for the region of the Western Pacific, including the islands formerly mandated to Japan; as an incident of any such arrangement, Australia should be entitled to reciprocal use of foreign bases in this region, thus providing for an overall increase in the security, both of Australia and all other United Nations with interests in the region.[42]

When the American overture for continued use of Manus finally did arrive in Australia during mid-1946, it proposed the exchange of American installations on Manus for an undertaking by Australia to maintain the installations at its own expense for 99 years, the exchange being subject to four conditions: (1) the United States would be given joint-user rights but would not be commited to maintain any forces on Manus, (2) the United States would be given the right to deny the use of the facilities to any third party, (3) the United States would be given the right at any time during the 99 years (and for as long as it felt necessary) to assume complete control of the base, and (4) the United States would be given the right to prevent, if it so wishes, the establishment of any other base in the mandated territory.[43]

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[41] John J. Dedman, "Encounter Over Manus," <u>Australian Outlook</u>, XX (1966), no. 2.

[42] C.P.D. (1946), CLXXXVI, p. 200.

[43] Dedman, op. cit., p. 145.

In view of the obvious Australian inability to afford the maintenance of the vast Manus base, the provisions of the American proposal were in all likelihood intended merely as negotiating points (an appraisal which is substantiated by the terms of subsequent security agreements governing the maintenance of American bases in the Philippines and Taiwan). In other words, the American Government sought to have the Australians assume as large a share of the costs involved in the maintenance of the Manus base while at the same time retaining as much control as possible over the use of the base--a tactic wholly in keeping with the prerogatives of a great power.

Not surprisingly, the Australian response to the American proposal was characterized by numerous expressions of nationalist sensitivity and Dr. Evatt's distrust of great power diplomacy. To begin with, the Australian Government chose to interpret the American proposal as a test of its commitment to the United Nations Charter. It held that since the terms of the Mandate under which Australia still administered the New Guinea territory prohibited it from erecting permanent fortifications there, the American proposal amounted to an effort, while the Mandate was still operative, to present the United Nations Trusteeship Council with a "_fait accompli_" whenver it got around to replacing the Mandate with a trusteeship agreement. According to Dr. Evatt, Australia was "being asked to

circumvent the United Nations Charter . . ."[44] Not only was Evatt's position an excessively legalistic interpretation of the Mandate agreement, especially in light of the fate of the League of Nations and what had occurred in the territory during the war, but it also failed to recognize that the American initiative regarding Manus had come from circles in Washington (namely, those who championed the Navy) who were not optimistic over the future success of the United Nations.

Furthermore, in addition to insisting that it lacked the financial resources to bear almost sole responsibility for the costs involved in maintenance of the Manus base, the Australian Government objected to the American suggestion that the United States Government be granted the right either to deny use of the Manus base to a third party or to assume complete control of the base. Taking as a point of departure the conclusion that America's lag in entering two world wars appeared to be a likely constant factor which should be taken into account, the Australia Government held that granting those rights to the Americans would not only render Imperial defense planning extremely difficult, but also would raise the possibility of Australia being unable to use a base, for which it bore the costs, in any future war in which it became a belligerent but the United States did not.[45] Moreover, the Australian Government held that

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[44]Ibid., p. 143. [45]Ibid., p. 146.

in addition to a more equitable interpretation of joint-usership being applied to the Manus base, any agreement concerning the base should be based upon the principle of reciprocity, thereby enabling Australian forces to use American bases in the Pacific.

Therefore, in response to the American proposal for continued use of the Manus base the Australian Government raised a series of issues which could only be resolved through the conclusion of a general Pacific security agreement which would operate within the provisions of the United Nations Charter. Conclusion of such a pact was envisioned by the Australian Government as a quid pro quo for indefinite American use of the Manus base.

In the end, however, the Americans lost interest in the Manus base when the post-war de-mobilization and Congressional budget-cutting of military appropriations forced the United States Navy to narrow the focus of its strategic planning for a defense perimeter in the Western Pacific and limit it to the region north of the Equator with the southern terminus ultimately defined as Manila. Subsequently, the Manus base was abandoned and allowed to fall into disuse. Although the subsequent course of world politics suggests that had the Manus base been maintained it would have proven to be something of a white elephant, "there is little doubt that Australian-American relations suffered somefurther deterioration as a result of the Manus

controversy."[46] In spite of the fact that Evatt had received warnings about the change in the mood of the Americans and as a consequence had belatedly softened the Australian position during the last month of negotiations over Manus, his move had come too late. Subsequently, he was criticized for having taken an unreasonable position over Manus and having missed a splendid opportunity for collaborative Australian-American planning in the defense field. As Casey was later to observe at the time of the ANZUS debate, during the Manus negotiations Evatt had "overplayed his hand."

> . . . aimed too high, and misjudged the temper and mood of the United States of America, at that time. It is not to his discredit that he failed to get a regional arrangement in the Pacific. The Americans cooled off . . . (but) Australia lost what I think was a tremendous opportunity to retain the militant interest of the world's greatest power in a position of immense value to us . . . .[47]

As the prospect dimmed for the conclusion of an American based Pacific security arrangement as a corollary of the Manus negotiations, Evatt changed his approach to that issue. Having lost the diplomatic leverage which accrued from American interest in the Manus base, he next sought to link the issue of a Pacific pact to the question of a Japanese Peace Treaty, an issue in which Australia's diplomatic leverage followed from representation on the Far Eastern Commission (an Allied body which ostensibly

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[46]Watt., op. cit., p. 100.

[47]C.P.D. (1951), CCXVI, pp. 594-6.

oversaw the occupation of Japan) and from the presence of Australian occupation troops in Japan.

In undertaking to link a Pacific security arrangement with a Japanese peace settlement, Dr. Evatt once again was not on particularly firm footing, for on that issue also, he frequently was at odds with American policy. Initially, Australian-American friction over Allied occupation policy followed from Dr. Evatt's long campaign against power politics. During the negotiation of agreements governing the post-war occupation of Japan, he insisted from the beginning upon Australia being treated as a principal power which could not be "brushed aside." Indeed, his relentless campaign for recognition of Australia as a major participant in the formulation of Allied policy toward Japan was largely responsible for American agreement to Australia's signature of the surrender document, the creation of the Far Eastern Commission and the selection of an Australian general to command the British Commonwealth occupation forces as well as the appointment of an Australian to represent the British Commonwealth on the Allied Council in Tokyo. In the process of achieving those objectives, however, Evatt's style on occasion seriously alienated the Americans. For example, two entries in the Forrestal diaries suggest that during the delicate negotiations concerning the arrangements for the Allied occupation of Japan, the Americans came to consider Evatt an ungrate-

ful and insufferable nuisance. In commenting on Secretary of State James Byrnes' report to the October 26, 1945 Cabinet meeting concerning his attendance at a London meeting of the Allies to discuss the occupation arrangements for the defeated Axis Powers, Forrestal noted Byrnes reported that,

> The Russians took advantage of the agitation here (in Washington) about MacArthur to inject this issue (the Far Eastern Commission) on the same day that Acheson had censured MacArthur; said we were not punitive enough with the Japanese, were not destroying their industries, were permitting the industrialists to survive, were not taking prisoners . . . . Molotov continued to press . . . for a control commission of the pattern of Germany, which Byrnes pointed out had not worked very well. They wanted Japanese prisoners, and in fact they are now using Japanese prisoners to build the railroad to Port Arthur. Evatt saw an opportunity for personal publicity and joined Molotov in the demand but was later called off by (British Foreign Minister, Ernest) Bevin . . . .[48]

Two days later, after a State-War-Navy meeting held to discuss the control system to be set up in Japan, Forrestal noted the "great difficulty of working out some agreement which will satisfy the British, the Soviets, and General MacArthur." He noted further that Byrnes reported that Stalin now did not want to put occupation troops in Japan "partly because he does not want to place them under an "American commander." When the question was raised whether this in turn would mean barring British and Australian troops, "Mr. Byrnes did not think the British would care much," but said that Evatt certainly would since "Evatt wants to run the world."[49]

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[48]Mills, op. cit., p. 104. [49]Ibid., p. 105.

Following the conclusion of arrangements for the occupation of Japan, fear of a revision of Japanese aggression continued to occupy a central place in Australian thinking about the Pacific. As suggested earlier, the war had tended to confirm ideas about Japan which had been current in Australia for a half century before 1941, and "the defeat of Japan did not dissipate those suspicions but rather seemed to freeze them into a rigid pattern."[50] Indicative of those suspicions was the resentment and hostility contained in a press statement by Mr. Arthur Calwell, Minister for Immigration, delivered during December 1948. In response to questions which had arisen concerning the entry of Japanese into Australia, Mr. Calwell summarized his Government's position in the following manner:

> Let me repeat for the last time that while I remain Minister for Immigration no Japanese will be permitted to enter this country. They cannot come as the wives of Australian servicemen for permanent or temporary residence, nor as businessmen to buy or sell to us; they cannot come as pearlers, nor as laborers to pearlers.
>
> I have no intention of granting interviews to anybody in matters concerning the entry of Japanese into Australia or into Australian waters. The memory of Japanese atrocities to Australian servicemen is too recent, too bitter, to be as easily forgotten as some people would like.
>
> The feelings of the mothers and the wives of the Australian victims of Japanese savagery are more important than any trade or other material considerations. I believe the people of Australia feel that Japan must expiate the crimes of the Japanese Army.[51]

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[50]Grattan, op. cit., p. 202.

[51]Current Notes, XX (1949), p. 107.

Because the fear of a resurgent Japan dominated Australian thinking about the Pacific, Australia generally was well-satisfied with the immediate post-war Allied occupation policy toward Japan; especially with aspects of that policy which emphasized total and permanent disarmament as well as democratization. Shortly after the Allied occupation of Japan, however, Dr. Evatt, for a variety of reasons, fell out with the Americans as the principal executants of Allied occupation policy. To begin with, the rather autocratic administrative practices followed by General MacArthur, in particular the General's failure to consult with the Allied Control Council or to heed its directives, clashed with Dr. Evatt's populist egalitarianism and his claims about Australia having become the trustee of British Empire interests in the Pacific. The fact that officials in Washington were experiencing similar difficulties in having MacArthur heed their directives apparently did nothing to temper Evatt's concern over what he considered to be MacArthur's unilateral control of Allied occupation policy.

More significant, however, was a growing Australian apprehension initially over the details of American occupation policy and then with the entire philosophical and political basis of that policy. In this regard, the Australians wanted a far harder policy than the Americans showed any disposition to enforce. They wanted "a severe

even a punitive policy especially designed to prevent the Japanese from ever regaining armaments, the technological equipment to build them, and the capacity to prosecute aggressive war."[52] Therefore, with the passage of time the Australian Government increasingly questioned the essentially benign character of American policy which had emerged after the initial disarmament phase of the occupation was completed. In particular, they objected to a shift in American policy during 1946 which had been precipitated by a combination of increasing American pre-occupation with events in Europe, the financial burdens of occupation, and growing doubts about the wisdom of the initial draconic occupation program. Together, those considerations had led to a rather drastic revision and liberalization of American occupation economic policies, which in turn heightened Australian fears about a tendency toward a piece-meal disposal of matters the Australian Government felt should be dealt with as a whole in a peace treaty with Japan.

Although Australian apprehensions over American occupation policy in Japan surfaced soon after the conclusion of hostilities, their expression was muted prior to mid-1947 by expectations of the conclusion of a security arrangement with the Americans and by a reluctance on the part of the Australian Government to upset the Manus Island negotiations. With the collapse of the Manus negotiations

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[52]Grattan, op. cit., p. 202.

and the passing of that opportunity for linking a security arrangement to any agreement for joint use of the Manus base, the Australian Government concluded that it was even more imperative that measures be taken to prevent any further drift in American policy away from a strict application of the Japanese occupation agreements. At the same time, however, efforts to secure a security agreement with the Americans were not abandoned.

The new urgency in Australian policy over the course of what was happening in Japan was reflected in a diplomatic initiative to publicly press the Americans for the conclusion of an early peace settlement with Japan. Fearing that Japan soon would acquire de facto virtually the same status as if a peace treaty had been signed, and thereby avoid the obligations which normally would have been imposed in such a treaty, Evatt preferred to see Japan bound by a formal peace treaty which would subject Japan to international control and supervision in order to prevent any possible resurgance of Japanese aggression. Hence, it was important to have as a corollary to any Japanese peace settlement a formal Pacific regional security arrangement which would both insure Australian security and facilitate actual collaboration between the Pacific powers in the event of any subsequent Japanese threat to the security of the Pacific region. As a consequence of those parallel Australian concerns, the effort to persuade the United

States to enter into a Pacific security pact was to be linked with the conclusion of a Japanese Peace Settlement.

In preparation for this new diplomatic effort, Evatt visited Japan during Ausut 1947, in order to set the stage for a wide-ranging public cambaign intended to secure American agreement to sign a peace treaty. Upon his return, he announced "that no country has exercised so much influence on American policy toward Japan as Australia." Furthermore, he stated that his

> . . . visit confirmed the position of the Australian Government that a peace treaty should be drawn up as soon as possible. The time has come to terminate the present (disarmament) phase of the occupation. The next task, of building on the foundations and creating a peaceful, democratic Japan, requires a different type of supervision and Allied decisions incorporated in a peace treaty.[53]

The intent of the Australian call for a peace treaty was clear. Evatt was seeking to influence American policy toward Japan by first subjecting it to the populist pressures of a peace conference, at which he then hoped to write into a formal treaty a policy toward Japan which was satisfactory to Australia.

In an effort to strengthen its diplomatic position and bring further pressure upon the Americans, the Australian Government, acting as the British Commonwealth representative on the Allied Control Commission for Japan, initiated the convening of a British Commonwealth Conference

[53]Current Notes, XVIII (1947), p. 496.

to discuss a Japanese peace settlement. That Conference was held in Canberra during late summer 1947, and under Australian leadership it reaffirmed the British Commonwealth's commitment to both the provisions of the Ptsdam Declaration and the wartime policy decisions made by the Far Eastern Commission. Thereafter, Dr. Evatt "sought to freeze policy toward Japan in the shape given it in those documents" by implying that "any American deviation from them was on the order of breaking a solemn covenant."[54]

Although this extraordinarily rigid and legalistic approach to influencing American policy was wholly in keeping with Dr. Evatt's political style, it failed to persuade the Americans to participate either in a peace treaty subjecting Japan to severe controls of a regional Pacific security pact. In fairness to the American Government, however, it should be mentioned that it had not been totally insensitive to Australian apprehensions over the situation in Japan. In fact, as early as March 1947, General MacArthur had publicly concurred in the view that the objectives of occupation--namely demilitarization and collection of reparations--had been achieved and the occupation should be terminated by the conclusion of a peace treaty. In July of the same year, the State Department had followed up MacArthur's statement by sending out invitations to the members of the Far Eastern Commission

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[54]Grattan, op. cit., p. 204.

suggesting an early preliminary conference to prepare a draft peace treaty. That initiative had run into stubborn opposition, however, from the Soviets and the Chinese Nationalists. Subsequently, the initiative was terminated.

With the collapse of this American initiative, the probability of Dr. Evatt's achieving his policy objectives vis-a-vis Japan rapidly faded into oblivion, for soon thereafter the State Department momentarily abandoned its preoccupation with European affairs, turned its attention to the situation in East Asia, and concluded that an even further liberalization of occupation policy was in order. In large measure, that conclusion on the part of the American Government resulted from a policy review precipitated by the deterrioration in the position of the Nationalist regime in China and the need to determine what course the United States should follow in lieu of an anticipated Communist victory over the Nationalists. According to George Kennan, then Chairman of the State Department Policy Planning Board, the policy review determined that:

> . . . the deterioration of the situation in China did not seem to constitute in itself any intolerable threat to our security, what it did do was to heighten greatly the importance of what might now happen in Japan. Japan as we saw it, was more important than China as a potential factor in world-political developments. It was . . . the sole great potential military-industrial arsenal of the Far East. Americans, laboring under that strange fascination that China has seemed to exert at all times on American opinion, tended to exaggerate China's real importance and to underrate that of Japan. I consider . . . that if at any time in the post-war period the Soviet leaders had been

> confronted with a choice between control over China and control over Japan, they would unhesitantly have chosen the latter. We Americans could feel fairly secure in the presence of a truly friendly Japan and a nominally hostile China--nothing very bad could happen to us from this combination; but the dangers to our security of a nominally friendly China and a truly hostile Japan had already been demonstrated in the Pacific war. Worse still would be a hostile China and a hostile Japan. Yet the triumph of communism in most of China would be bound to enhance Communist pressure on Japan; and should these pressures triumph, as Moscow obviously hoped they would, then the Japan we would have before us would obviously be a hostile one.[55]

From that appraisal of the situation in the Far East, Kennan states that it further was concluded:

> If one was to regard the protection of Japan against Communist pressures as a legitimate concern of the United States Government, then it was simply madness to think of abandoning Japan to her own devices in the situation then prevailing. She had been totally disarmed and demilitarized . . . she was semi-surrounded by the military positions of the Soviet Union. Yet no provision of any sort had been made by the occupational regime for her future defense; now could we discover that anyone in our government or in any of the Allied governments had given any thought in their planning for a peace treaty to the question of how this need was to be met in the post-treaty period. In addition to this, Japan's central police establishment had been destroyed. She had no effective means of combatting the Communist penetration and political pressure that was already vigorously asserting itself under the occupation and could be depended upon to increase greatly if the occupation was removed and American forces withdrawn. In the face of this situation the nature of the occupational policies pursued up to that time by General MacArthur's headquarters seemed on cursory examination to be such that if they had been devised for the specific purpose of rendering Japanese society vulnerable to Communist political pressures and paving the way for a Communist takeover, they could scarcely have been other than what they were . . . . In the refusal of the Russians and Chinese to go along (with the July initiative) we had been luckier than we deserved. The resulting deadlock now gave

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[55]George F. Kennan, Memoirs 1925-1950 (New York: Little, Brown and Co., 1967), p. 395.

> us opportunity to review the situation and to have a new look at our thinking and our policies generally with relation to Japan . . . . A continued effort just to implement existing concepts and directives was not likely to bring Japan to a point where the consequences of a treaty of peace could be safely contemplated.[56]

What all this meant, of course, was that changes in the post-war international environment, namely the onset of the cold war, had precipitated a fundamental shift in the American perception of Japan from that of a former enemy to that of a potentially crucial ally. Dr. Evatt and his supporters disagreed violently with that shift in American policy. As suggested earlier, they refused to accept the reality of the cold war and were unwilling to adjust their conception of Japan in light of the breakdown of the war-time harmony between the great powers. More specifically, they "were reluctant to admit that the locale of menacing power in East Asia had shifted from the islands of Japan to the continent; they feared Japan but were not so disturbed about possible extensions of communist power in the North Pacific and South and Southeast Asia."[57]

Although Dr. Evatt and his supporters protested to Washington over these changes in Allied occupation policy, their protests fell on deaf ears. By that time, the Americans were more concerned with containing Soviet expansionism in Asia than they were in assuaging paranoic fears about renewed Japanese Aggression voiced by a

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[56] Ibid., pp. 396-7.

[57] Grattan, op. cit., p. 204.

strategically remote and increasingly difficult former ally. In fact, it was this very point which George Kennan chose to impress upon General MacArthur during an interview in Tokyo during early March 1948. After having outlined the State Department's conclusions about the situation in Japan and having been somewhat surprised to find that MacArthur generally concurred in "the need for changing and modifying a number of occupational policies," Kennan found that:

> What worried (MacArthur) particularly was the opposition that any such changes might be expected to encounter on the part of the Allies, as represented in the Far Eastern Commission. In this respect I was able to make suggestions that were new to him and in which he saw, I think, possibilities for overcoming the impediments he had in mind. I pointed out that the advisory capacity of the Far Eastern Commission related solely to the responsibility he bore for executing and enforcing the terms of the Japanese surrender. These in turn were based on the Potsdam Declaration. But the latter had envisaged only the demilitarization of Japan and the relinquishment by her of the administration of certain territories. These terms had now been carried out. He could therefore be said to have carried to completion that portion of his responsibility, flowing from the terms of surrender, with relation to which the Far Eastern Commission was qualified to advise him. The changes in occupation policy that were now required were ones relating to an objective--namely, the economic rehabilitation of Japan and the restoration of her ability to contribute constructively to the stability and prosperity of the Far Eastern region--the necessity of which did not flow from the terms of surrender but rather from the delay in negotiation of a peace treaty. There had been no international agreement on the policies and methods to be applied in this unforeseen situation. This being the case, the United States' government, and he as its commander in Japan had to exercise an independent judgement. I saw no need for him, in these circumstances, to consult the Far Eastern Commission or to feel himself bound by views it had expressed at earlier dates with a

> view to implementing the terms of surrender. So long as nothing was done that would undermine the measures envisaged in the Potsdam Declaration and the surrender document, the Allies could have no grounds for objection.
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> This thesis appeared to please the general mightily; he even slapped his thigh in approval; and we parted with a common feeling, I believe, of having reached a general meeting of the minds.[58]

It is clear, then, that by early 1948, much of the political leverage on American policy which Dr. Evatt insisted followed from Australia's representation on the Far Eastern Commission had faded into the background. By that time the United States had concluded that until the Japanese were better prepared to resist Soviet pressures on their own, the conclusion of a Japanese peace treaty would be both inopportune and fraught with dangers.

Nor was the United States about to allow Dr. Evatt to link the issue of a Japanese peace treaty with the conclusion of any Pacific security pact which would involve a formal American guarantee of Australian security. Although Evatt continued to press for such an American guarantee, he was apparently told by President Truman that an American guarantee of Australian security was unnecessary because "when Australia was in trouble the United States would also be in trouble, and no written agreement was needed."[59] Similarly Secretary of State James Byrnes informed Evatt that "a Pacific pact was unnecessary, having

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[58]Kennan, op. cit., pp. 406-407.

[59]Starke, op. cit., p. 18, citing C.P.D.

regard to the close, friendly and comradely relations between Australia and the United States."[60] Although Evatt's hopes in this regard were again raised at the time of United State's passage of the "Vandenberg Resolution" and the initiation of negotiations for American entry into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), his subsequent proposals for the creation of a Pacific counterpart to NATO came to naught on May 18, 1949, when Secretary of State Dean Acheson rejected all such Pacific security pact proposals and affirmed that the United States was not then considering participation in any further special collective defense arrangements other than NATO. In the end, Evatt had to be content with having to rely upon what Truman and Byrnes had characterized as the existence and continuance of a close *de facto* association between Australia and the United States. Thus, he left office without realizing still another of his principal foreign policy objectives.

AN EVALUATION OF DR. EVATT AS MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

As Minister for External Affairs, Herbert Evatt bore primary responsibility for shaping an independent Australian foreign policy in its critical formative years during World War II and the early post-war period. In his own words, he had deliberately set out to have his fellow countrymen

"get rid once and for all of the idea that Australia's international status is not a reality, and that we are to remain adolescent forever."[61] In his pursuit of that goal, however, he was a highly controversial figure whose politics and diplomatic achievements evoked strong reactions from his contemporaries both at home and abroad.

In general, most Australian evaluations of Dr. Evatt's politics tend to be critical. Although the enthusiasm, idealism and hope he radiated were widely admired, many of his contemporaries felt that those attributes were more than off-set by his tendency toward egotism and political rigidity. It was these latter qualities which led the Sydney Morning Herald to editorially comment upon Evatt's death in 1965, that "for the most part Dr. Evatt's career was a disaster. As Minister for External Affairs and President of the United Nation's Assembly he certainly won Australia much attention but his real achievements were exaggerated by publicity and the public never knew the havoc he created in his own department."[62]

Furthermore, although Evatt is credited with having greatly enhanced the expertise and prestige of the rapidly expanded Department of External Affairs by pushing it into every world problem that could be detected, Australian

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[61] A. and M. B. Vandenbosch, op. cit., p. 78, quoting from C.P.D.

[62] Ibid., p. 38, quoting from Sydney Morning Herald November 3, 1965.

evaluations of his diplomatic achievements also vary widely. More specifically, while Evatt is commended for having devoted himself with considerable skill and energy to the solution of foreign policy problems on a global basis he is often criticized for having been strangely oblivious to more immediate foreign policy tasks. This criticism is most frequently leveled against Evatt's management of Australian relations with Asia, for even though he took a leading role in having the Indonesian conflict taken to the Security Council and in persuading India and Pakistan to stay within the British Commonwealth, and in spite of his repeated statements of the need for Australians to understand Asian peoples and to develop friendly relations with them, apparently very little was done during Evatt's tenure in the External Affairs Ministry to establish contact with Asians. Indeed, in spite of the fact that Evatt's policies did build up a considerable reservoir of good will among Asians toward Australia, there is ample evidence to support R. G. Casey's charge that when the conservatives succeeded Labour in office, Australia had:

> . . . no positive plan for promoting peace in Southeast Asia, East Asia, or elsewhere . . . we took over no relations with Asia at all. The last Government had completely ignored Asia. We had no relations of any sort with Asian countries . . . . No effort of any sort had been made in those fateful and formative years to find out what was going on, or to try to help the people in their travail under the lash of Communism in Southeast Asia. Not one thing.[63]

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[63]Ibid., p. 39, quoting from C.P.D.

This writer's evaluation of Dr. Evatt's performance as Minister for External Affairs would focus on two rather different aspects of this controversial man's politics and achievements. That evaluation would begin by suggesting that Evatt's record must be viewed against the background of the Australian foreign policy environment prior to World War II. As indicated in Part I, the hallmark of pre-war Australian foreign policy had been a strong inclination toward isolationism.

Although the war experience had done much to weaken that inclination among the Australian people and had heightened their interest in world affairs, strong but latent isolationist attitudes continued to characterize the post-war attitudes of many Australians toward the conduct of their nation's foreign policy. Furthermore, the war experience also had generated a set of Australian political attitudes which created the potential for Australia to follow a course in world affairs somewhat parallel to that which the South Africans eventually chose to pursue after the war. More than any other individual, Dr. Evatt was responsible for preventing Australia from following either of those lines of policy. Irrespective of what temporary friction Evatt's abrasive diplomatic style may have caused in the areas of either Anglo-Australian or Australian-American relations, he kept the Australian Government firmly committed to an active policy of internationalism. More-

over, the bouyant idealism and hope which characterized his policies did much to maintain the interest of the Australian people in the course of world politics. In other words, Dr. Evatt's greatest contribution and successes were in those areas, he did much to help his fellow countrymen understand both the interdependent nature of security in the post-war international environment and the necessity of their playing a continuing role in world affairs. In this important respect, Dr. Evatt (or a man like Evatt) was absolutely necessary for Australia.

This writer's assessment of Dr. Evatt's record would focus on this extraordinary man's overall approach to the problem of insuring the security of a small or middle power in a political system dominated by great-power politics. Historically, the most successful and widely acclaimed architects of small or middle power foreign policies have been individuals who sought to resolve that problem through the exploitation of differences between the great powers. In other words, they have been architects of policies predicated upon a general acceptance of the norms of the prevailing international political system. And even when those norms were judged to be in conflict with the national interests of their nation, they have sought to improve the lot of the small or middle powers in the world arena through the pursuit of policies of gradualism intended to bring about small incremental changes in the norms controlling the

conduct of world politics. In large measure, Dr. Evatt rejected that approach outright.

As a spokesman of a small or middle power, Evatt tended to concentrate his energies on organizing and leading an assault on the norms of the prevailing international system. Almost single-handedly he sought to change or alter the concensus which served as the foundation of the international political system. In so doing, he set Australia upon a quest in search of a goal which even great powers had attempted and failed to achieve. What was even more disturbing about all this, was that Evatt apparently believed that he was making progress in his quest of that extremely ambitious goal. He seemingly never recognized that his early successes largely resulted not from any dramatic change in the international political concensus, but from temporary war-induced disequilibria in the international system. Once the major lines of power in the international system began to harden again after the end of hostilities, Dr. Evatt enjoyed fewer and fewer successes, and after the onset of the cold war he was probably more distant from his goal than when he started. When approached from this perspective, Evatt's record as Minister of External Affairs was largely one of tragic failure.

PART III

THE LIBERAL-COUNTRY PARTY DIRECTS AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Chapter 10

THE LIBERAL-COUNTRY PARTY IN OFFICE: THE FIRST DECADE

LEADERS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Federal elections were held in Australia during December of 1949. As a result of those elections, Labour was turned out of office and a Liberal-Country Party coalition under the leadership of Robert G. Menzies assumed office. An important contributing factor to Labour's defeat at the polls had been its continuing inability to come to grips with what Mr. Menzies and his colleagues termed "the Communist menace." In the domestic arena, Labour had proven incapable of preventing Communist-dominated trade unions from repeatedly holding the Australian community to ransom with strikes and go-slow tactics undertaken for political rather than industrial purposes. In the international arena, Labour had taken an extremely detached and ambivalent position with regard to successive Soviet actions involving the unsuccessful blockade of Berlin, rejection of participation in the Marshall Plan, consolidation of its hold over Czechoslovakia and deadlocking of the United Nations Security Council through repeated use of the veto,

Even closer to Australia, Communist insurrections had broken out in Indonesia and Malaya, and Mao Tse-Tung's forces had sent a shock-wave through Western democracies by winning undisputed control over the Chinese mainland. It was not surprising, then, that the anti-Communist campaign waged by the Liberal-Country Party had struck a responsive note with the Australian electorate.

Under Labour's direction, Australia had formulated, either by conscious endeavor or empirical pragmatism, a three-pronged foreign policy. In that policy, "due regard for American leadership in world affairs generally and for the special interests of the United States in the western Pacific was to be maintained alongside both the old traditional friendship and close diplomatic economic and defense coordination with United Kingdom and a new political, economic and strategic emphasis on activity among the Asian countries of Australia's own oceanic hinterland."[1] While the overall frameword of that policy did not change when the Liberal-Country Party coalition replaced Labour in office, both the emphasis and direction of that policy underwent fundamental changes.

To begin with, the management of Australia's foreign policy became much more a collective concern that it had been

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[1]Fred Alexander, "The Australian Community," in G. Greenwood and Norman Harper, Australia in World Affairs, 1950-55 (Melbourne: F. W. Sheshire, 1957), p. 4. Also see Gordon Greenwood, "Australia's Triangular Foreign Policy," Foreign Affairs, XXXV (1957, no. 4, p. 699.

under Labour. Whereas the formulation of Australian foreign policy under Labour's direction had tended to be a highly personalized affair with Dr. Evatt frequently treating that function as his own private domain, the direction of foreign policy under Liberal-Country Party control passed into the hands of essentially three men who would rely upon and be supported by an increasingly competent and capable Department of External Affairs.

Foremost among the three men who would share responsibility for the direction of Australian foreign policy during the decade of the 1950's was the new Prime Minister, Robert G. Menzies. Of course, Mr. Menzies was no newcomer to the national political arena. He brought to the Prime Ministry sixteen years of experience in federal politics.

Mr. Menzies was a skilled practioner of the art of politics, and his return to the highest public office in Australia was both a remarkable political comeback as well as a testimony to his political tenacity and expertise.

Dominant among Mr. Menzies' attitudes toward world affairs was his strong attachment to British constitutional democracy and the concept of the British Commonwealth of Nations. It was with deep feeling and immense pride that he would repeatedly state "I am a Commonwealth man . . . . We are all the Queen's men." It was this man who possessed such a deep reverence for British parliamentary democracy and the pragmatic Common Law approach, to whom the

Australian people would entrust ultimate responsibility for their security and well-being for the next sixteen years.

Second in line of responsibility for the direction of Australian foreign policy during the decade of the 1950's was Mr. Percy C. Spender, the new Minister for External Affairs. In his general approach to world affairs, Mr. Spender was a pragmatic realist who liked to consider himself a man of the world. He was far less emotionally attached than Mr. Menzies to the concept of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and as a result of having had previously served as Minister of the Army (1940-41) and on the Advisory War Council throughout the duration of the war, he was intimately familiar with the decline in British power and the emergence of the United States as the paramount power in the Pacific Basin.

Although Mr. Spender would retain the External Affairs portfolio for only slightly more than one year before accepting an appointment as Australian Ambassador to the United States, he would emerge as the principal theoretical architect of a foreign policy for Australia during the decade of the 1950's. As Minister for External Affairs, and later as an Ambassador in Washington, he would play a primary and distinguished role in the negotiations which led to the establishment of the Colombo Plan, ANZUS, and SEATO.

Third, but far from last, in the line of responsibility for the direction of Australia's foreign policy during the decade of the 1950's was Mr. Richard G. Casey. Mr. Casey would assume the External Affairs portfolio upon Mr. Spender's dispatch to Washington and would retain the portfolio until January, 1960, when he would be appointed a Life Peer. Mr. Casey brought to the External Affairs portfolio a distinguished diplomatic career and a wealth of experience in foreign affairs. By training and up-bringing, Mr. Casey was an aristocrat and traditionalist. He possessed a natural belief in the older diplomatic virtues, was a skilled negotiator and diplomatic tactician, and would lend a new and much needed degree of professionalism to the conduct of Australian foreign policy.

With the passage of time, something approaching a tacit division of labor concerning the management of Australia's external relations would emerge between these three men. In that division of labor, or interests, Mr. Menzies not surprisingly would assume primary responsibility for those aspects of Australian foreign policy involving British Commonwealth affairs. Similarly, Mr. Spender would assume primary responsibility for negotiating new security arrangements with the United States, while Mr. Casey would over-see the direction of the remainder of Australia's external relations--particularly relations with the Asian nations.

In diplomatic style, the Liberal-Country Party also differed quite dramatically from Labour. In that regard, the new managers of Australia's foreign policy were devotees of traditional or "quiet" diplomacy. They had been highly critical of Dr. Evatt's assertive, flamboyant and thrusting style, and had suggested that his style of diplomacy had done serious damage to Australian relations with the United Kingdom and the United States. Indicative of the Liberal-Country Party's diplomatic style was Mr. Menzies' long-standing advocacy of private "consultations" with British officials. Indeed, the trademark of Mr. Menzies' diplomatic style soon would become the increasingly familiar news photo of the British Prime Minister and himself taken in London prior to or after the private discussions which usually were associated with British Commonwealth Prime Ministers' meetings. In other words, the new managers of Australian foreign policy were traditionalists who believed that any differences with, or criticism of one's friends should be conveyed in private and not aired publicly.

Still another area in which the foreign policy attitudes of the Liberal-Country Party differed from those of Labour was in its assessment of the nature of the international environment. In general, the Liberal-Country Party was far less optimistic about the future than Labour seemingly had been. To the Liberal-Country, the situation in Asia tended to fit naturally into the older Australian

folklore and stereotypes about unspecified "Asiatic hoardes" who were presumed to be hostile toward Australia and covetous of its small population, long coastline and high living standards. In the Liberal-Country Party perspective on the world, Japan only recently had pursued a policy of all-out military aggression; China had become a Communist state and joined a Soviet Union which was threatening that part of the world which most Australians considered to be the center and source of their own civilization or culture; centers of European power located on the Asian mainland and from which many Australians took comfort, were being abandoned; India had become both a republic and a neutralist, Indonesia was xenophobia and troublesome; and over all that stood the specter of the cold war and Communist expansionism.

When approached from that perspective, Australia's external environment was assessed to be hostile by the Liberal-Country Party. Subsequently, its leaders repeatedly would warn the Australian public that "instead of living in a tranquil corner of the globe, we are now on the verge of the most unsettled region of the world."[2]

The operational conclusion which was drawn from that assessment of Australia's external environment can be summarized in one generalized statement. In December 1949, Australia abandoned a quest for world government by stages through the United Nations, and joined the ranks of the

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[2] C.P.D. (1954), V, p. 2382.

cold war. Although Labour had not been completely unresponsive to the need to check the spread of Communist influences in Asia, it had not been overly alarmed by that development and had taken the position that the most effective means of destroying the socio-economic appeal of Communist doctrines for oppressed and impoverished peoples was through the redress of colonial injustices and the encouragement of Asian nationalist movements. The Liberal-Country Party was frankly skeptical of that approach to checking the spread of Communist influences and argued that military measures should be given equal, if not greater emphasis than economic and political schemes in any policy that sought to halt the growth of Communist influence in Asia.

In its selection of those foreign policy instruments which were considered most appropriate for the prosecution of Australia's national interests, the Liberal-Country Party also differed with Labour. Central to this issue was the determination of how Australia, or any small or middle power for that matter, should approach the problem of attempting to influence the diplomacy of the great powers. As suggested earlier, Labour's approach to that fundamental issue on numerous occasions had been characterized by an effort to influence great power diplomacy from without, or externally, by bringing the full force or pressure of world opinion to bear upon great power policies. During their

years in Opposition, the members of the Liberal-Country Party had signled out that tendency on the part of Labour for particular criticism. They had argued that Labour's approach to the great powers not only was extremely pretentious, but also relied far too heavily upon an organization and the support of a group of nations whose reliability and capacity for insuring Australian security remained to be demonstrated. Moreover, they had argued that Labour's efforts in that regard far too often had been undertaken at the expense of good relations with nations whose support and reliability for insuring Australia's security only recently had been put to the supreme test and not been found to be wanting.

What was of paramount importance to the Liberal-Country Party was not the recruitment of weak and unpredictable nations in a crusade to democratize world politics, but rather the fostering of close relations with the United Kingdom and the United States. In order to accomplish that goal, the Liberal-Country Party chose a traditional approach to the great powers. It sought through traditional diplomatic instruments to influence great power diplomacy from within, or away from the public glare of the news media, by bringing quiet or private pressure and influence to bear upon the key foreign policy decision-making circles within those countries it considered to be Australia's known friends.

In his initial foreign policy review Mr. Spender stated that "the aims of Australian foreign policy are self-evident and unchanging (but) the ways and means may change."[3] The direction which those changes in the "ways and means" of Australian policy were about to take was clearly discernable from Liberal-Country Party Government's approach to the United Nations. As suggested in the preceding chapter, the Liberal-Country Party from the beginning had been skeptical, if not openly critical of Labour's enthusiasm for implementing Australian foreign policy through the United Nations. In particular, it had argued that Labour's foreign policy had placed undue reliance upon the United Nations as a security instrument. According to the Liberal-Country Party, realism required that a decent respect for the principles and purposes of the United Nations had to be balanced by a clear recognition of that organization's impotence to resolve vital problems of security. In Mr. Spender's view the Australian people needed to:

> . . . recognize how fatal it would be for Australia's future if our foreign policy rested solely on an affirmation of faith in the United Nations. There is a distinction between whole-heartedly supporting its principles--which we do--and believing that all its members will find in the foreseeable future common agreement on the application of those principles. What is of vital concern to us is that there has been no agreement on major issues in the past, there is no immediate prospect of agreement in the future, and the basis of Australian foreign policy and defense policy must be adjusted accordingly. Australia lives in a dangerous world and we must look immediately to means additional to the United Nations--not necessarily to other principles--to defend our interests and to exert our influence toward the creation of peaceful

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[3]Current Notes XXI (1950), p. 152.

> relations among democratic governments . . . where the United Nations is manifestly unable to protect Australian interests, it is the duty of the Government to follow simultaneously a policy of making supplementary arrangements among those we know to be our friends.[4]

To the leadership of the Liberal-Country Party, the primary foreign policy objective of a small and vulnerable country like Australia should be the strengthening of relations with nations which were willing and able to support policies that would further Australia's interests, and according to the new managers of Australian foreign policy that was a task which could be best accomplished outside rather than within an organization predicated upon the sovereign equality of all members and wherein the weakest member was able to cast a vote in the General Assembly equal to that of the United States or the United Kingdom irrespective of its capacity to carry a reasonable share of the economic or military burden of resolutions the Assembly might pass.

Therefore, the Liberal-Country Party members had openly questioned Dr. Evatt's premise that peace was indivisible and that the United Nations Charter imposed upon all its members the solemn duty of involving themselves in all matters within the scope of that organization. They held that the emphasis which Dr. Evatt placed upon the United Nations had forced Australian foreign policy out of focus

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[4]Ibid., p. 168.

and they had urged that Australia largely confine its foreign policy activities to matters which directly concerned Australia's national interests--particularly those interests involving parallel or combined action with the United Kingdom--rather than focusing its efforts on the United Nations "experiment."

Similarly, the Liberal-Country Party had been critical of the strong populist element in Labour's approach to the United Nations. To Messrs. Menzies, Spender, and Casey, the success of the United Nations depended not on its ability to focus world public opinion on important international issues, but on the motives of its members. If those were wrong, then public debates not only would be futile but also could prove injurious to world peace by enabling the delegates to become "the vocal champions of conflicting ideals and interests, and small disputes growing into great ones in the forcing house of publicity and propoganda."[5] Sharing neither Dr. Evatt's personal attachment to the United Nations nor his distrust of secret diplomacy, the leadership of the Liberal-Country Party at an early stage had advocated direct negotiations outside the United Nations framework as a means of lessening world tensions.

Differing attitudes over the efficacy of the United Nations also were magnified and brought into clear perspective by the Liberal-Country Party and Labour's conflicting

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[5]C.P.D. (1946), CLXXXVI, p. 440.

assessments as to the origins and nature of the cold war. On that crucial issue, Labour had been very ambivalent. Although Dr. Evatt had been deeply concerned by Soviet actions and policies, he initially regarded Soviet actions as defensive and had later criticized all anti-Soviet propoganda. For example, early in 1946, he had taken the populist position that Soviet expansionism had been encouraged by secret arrangements between the United States and the United Kingdom which had been made "alone and without reference to their allies," and therefore, "having no clear evidence to the contrary and having . . . come to know some of Russia's greatest statesmen" he took "the view that the Soviet Union's policy is directed toward self protection and security against future attack . . . ."[6] Later, he had argued that the war-time exclusion of the Soviet Union from atomic secrets was one of the root causes for its suspicion of the Western nations in the United Nations; praised the Soviets for their contribution to the Allied victory and cautioned that neither side in the cold war should get tough with the other; again attacked anti-Soviet propoganda and took comfort from the fact that the Soviets had sponsored a General Assembly resolution condemming war propaganda.[7]

Soon after the war-time great power alliance began to break up, Mr. Menzies had led a forthright attack on Dr. Evatt's views on Soviet behavior in which he had charac-

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[6] Ibid., p. 205. [7] Ibid., CC, p. 3901.

terized Labour's position as being "reminiscent of the case which was made out for Hitler's Lebensraum before the war," and had argued that if Dr. Evatt's theory of defensive motives on the part of the Soviets were accepted, "the day will come when the Soviet Union will be able to dictate its own terms to the world."[8] According to Mr. Menzies, Soviet expansionism had upset the world balance of power against the Western democracies and made it necessary for Australia to "cultivate its special friendships with such nations as have common interests with it."[9] He had ridiculed Labour's charge that his subsequent plea for a United States-British Commonwealth alliance was a revival of a hopeless policy of power politics, and in February, 1949, he had restated his lack of faith in the efficacy of "ideals" as a basis for resolving cold war antagonisms. Indeed, Mr. Menzies had defended his advocacy of a policy of expediency with the observation that:

> The immediate, practical, urgent problem that must be faced in this world so full of danger is not whether we ourselves subscribe to a certain ideal state of of affairs, but whether this scheme (the United Nations) works now or can work now . . . . Expediency matters in this world, and if we are confronted by a state of affairs in which we find things challenging the peace of the world and the security, safety and future of our own people, it is no use stating any airy-fairy legalistic ideals.[10]

Mr. Menzies then had gone on to repudiate Dr. Evatt's basic premise that the United Nations could act as well as talk,

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[8]Ibid., CLXXXVI, p. 444. [9]Ibid.

[10]Ibid., CCI, p. 265.

by arguing that great power aggression could never be restrained by the Security Council; it could be checked only "by some other great power or great powers acting together, not under the Charter but in spite of the existence of the Charter."[11]

The presumption was, then, that when the Liberal-Country Party took office there would follow a sharp reorientation in the Australian approach to the United Nations and that a conspicuous element of the new foreign policy formulation would be a heavy emphasis upon more traditional power relationships. This was in fact what did occur, but not to the extent which might have been anticipated. In his initial foreign policy review, Mr. Spender made it clear that the Liberal-Country Party's quarrel with Labour's foreign policy was more a matter of emphasis and method than with direction. Indicative of that difference over emphasis and method was the fact that only "fourthly" did the new Minister for External Affairs refer to the United Nations and Australia's obligations under the Charter. Even then, certain important Australian reservations were stated and fears implied:

> Fourthly, we . . . owe obligations to the United Nations, and must be in a position to discharge them. There is a danger of exaggerating not the importance of the aims or purposes or principles of the United Nations, but the extent to which in present circumstances it can exert real influence for the maintenance of peace in the world. It must not be forgotten that, as its membership includes representatives of all the groups of the world, it may contain those who are working to disrupt the order we live in, as well as those who support it . . . .[12]

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[11]Ibid., p. 267. [12]Current Notes, XXL (1950), p. 158.

From that appreciation of the United Nations, it was concluded that while Australia should continue to apply the principles of the Charter in its own foreign policy and give support to United Nations activities, Australian support would be forthcomig only "so long as the United Nations itself operates in accordance with those principles."[13] Although Messrs. Menzies, Spender, and Casey did not repudiate Dr. Evatt's confidence in the ideal that mankind must move toward world government within the framework of democratic international organization as an ultimate objective,' they did not believe that that was an objective which could be realized in the near future. Whether by philosophical inclination or as a result of conscious political analysis, the new managers of Australian foreign policy had concluded that not only was the equality of all nations an illusion, but also that "world government was so far over the horizon as to be invisible; power was a fact of life"[14] irrespective of one's hopes for the future of the United Nations.

Writing in 1956, Mr. Geoffrey Sawer succinctly summarized this change in emphasis in Australian foreign policy in the following manner:

> The broad difference between the Evatt attitude to the United Nations on one hand, and the Spender-Casey attitude on the other, is that the former hoped for and believed in the United Nations, while the latter only hoped for it. Dr. Evatt had the socialist distrust of big-power international politics, the socialist stress

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[13] Ibid..

[14] Alan Watt, <u>Australian Foreign Policy 1938-1965</u> (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 110.

on economic factors as a cause of war, a confidence that men must move toward world government within a democratic frame of international organization. He wanted all international contacts to come within the United Nations orbit and be conducted publicly, as in a legislature, with an emphasis on welfare politics. Spender-Casey do not repudiate those Evatt notions as ultimate ideals, but do not believe they can be realised in the forseeable future. Meanwhile, they have the typical anti-socialist preference for power political arrangements outside the United Nations, the belief that military preparedness and strong alliances are more important than international ideals, a disbelief in economics as a main factor in bringing about war, and in the present period a very heavy stress on fighting Communism, internally and externally, as the main objective, without being too fussy about the allies in this struggle; they may regret but are not deterred by the results which this policy might have on the prospects for world government or on the United Nations as originally planned.[15]

THE "FORWARD DEFENSE" STRATEGY

Having concluded that the United Nations was manifestly unanle to protect Australia's interests, it then became incumbant upon the Liberal-Country Party to formulate a foreign policy which would insure Australina security by other means. Australia's foreign and defense policies had to be adjusted according to the Liberal-Country Party's vision of the international environment. The response of the Liberal-Country Party to that requirement was to place a much stronger emphasis upon military preparedness and closer cooperation with Great Britain and the United States in the area of defense planning. According to Mr. Spender,

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[15]Geoffrey Sawer, "The United Nations" in G. Greenwood and N. Harper, eds., Australia in World Affairs 1950-55 (Melbourne: F. W. Cheshire, 1957), p. 93.

Australia lived in a dangerous, if not hostile world which required that:

> A nation's foreign policy must . . . be closely integrated with that of defense, for if the foreign policy which is followed proves incapable of achieving or maintaining peace, the departments of war must take over. Indeed, the military strength of a nation may largely condition the means employed by foreign policy in seeking to achieve its purpose.[16]

With the passage of time, this new emphasis in Australian foreign policy found formal expression in what eventually came to be known as the "Forward Defense Strategy." That strategy took as a point of departure the long-standing dual premise that: (1) the Australian people lacked both the numbers and the resources to raise an army capable of defending their continent, and (2) if war could not be avoided, it then was necessary that any war be fought in some area as far removed as possible from Australian shores. Whereas Labour's response to this traditional Australian dilemma had been characterized by a tendency to vacillate between an escape into either isolationism or universalist internationalism, the Liberal-Country Party's more ready acceptance of power politics led its response to the same problem to focus upon measures to strengthen Australia's security arrangements with what Mr. Menzies liked to refer to as "Australia's great and powerful friends." Throughout the decade of the 1950's, he repeatedly would argue that:

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[16]Current Notes, XXI (1950), p. 153.

> We need friends, that is the essence of our policy. The first task of a foreign policy is to keep our country out of war if you can on terms consistent with the vital interests and self-respect of our country. The second is to take fine care that if war cannot be avoided you enter that war with powerful friends with such a degree of preparation and cooperative planning thatyou have a prospect of winning it. That is why for us the business of foreign politics is the getting of friends.[17]

Of course, there was nothing particularly new about the overall thrust of Mr. Menzies' argument. As an expression of strategic concerns, it followed closely in the steps of the Australian conservative's pre-war "defense of the center of the empire" strategic doctrine. Moreover, the paramount strategic objective of the new Forward Defense Strategy was also familiar to most Australians: namely, the establishment of a strong strategic barrier between potential sources of Asian aggression and the Australian continent. Therefore, Mr. Menzies' basic argument represented a restatement of the Australian fear of being abandoned to face unassisted the uncertainties of their near-Asian environment and their consequent determination to halt, or at least retard, the retreat of Western power from the Asian and Pacific regions.

Although the theoretical arguments which underlay the Forward Defense Strategy were not particularly new, the operational expression given to those arguments by Liberal-Country Party strategic planning for the decade of the 1950's did differ in several important respects from pre-

[17]Ibid., p. 668.

war Imperial defense planning. To begin with, both the geographic focus and operationsl requirements of the Forward Defense Strategy differed from pre-war Imperial defense planning. Both of those aspects of strategic planning were altered in accordance with Australia's war-time experience and changes in the post-war international security environment. Gone now was the old dogma concerning the need to protect the "center of the empire" at all costs. In its place, the Forward Defense Strategy took cognizance of the obvious decline in British power and focused on defense planning for the South and Southeast Asian area. Although close cooperation with the British in the defense field was not about to be abandoned, the Forward Defense Strategy did signal a rather dramatic and necessary shift on the part of the Australian conservatives away from global Imperial schemes to regional security arrangements. Therefore, the Forward Defense Strategy represented the third phase in an evolutionary process in which the focus of Australian strategic planning moved from global-Imperial schemes to the universal collective-security arrangements of the United Nations, to regional security planning. In keeping with the new emphasis in Australian strategic planning, Mr. Spender began the substantive portion of his initial foreign policy review with the observation that:

> Situated as we are in the South-west corner of the Pacific, with the outlying islands of the Asian continent almost touching our own territories of

> New Guinea and Papua, our first and constant interest must be the security of our own homeland and the maintenance of peace in the area in which our country is geographically placed. We could many years ago reasonably regard ourselves as isolated from the main threats to our national security. Our security, however, has become an immediate and vital issue because changes since the war have resulted in a shifting of political aggression from the European to the Asian area, and our traditional British Commonwealth and USA friends have not yet completed their adjustments to the new situation. A very great burden of responsibility rests especially on us, but also upon the other British Commonwealth countries of this area.[18]

Mr. Spender's reference in the above passage to Australia's friends having "not yet completed their adjustments to the new situation" was particularly indicative of the Australian concerns that led to the formulation of the Forward Defense Strategy. In large part, those concerns followed from a belief on the part of the Liberal-Country Party that cold-war tensions had led strategic planning on the part of the Western democracies to over-concentrate on the situation in Europe to the point of endangering the security of the Indo-Pacific region; that is, it amounted to a reiteration of a long-standing Australian concern which only recently had found its most poignant expression during the dark months of early 1942. Mr. Spender restated that concern more forecfully somewhat later in his foreign policy review:

> The United Kingdom and the United States have up till recently been primarily concerned with resisting aggression in one form or another in Europe. The

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[18]Ibid., p. 154.

> situation is, however, in essence no different in the Western Pacific, particularly in what is generally known as Southeast Asia. Southeast Asia policy must therefore be seen in this world perspective.[19]

Furthermore, the Liberal-Country Party's concern over the need for the United Kingdom and the United States to approach strategic planning from a "world perspective" also was indicative of a changed Australian perception of the principal potential source of any threat to their security. Whereas pre-war defense planning had proceeded on the assumption of the need to prepare against a traditional or classical military attack (particularly an attack which would originate from Japan) either on Australia itself or the principal guarantor of Australian security, the Forward Defense Strategy was based on the premise that not only had Communist expansionism replaced Japan as the principal threat to Australian security, but also that the "war of ideas" implicit in the cold-war struggle posed a new and dangerous threat to the entire Southeast Asian region. It was clear, for example, that what Mr. Spender had in mind when he referred to the tendency on the part of British and American strategic planning to be preoccupied "up until recently" on security planning for Europe, was the recent so-called "loss of China" which had forced the Western democracies to reassess the entire security situation in

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[19]Ibid., p. 155.

Pacific Basin. In overall orientation, then, the Forward Defense Strategy also was strongly anti-communist,

While Labour had not ignored the threat which Communist expansionism in Asia posed to Australian security, it had chosen to interpret the Asian political unrest which facilitated Communist political inroads as being largely a natural response to colonial mis-rule and capitalist exploitation of dependent peoples. According to Labour, Communist expansionism could be countered only through the immediate adoption of programs leading to socio-economic reform in Asia. Although the Liberal-Country Party did not reject out-right Labour's arguments concerning the need to improve living standards in Asia as a means of combatting the spread of Communist influences, it differed strongly with Labour over the value of European colonial administrations in Asia. Specifically, the Liberal-Country Party argued that necessary socio-economic reforms could be effectively implemented within the frameowrk of colonial administrations. It took comfort from the continued presence of European power on the Asian mainland and argued that power would have to be applied in concert with socio-economic reform to halt Communist expansion in Asia. Subsequently, the new Australian Government became one of the earliest and most persistent advocates of what later became known as the "dominao theory" of Communist expansion through subversion. Thus, when Mr. Spender referred during his initial foreign

policy review to the problems the French then were encountering with the Viet Minh in Indo-China, he warned the Australian people that:

> Should the forces of Communism prevail and Vietnam come under the heel of Communist China, Malaya is in danger of being out-flanked and it, together with Thailand, Burma, and Indonesia will become the next direct object of further Communist activities.[20]

At the conceptual level, then, what the Forward Defense Strategy did was to lay the foundation for an Australian policy of containment of Communist Chinese expansionism in South and Southeast Asia through a series of regional security arrangements. It rested squarely on the premise that the policy of containment of Soviet expansionism then being implemented in Europe through the establishment of a series of complementary regional military and economic security arrangements also could be employed effectively to contain Chinese expansionism in South and Southeast Asia. According to the Liberal-Country Party, what was wrong with security planning for the European area was not its reliance upon a regional approach <u>per se</u>, but the failure on the part of the Western democracies to keep their strategic planning in "world perspective," or their reluctance to apply the regional approach world-wide. Mr. Spender expressed his Government's concern over that development during November 1950, in the following manner:

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[20] Ibid., p. 158.

> Regional organization is important and planning in regard to one region can usefully supplement planning in another. Nevertheless, wherever the planning is done, the problems of a particular region should not be allowed to overshadow the basic problems of the world as a whole. It is not a question of making a choice between one region and another, but rather of insuring that sufficient attention is given to world problems insofar as they manifest themselves in different regions.[21]

Therefore, as perceived by the Liberal-Country Party, the "great burden of responsibility" which rested "especially on Australia," was interpreted as requiring that they not only warn Australia's "great and powerful friends" as to the gravity of the Communist menace in Asia, but also that they take the lead in restoring global balance to the strategic planning on the part of the Western democracies. What followed from that conception of Australia's role in world politics was a series of Australian regional initiatives designed to keep the United Kingdom and the United States heavily involved in the Asian and Pacific regions as a means of serving the dual purpose of both containing Chinese expansionism and erecting a security shield between Australia and Asia. To what extent the policy of containment of China and associated anti-communist dogma deliberately was employed by the Australian Government to achieve the latter of those purposes is a matter of conjecture. It is clear, however, that the series of Australian regional initiatives which were the hallmark

[21] Ibid., p. 800

of the Liberal-Country Party's foreign policy during the 1950's closely followed the two-pronged security formula which had been employed in Europe: that is, containment of Communist expansionism through the establishment of a military shield, behind which stable and democratic governments would be maintained with economic assistance programs designed to cut at the roots of potential support for Communist movements.

THE COLOMBO PLAN

Even before Mr. Spender had presented his first comprehensive foreign policy review to Parliament, he had undertaken an important foreign policy initiative which eventually led to the creation of the Colombo Plan for providing economic assistance to the developing countries of the South and Southeast Asian region. Briefly, the Colombo Plan stemmed from an initiative undertaken by Mr. Spender, in close collaboration with the Government of Ceylon, at a meeting of British Commonwealth Foreign Ministers held at Colombo in January 1950, and continued at a subsequent follow-up meeting held in Sydney during May of that year. The Australian External Affairs Minister played such a distinguished role in the successful negotiations that led to the formal launching of the Colombo Plan on July 1, 1951, that the proposal was known throughout 1950 as the "Spender Plan" in many diplomatic circles.

Indeed, Mr. Spender is frequently and rightly credited with having fathered and fostered the Colombo Plan.

What Mr. Spender had proposed at Colombo was that a scheme be devised whereby the countries of South and Southeast Asia would be provided economic aid in the form of technical assistance, the provision of educational opportunities in donor countries such as Australia and capital grants for the purpose of strengthening the economies of recipient nations. The overall thrust of the scheme was to be geared toward early results in the way of fortifying and improving Asian living standards. The aspect of the scheme which bore Mr. Spender's distinctive trade-mark was its emphasis on administrative simplicity and the avoidance of Pakinsonian structures with proliferating committees and subsidiary bodies.

Subsequently, the administrative machinery that was established to carry out the Colombo Plan's objectives not only is characterized by simplicity but also by the lack of any real power or authority. The heart of that machinery, the Colombo Plan Bureau, serves mainly as a statistical center and an information clearing house which attempts to facilitate the matching of recipient needs with donor capabilities. Specifically the Bureau lacks the planning authority to determine: (a) whether a project is basically sound; (b) whether a project has high priority and is properly integrated in the recipient country's overall

development plan; (c) whether the type of assistance sought would have the maximum development "impact"; and (d) whether the country from which assistance is sought could provide that aid better than other potential donors.

Since the Colombo Plan proposal was the first major foreign policy initiative undertaken by the Liberal-Country Party Government and because the initiative embodied much of the diplomatic strategy which the Australian Government would employ throughout the remainder of the decade, it tended to serve as a model for all subsequent Australian diplomatic activity during the 1950's. Therefore, in order to properly understand what kind of foreign policy frameowrk the Liberal-Country Party Government was attempting to construct, it is necessary to appreciate some of the major political considerations that lay behind the Colombo Plan proposal.

To begin with, the Colombo Plan initiative was in part a reaffirmation of traditional Australian suspicions of their Asian neighbors. Among other things, it was envisioned as an economic tranquilizer which would serve Australian interests by raising Asian living standards, and thereby hopefully dampen Asian political unrest as well as arrest what the Australians perceived as socio-economic pressures for Asian migration to Australia. Moreover, in addition to those more traditional concerns, the strong anti-communist orientation of the Liberal-Country Party

also was an important consideration in the formulation of the Colombo Plan proposal. While the Liberal-Country Party never accepted Labour's socialist or economic interpretation of the cold war struggle, they shared a belief in the utility of economic assistance as a means of combatting the spread of communist influences in Asia through the destruction of the socio-economic appeal of communist doctrines to impoverished peoples. Although the stated objectives of the Colombo Plan were never explicitly anti-communist, such an emphasis was implicit in those official communiques associated with the Colombo Plan which placed heavy stress on the need to "strengthen (Asian) free institutions"; "social stability"; "the political stability of the (South and Southeast Asian) area, and indeed of the world"; "to strengthen the cause of freedom . . . ." In other words, the Colombo Plan was envisioned by the Australian Government as a long term economic insurance policy.

Second, the Australian Colombo Plan initiative was a manifestation of the strong Imperial orientation of the Liberal-Country Party. The thrust of the initiative was purposely channeled through British Commonwealth machinery. In addition to the proposal having been negotiated at British Commonwealth meetings, all of the original members of the Colombo Plan were British Commonwealth members. Since Great Britain already had accepted responsibility for the development of its remaining Asian colonial

territories, that meant that the Australian proposal largely was directed toward the former British colonies of the South Asian sub-continent; that is, the old "Imperial jugular vein." It was hoped, however, that the proposal could be expanded in the near future to include other strategically important non-British Commonwealth countries--particularly Indonesia.

Third, the Colombo Plan proposal was an affirmation of growing Australian disquiet over what the Liberal-Country Party perceived as disturbing tendencies on the part of both the cold war struggle to over-emphasize the importance of European security at the risk of endangering the security of the Indo-Pacific region, and the United Nations to over-step its authority and thereby compromise the sovereignty of its members. Indeed, the Colombo Plan proposal was formulated both out of a recognition of the shift on the part of the major Western democracies away from universal to regional approaches to strengthening world security and with a view toward extending the regional economic assistance and security approach to the South and Southeast Asian region. Although no Australian official ever explicitly stated that the Colombo Plan was intended to be Asia's answer to the European Marshall Plan, Mr. Spender clearly implied that this was the case when he observed that:

> . . . already some machinery exists for promoting rehabilitation and development. So far, this machinery had achieved little in South and Southeast Asia. This

> Government is concerned that there isn't as yet any concerted attempt to check and reverse through international economic measures the deterioration in the political and economic situation (in the region).[22]

What was particularly appealing to the new Australian Government about the Marshall Plan sort of approach to strengthening world security was the fact that it was ideologically eclectic with regard to the issue of international organization. Whereas Dr. Evatt's preference for channeling Australian economic assistance through the United Nations (Dr. Evatt had stated that Australia was implementing its own Marshall Plan through the United Nations) had implied advocacy for that organization and all its activities, the Liberal-Country Party feared that continued reliance upon the United Nations economic assistance machinery would encourage that organization to make further inroads in the area of national soveriegnty which might eventually lead to a compromising of national prerogatives with regard to the sensitive issue of immigration policy. Regionalism was envisioned as an acceptable alternative approach which could facilitate the strengthening of Asian economies without further compromising national political prerogatives. Later, the preference on the part of the Liberal-Country Party for regional approaches to the issue of foreign aid was reinforced by the awareness that when evaluated on a per capita basis, multilateral approaches to aid giving resulted in

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[22]Ibid., p. 160.

those geographic regions of primary importance to Australia (South and Southeast Asia) receiving the smallest percentage of foreign aid funds, while those regions of only marginal interest to Australia (Latin America) received the largest percentage of those resources. Subsequently, the Colombo Plan porposal purposely stressed bilateral diplomatic activities and a minimum of liaison between donors and recipients. In all matters, the recipient governments were encouraged to do their own planning. They retained full freedom and independence with regard to their acceptance of responsibility for the success or failure of their programs. The success of the Colombo Plan clearly was dependent then, on the wisdom with which the Asian recipients employed the external resources made available to them.

Fourthly, and perhaps most importantly, Australia undertook the Colombo Plan initiative in the hope that adoption of the proposal would redress the geographic imbalance in the "free world" security planning by serving as a catalyst to bring external resources--particularly those of the United States--into the South and Southeast Asian region. That consideration was implicit in Mr. Spender's observation that:

> If the Colombo Plan is to be carried out in full it would be necessary to enlist financial support of international agencies and countries outside the area.[23]

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[23] Ibid., p. 731.

The Australian initiative was considered crucial to that objective, however, since:

> A response on the part of others, in the direction of mutual self-help even in a limited way, would be an indication that the United States was not alone in its endeavor to concentrate on this region a proportion of effort commensurate with its high importance.[24]

Therefore, according to Mr. Casey, Australia's motivation in undertaking the Colombo Plan proposal was twofold:

> . . . to try to bring to this area the attention which it deserves from the free world and show our bona fide concern by providing a reasonable share of our resources. If we don't, then others with command of much great resources than Australia are liable to become discouraged if we show signs of leaving it all to them.[25]

Finally, the Colombo Plan proposal was designed to maximize the impact of Australia's foreign aid capability on the countries of the South and Southeast Asian region. As originally conceived, the proposal gave particular emphasis to bi-lateral technical assistance through the provision of expert advisors and educational scholarships. Not surprisingly, that was virtually the only form of economic assistance, other than surplus foodstuffs, which Australia could offer to its Asian neighbors. Furthermore, focusing on bilateral technical assistance enabled the Australian Government not only to maintain the national identity of Australian aid and confine that aid to the geographic region of greatest importance to Australia, but also

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[24] Ibid., p. 340.

[25] Current Notes, XXIII (1952), p. 313.

to avoid the balance of payments problems which would confront an aid donor that was experiencing what then was known in international financial circles as the "world dollar shortage" (an important consideration in this regard was the fact that most contributions to United Nations sponsored aid programs had to be made in convertable currencies; meaning, scarce United States dollars). In addition, by providing technical assistance to Asians in the form of educational scholarships to Australian universities, the Australian Government hoped to promote regional cultural understanding by both exposing the Australian people to the presence of thousands of Asians in their society as well as enabling the future leaders of Asia to learn first hand that the Australian people are not necessarily racial bigots. Subsequently, Australia's largest contribution to the Colombo Plan has been in the form of tertiary educational scholarships.

THE ANZUS TREATY

The next major diplomatic initiative undertaken by the Liberal-Country Party took place in the defense field. The first and most important result of that initiative was the conclusion of the Australia-New Zealand-United States Treaty (ANZUS). In terms of inspiration or motivation, the ANZUS iniative followed closely in the path of Labour's prior efforts to negotiate a Pacific Pact centered on

American power; that is, it was characterized by strong Australian unease over the unsettled post-war security environment in the Pacific basin and by growing Australian apprehensions over what they perceived as a tendency on the part of the Western democracies to over-concentrate their security preparations in Europe at the risk of ignoring the gravity of the security situation in the Indo-Pacific region.

Where the new Liberal-Country Party initiative differed from prior Labour efforts in this regard was in terms of the role Australia was envisioned as playing in a process leading to the conclusion of Pacific security arrangements underwritten by American power, whereas Labour's approach had been ambiguous on that important issue, the Liberal-Country Party formulated a systematic, although pragmatic, approach to the Americans which stressed regionalism and postulated a catalytic role for Australia. In other words the ANZUS initiative reiterated the Colombo Plan format.

In general, the principal policy objectives of the ANZUS diplomatic initiative were three-fold and complementary. Those included: (1) the development of a creditable strategic rationale for the participation of Australian military forces in collective security arrangements; (2) a plan to "build up with the United States somewhat the same relationship that exists with the British Commonwealth";[26] and (3) the formal committment of the United States

[26]Current Notes, XXI (1950), p. 660.

to the defense of the South and Southeast Asian region.

Taking as a point of departure the premise that the paramount goal of Australian foreign policy was the winning of friends, the new managers of Australian foreign policy reasoned that a prerequisite to the realization of their second and third policy objectives was Australia's being "able to act swiftly to help (its friends) when the need arises."[27] Thus, they argued that before Australia could play a catalytic role in the formation of a Pacific security alliance it first had to be able to demonstrate its worthiness and creditability as an ally. As perceived by the Liberal-Country Party, a major impediment to Australia's playing such a catalytic role was the traditionally strong aversion within Labour and among other anti-Imperialist groups to the commitment of Australian military forces, particularly conscripts, to overseas wars. In order to remove that domestic political obstacle to the realization of its foreign policy objectives, the Liberal-Country Party presented the Australian public with a strategic argument which closely followed standard collective security doctrines. As set forth by Prime Minister Menzies, their argument stressed that:

> . . . if there is a Third World War, the safety of Australia will not be protected here in Australia, but in some other area, where in the opinion of the Western democracies, Australian participation is necessary for victory . . . the purpose of a regular

[27] Ibid., p. 668.

> Army is defeated if it cannot be called upon to serve outside Australia . . . (since) the imperialist Communist has no sea-power (and) cannot stage an invasion . . . the principal course of an Australian Army is not to repel a land invasion, but to cooperate with other democracies in those theatres of war in which the fate of mankind may be fought out. In brief, an Australian Army raised only for service in Australia would in all probability be raised for no service at all. It would be the equivalent of a wooden gun. And the democratic world cannot afford to have its common front against Communism weakened by the withdrawal into isolation of some of the best troops in the world.[28]

In seeking to establish a security relationship with the United States similar to that which existed with the British Commonwealth, the Liberal-Country Party Government returned to a familiar concern of Dr. Evatt's: namely, securing Australian access to the Western councils where "world strategy" was formulated. As explained by Mr. Spender, the Government was concerned that:

> . . . Australia's views in regard to world strategy and global planning cannot, under existing organizational arrangements, be expressed effectively and carry the same weight at the appropriate point of time as the views of some other countries who are members of a regional organization such as NATO.[29]

As suggested in that statement, the Government's search for access to Western "global planning" councils proceeded on the assumptions that discussions of this nature occurred either within NATO, or more specifically through meetings of the American Joint Chiefs of Staff. Therefore, those two "organizational arrangements" became the specific targets of

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[28] Ibid., p. 660.

[29] Ibid., p. 127.

the Australian Government's effort to have its views "expressed effectively and carry the same weight" as the views of nations which had entered into formal alliance with the United States.

For a variety of reasons, the Australian Government's hope to secure access to the strategic planning machinery of NATO and the American Government met with only marginal success. To begin with, Australian assumptions about NATO being the locus of global strategy formulation were incorrect and should have been dispelled by closer Australian consultation with the principal European members of that Alliance. Moreover, the implication that NATO somehow should be expanded to include the Pacific and thereby re-involve the European members of the alliance in Asian problems was ill-conceived at a time when even Europe's problems seemed too much for them. Further, the prospect of establishing a direct and permanent relationship between the Australian and American Chiefs of Staff--the most cherished idea of the Australian Government--was not warmly received in Washington. Unfortunately, however, Australian assumptions in that regard apparently were not dispelled by the Americans until August 1952.[30] Therefore, the Australian Government proceeded apace in its effort to apply its conception of the NATO security formula to the Pacific region.

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[30]Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation, (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1969), p. 637.

Subsequently, Mr. Spender continued to attack the notion that a tacit Australian-American strategic understanding was adequate and he went on to specify exactly what it was that his Government sought from the Americans:

> It might be said that there is no doubt at this moment that the USA would immediately and effeictvely come to our aid in the event of an act of aggression against Australia. But it is not one-way traffic in obligations with which Australia is concerned. What we seek is an effective way of contributing to the fashioning and maintenance of world peace. What we desire is a permanent regional basis of collective security which has as its pivotal point some obligation comparable to that set forth in Article 5 of NATO--namely that an armed attack upon one shall be deemed an armed attack upon all. We desire to see formal machinery set up to which, amongst others, the United States and ourselves are parties, which will enable us effectively to plan the use of our resources and military power in the interests of peace in the geographical area of the world in which we live.[31]

In order to realize that objective, however, a clear demonstration of Australian willingness to contribute to the establishment of regional security arrangements in the Pacific was deemed imperative, since:

> Before the United States can be expected to assume responsibilities in connection with the defense of Pacific countries, some of those countries at least must give evidence of their willingness to unite in their own defense. The immediate need, therefore, is for some initiative from among the countries of the Pacific area.[32]

In pursuit of the third of its three policy objectives, the Liberal-Country Party Government not only restated the need for the Western democracies to approach strategic planning from a global perspective, but also suggested that

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[31] Current Notes, XXI (1950), p. 802.

[32] Ibid., p. 403.

the success of NATO in blunting Soviet expansion in Europe had actually increased communist pressure in Asia. As Mr. Spender observed:

> There are in fact good grounds for thinking that the success of the Western democracies in presenting and holding a firm front against Communism in Europe has been partly responsible for the increased interest shown by the Soviet Union in fostering the spread of Communism in Asia.[33]

Although many aspects of this Liberal-Country Party Government's initiative were similar to that of the preceding Labour Government, the diplomatic style employed by the two Governments stood in marked contrast to each other. Whereas Dr. Evatt's approach to that issue had been characterized by a tendency toward rigidity and dogmatic adherence to untenable positions, Mr. Spender's performance was notable for its flexibility, keen sense of timing, expert moulding of public opinion and elasticity in the scope of its objectives. Unlike Dr. Evatt, Mr. Spender accepted the American reluctance to support colonial regimes, and for this reason he was willing to exclude all British Commonwealth countries, save New Zealand, from a Pacific security treaty in the interests of securing a formal American security guarantee for Australia. He also further narrowed the operational scope of the proposed security agreement by publicly recognizing the difficulties involved in transposing the NATO format to the Pacific region. In fact, Mr. Spender was

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[33] Ibid., p. 155.

willing to narrow the envisioned membership of any Pacific security arrangement to the point where he announced that "Australia alone, if called upon to respond by the United States, would be prepared to enter into a Pacific Pact."[34]

In spite of all these overtures toward the Americans, the United States Government remained unwilling to enter into a NATO style Pacific Pact and the Australian Government's diplomatic initiative began to lose momentum. At that crucial juncture in the Australian initiative, however, world events seemed to play into the hands of the Australian Government. On June 25, 1950, the North Korean troops invaded South Korea and on the following day President Truman denounced the North Koreans for unprovoked aggression and announced that in response to the call of the United Nations Security Council, he had ordered United States air and sea forces to help the South Korean Government. On June 29, the Australian Government responded to the American action by announcing that it had put a naval squadron at the disposal of the United States for use in Korean waters, and the following day the Royal Australian Air Force Fighter Squadron stationed in Japan was also put at their disposal. Australia thereby became the first nation to lend military assistance to the United States forces in Korea. Subsequently, on July 6, Prime Minister Menzies called on Australians to enlist in the army, navy, and air force for

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[34]C.P.D. (1951), CCVIII, pp. 4005-6.

service in Korea.

Here, then, was concrete "evidence" of Australia's willingness to unite with other nations in cooperative defense arrangements in order to insure the security of the Pacific Basin. As Mr. Menzies stated during an address before the U. S. Senate in August 1950, the Australian Government's actions in Korea demonstrated that:

> We Australians are your (the United States) friends. What has taken place in Korea is indicative of the close association which we have endeavored to create.[35]

At the same time, Mr. Spender moved to head off any American arguments to the effect that what had occurred in Korea had once again demonstrated the absence of any need to formalize further Australian-American cooperation in the defense field. Borrowing liberally from deterrence doctrines, he argued that the "peace loving nations must be so organized and prepared as to discourage any repetition of the Korean incident," and that required "a far greater measure of preparation than anything we have had up to date."[36]

Irrespective of Australian suggestions that their actions in Korea were ample demonstration of their ability as an ally, the United States remained unwilling to enter into a formal security agreement with Australia. What eventually did enable the Australians to make a beginning toward

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[35]Current Notes, XXI (1950), p. 576.

[36]J. G. Starke, The ANZUS Treaty Alliance (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1965), p. 32, citing C.P.D.

the kind of Pact which they had envisioned in 1950 was the American decision to resolve the post-war status of Japan. Having been precipitated by the hostilities in Korea, that American decision was followed by a round of negotiations which not only transformed Japan from a defeated enemy to the keystone of the American defense perimeter in the Pacific, but also formally extended the umbrella of American military power over Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines through a series of inter-locking security treaties of which the ANZUS treaty was only one. Therefore, the crucial development in the process which led to the conclusion of the ANZUS treaty was the American decision to sign a peace treaty with Japan.

On the important issue of a Japanese peace treaty, the Liberal-Country Party had been at one with Labout in its fear that a resurgent Japan would be an aggressive Japan. Like Labour, the Liberal-Country Party held that any peace treaty with Japan was undesirable if it neither limited Japan's ability to make war nor provided for a collateral formal treaty to insure collaboration between the Pacific powers in the event of any Japanese threat to the security of the Pacific Basin. In one very important respect, however, the Liberal-Country Party's position on that issue did differ from that of Labour. Having been elected on a strong anti-communist platform and having committed Australian military forces to an anti-communist military action in

Korea, the Liberal-Country Party eventually had worked itself around to the position that the "immediate problem . . . to consider was the security of Japan, even more than security from Japan."[37]

That did not mean, however, that the Australian Government was prepared to concur in whatever peace treaty formula the American Government proposed for Japan. Rather, it meant that the crux of the matter as perceived by the Australian Government was the resolution of the post-war status of Japan in such a manner that Japan not only would be given sufficient strength to resist the threat of communist expansionism but also would be simultaneously prevented from ever again threatening Australian security. To the Australian Government, those requirements were inseparable and it remained adament in its refusal to concur in a Japanese peace treaty until its own security was assured against any resurgance of Japanese aggression. It was that concern which provided Mr. Spender with the opportunity to link the issue of an Australian-American security pact with the American proposal to conclude a peace treaty with Japan. That was deftly accomplished by suggesting that:

> The type of guarantee which should be provided by the treaty is also closely affected by the extent to which defense arrangements can be worked out in the Pacific which will deter any country from threatening the area

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[37]Current Notes, XXIII (1952), p. 97.

> and by so doing establish a basis for lasting peace in this part of the world.[38]

In the end, it was that formula which led to the conclusion of the ANZUS Treaty, for the United States Government became increasingly receptive to the idea of a Pacific security pact (or pacts) in order to overcome the objections of Australia and other Pacific nations to a peace treaty which permitted substantial, although limited, Japanese rearmament.

Therefore, the conclusion of the ANZUS Treaty was less the product of an Australian diplomatic initiative leading to the establishment of a Pacific Pact than the end result of a divergence in views between Australia and New Zealand on one hand, and the United States on the other hand over the terms of a Japanese peace treaty. When Australia and New Zealand (and the Philippines) made their acceptance of the Japanese peace treaty conditional upon the American's simultaneous conclusion of a security treaty with themselves, the United States' Government agreed to enter into the ANZUS Treaty as a _quid pro quo_ for Australian and New Zealand acceptance of its draft treaty. The agreement was given formal expression on July 12, 1951, when the United States, Australia, and New Zealand initialled the draft ANZUS Treaty. Immediately thereafter, the United States concluded bi-lateral security treaties with the Philippines and Japan.

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[38]Current Notes, XXII (1951), p. 73. Also see R. G. Menzies, "The Pacific Settlement Seen From Australia," _Foreign Affairs_, XXX (1952), p. 189.

Viewed from the Australian Government's perspective, however, the series of treaties of which ANZUS was a part provided the Pacific Basin with only a limited and rather uncoordinated security system. As stated earlier, what the Australian Government originally had sought was the establishment of a security pact for the Pacific region which would adhere closely to the NATO model. When compared to that model, the limitations of the ANZUS formula were threefold. To begin with, ANZUS did not provide the Australian Government with the kind of direct access to American strategic planning councils which had been hoped for. Not until the ANZUS Council meeting of August 1952, however, did the United States Government finally inform Australian and New Zealand Governments that its Chiefs of Staff were so preoccupied with problems arising from their consolidation under a single defense agency and the launching of the NATO Alliance that they would not even entertain the thought of taking on additional joint United States-Allied strategic planning responsibilities.[39]

Second, the membership of ANZUS was far more restricted than the Australian Government initially had hoped for. Originally, the Australian proposals for the conclusion of a Pacific Pact had envisioned the participation of both Great Britain and the United States as the nucleus of a security agreement which broadly would include other British Commonwealth countries that might wish to join, providing only

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[39]Acheson, op. cit.

that they were capable of contributing military commitments to the common cause. In short, Australia had sought once again to employ the Colombo Plan model by making the United States and the British Commonwealth of Nations twin pillars of any Pacific security system. The United States had strongly resisted Australian pressure in that regard, however, and had insisted that neither Great Britain nor any other British Commonwealth country, save New Zealand, should be party to the ANZUS Treaty. The United States not only had been suspicious of British imperialism and unwilling to underwrite the defense of British colonies, but it also had been anxious to limit its commitments in the Pacific Basin as well as avoid involvement in an alliance which might be interpreted by Asians as a Western pact designed to safeguard Western interests to the exclusion of those of the region as a whole.

Third, the obligations undertaken by the signatories of the ANZUS Treaty were much more vague than those which had been hoped for by many within the Australian Government. Whereas Article V of the NATO Treaty were explicit and automatic, Article IV of the ANZUS Treaty only required that:

> Each Party recognizes that an armed attack in the Pacific area on any of the Parties would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes.[40]

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[40]Article IV, ANZUS Treaty. The entire text is reprinted in Starke, op. cit., pp. 243-5.

Although the formal commitment on the part of the United States' Government to act in accordance with its constitutional processes to come to Australia's assistance fell short of the Australian Government's ideal, it was the strongest commitment that could be illicited from an American Government which was unwilling to reopen the domestic debate that had surrounded the ratification of the NATO Treaty. The insurance of Australian security was judged by the American Government not to be of sufficient importance to the promotion of the United States national interests to warrant a re-opening of that debate. Therefore, broad and flexible phraseology reminiscent of the Monroe Doctrine was deliberately employed in drafting the ANZUS Treaty.

THE SEATO TREATY

Viewed from the Australian perspective, the series of the bilateral security treaties that followed from the American decision to sign a peace treaty with Japan resulted in the creation of an uncoordinated and uneven security system for the Pacific region in the sense that while that system encouraged constructive and creative thinking about self-reliance, it could not be forced to take on the burden of collective defense. More specifically, the Australian Government viewed the ANZUS Treaty as merely a partial fulfillment of its quest for a Pacific Pact modeled on the NATO formula.

Even before the ANZUS Treaty was initialed or ratified, Mr. Spender had been sent to Washington as the Australian Ambassador to oversee implementation of the Treaty and Mr. Casey had assumed the External Affairs portfolio. As one of his first official acts as Minister for External Affairs, Mr. Casey went to Southeast Asia on a fact-finding tour to assess the intensity of communist pressure on that region. Upon his return, Mr. Casey restated both the "domino theory" and "the need for the West to have a genuinely global outlook and policy in the Cold War," that is, he stated the Australian Government's belief that while ANZUS had made an important contribution to the security of the Pacific region, "it did not provide the complete and final answer to the maintenance of peace and security in the Pacific Basin," only a "great advance along the road."[41]

Therefore, the Australian Government continued during the post-ANZUS period to reiterate its call for the conclusion of a broad NATO style Pacific Pact. With the passage of time, however, that appeal came to be characterized by a noticeable maturing of Australian foreign policy attitudes. Whereas the Government had previously demonstrated a preoccupation with the potential threat to Australian security posed by a resurgent Japan, Government spokesmen increasingly recognized that a significant shift had occurred in the post-war Asian balance of power.

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[41]Current Notes, XXIII (1952), p. 98.

Although they would continue for many years to play (for domestic political advantage) upon the widespread but progressively latent Australian fears of a resurgent Japan, Government spokesmen eventually agreed that China now posed the most immediate and real threat to the security of the Pacific region.

With this maturing in foreign policy attitudes and the outbreak of several communist dominated insurrection movements in Southeast Asia, the attention of the Australian Government came to focus on what was perceived as a serious gap in the Western defense perimeter, which was held only by the tenuous French position in Indo-China and a fragile British defense line that rested precariously on Singapore and made no contact with the American defense perimeter terminating at Manilla. Writing in early 1957, or after the conclusion of the SEATO Treaty, Norman Harper observed that this gap had resulted largely from important divergencies in strategic priorities as seen from London and Washington:

> American interests in the South Pacific as in Southeast are basically peripheral. The primary purpose of advanced outposts on friendly Asian soil is to strengthen the Alaska-Manila defense permiter which in turn is the outer bastion of defense for California and the West Coast. British defense lines to the Far East have become increasingly tenuous with the evacuation of Suez and the recognition of Indian independence. Singapore has increasingly become the advanced sheet anchor of the British line and a defense bastion of Malaya instead of being as well a spring-board for the defense of British and Commonwealth interests east of Singapore. Singapore-Manila gap is an awkward no-man's land, a strategic vacuum into which Australia is anxious to press the United States. For Australia, the whole

> region was central to her defense: Singapore was a bulwark to hold back a landward advance and Manila an advanced base for the American navy and air force upon whose back her security so largely rested.[42]

Australian apprehensions concerning the strategic importance of the Southeast Asian region were both historical in origin and more immediate. Historically, that concern resulted from the recognition that the most likely approach for any Asian country lacking a strong navy but intent upon conquest of Australia was to make use of the stepping stones so conviently provided by the vast East Indian archipelago. Broadly, the two outer wings of that archipelago sweep southward from Taiwan and eastward from the Andaman islands to coalesce in New Guinea and then scatter themselves eastward in the Solomon Islands and beyond. In that vast region, no island is more than one hundred miles from the nearest neighboring island, and the entire system approaches within a similar distance of the Australian mainland in the Cape York Peninsula. From this appreciation of Australia's geographic setting, it has been concluded that the ultimate danger to Australian security lies, and must always lie, to the north and northwest of the continent: or in the region between Manila and Calcutta.

This more traditional Australian concern about the strategic importance of the Southeast Asian region was reinforced in the early 1950's by what was perceived as the

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[42]Norman Harper, "Australia and the United States," in G. Greenwood and N. Harper, eds., Australia in World Affairs 1950-55 (Melbourne: F.W. Cheshire, 1957), p. 184.

impact of the Korean armistice on the region. When the end of hostilities in Korea was followed by increased Chinese pressure on Indo-China, Mr. Menzies echoed the sentiments of many French officials when he observed that "the armistice could be regarded as merely a trick designed to cover new aggression in Indo-China."[43] In other words, Mr. Menzies suggested that the failure on the part of the Western allies to approach strategic planning from a truly global perspective had led to a situation wherein successful resistance to Chinese pressure in Korea paradoxically had precipitated increased Chinese pressure onSoutheast Asia.

A combination of these more traditional and immediate concerns led the Australian Government to narrow the geographic focus of its continuing effort to engage the Americans in a NATO style Pacific Pact. Whereas the Australian Government previously had sought the conclusion of a Pacific-wide security pact which would consolidate the several bilateral security treaties that the United States had concluded with Pacific nations, it now deliberately sought to avoid involvement in such conflicts as that being carried on in the Formosa Straits and concentrated its diplomatic initiative on the deteriorating security situation in the Southeast Asian region. Not until the collapse of the French position in Indo-China precipitated an international

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[43] Current Notes, XXIV (1953), p. 289.

crisis, however, did the Australian initiative enjoy any measure of success.

Throughout the Indo-China crisis, the conduct of world politics was characterized by strong disagreement between governments as well as within governments. Indicative of this confused state of affairs was the situation in Canberra, where the Australian Government was confronted by a series of onerous foriegn policy dilemmas. The first of these was precipitated by the American suggestion that the Western Allies intervene from the air on behalf of the beleaguered French garrison at Dien Bien Phu. While that suggestion represented an expression of the kind of American interest in Southeast Asian affairs which the Australian Government had sought all along, it came too late and was greeted by an extremely cool response from several of the European allies--most importantly from the British Government. At the time, the British Government was uncertain as to the impact of the recently exploded hydrogen bomb on world politics, and was preoccupied with the avoidance of action that in its opinion might escalate into a nuclear exchange in which Great Britain might be the first and worst victim. As interpreted by British officials, what the Americans were proposing involved the sort of action which they were preoccupied with avoiding. Subsequently, the British sought a "political solution" to the Indo-China crisis, and rather bluntly rejected the American approach.[44]

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[44]Watt., op. cit., pp. 146-8.

This divergence between strategic priorities as seen from Washington and London created an awkward situation wherein the Australian Government was confronted with having to choose between the differing policy positions held by its two principal "great and powerful friends." After much deliberation, the Australian Government eventually resolved its dilemma by wisely concluding that military intervention in Indo-China not only would be ineffective but also would generate strong anti-Western resentment in Asia as well as possibly embroil other Western powers with Communist China.[45] Therefore, Australia sided with the British in opposing an air strike at Dien Bien Phu. Although the impact of that decision on Australian-American relations became submerged in the deepening crisis in Angl-American relations, the Australian Government concluded that having opted in favor of the British on the issue of intervention, it was now more imperative than ever before that something be done to avoid stifling the new American interest in the security of the Southeast Asian region.

That conclusion served as the basis for the Australian response to a series of proposals for the creation of a Southeast Asian defense organization. On this issue, the British insisted that no action should be taken toward establishing a military alliance in Southeast Asia until all

[45] C.P.D. (1954), IV, p. 97.

possibilities of securing a political settlement at the Geneva Conference were fully exhausted; that is the British feared any action in that regard might jeopardize the Geneva negotiations. On the other hand, the Americans urged a speedy conclusion of a Southeast Asian defense agreement in order to bring pressure on the Viet Minh negotiators at Geneva and provide the framework for future military intervention in Indo-China in the event the Geneva negotiations failed.[46] It was this divergence in the British and American positions which provided the Australian Government with its long sought after diplomatic opening.

In order to restore balance to its position vis-a-vis the Anglo-American rift and exploit the new American interest in the security of the Southeast Asian region, the Australian Government sided with the American position in favor of the expiditious conclusion of a defense agreement covering that region. It was anxious to begin at the earliest possible moment the task of creating a regional security organization in Southeast Asia which not only would shore up any Geneva settlement but also formally commit the United States to active participation in the security of the region. Therefore, when the British eventually softened their position and agreed to begin at least preliminary discussions regarding a Southeast Asian security pact, the Australian Government seized upon that opportunity

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[46]Watt., op. cit., pp. 149-50.

to undertake a new diplomatic initiative in the security area. That initiative was undertaken within the ANZUS framework, and it secured American agreement during the June 1954, ANZUS Council meeting to meet at Manila to establish the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization. In an attempt to once again demonstrate its keen interest in the conclusion of this regional security effort, the Australian Government took the unprecedented and historic step prior to the Manila meeting of announcing its decision to commit itself in advance to the military defense of Southeast Asia. In so doing, Australia abandoned its long standing tradition of not commiting its military forces in advance of the outbreak of war.

A second dilmma which confronted the Australia Government as a result of the Indo-Chinese crisis arose from the intrinsic ambivalence in Australian foreign policy toward Asia. As suggested earlier, that ambivalence followed from Australia's efforts to assist its Asian neighbors in their quest for political independence and freedom from colonial influences while simultaneously feeling obliged to seek the maintenance of the influence and military strength in that region of the very same great powers which Southeast Asian opinion tended to regard as "colonialist" or "imperialist." During the decade of the 1950's, that ambivalence in Australian foreign policy was never brought into clearer focus than in the course of the SEATO negotiations, for in

those negotiations the divergent positions taken by the Americans and the British over the question of membership forced the Australian Government to make another basic choice; that of choosing between the maintenance of good relations with its Asian neighbors and the intensification of Australian-American cooperation in strategic planning.

At the beginning of the Indo-China crisis, the Australian Government sought to avoid this difficult issue by suggesting that Asian antipathy toward the Western great powers and their own perceived need for the continued presence of Western Military power in the region could somehow be reconciled. In support of that position, the Australia Government, in concert with the British Government, insisted that the attitudes of the Indian Government were a crucial consideration in the planning for a Southeast Asian security pact: that is, India was envisioned as being both a counterweight to Chinese power in Asia and the cornerstone of Asian support for any eventual Southeast Asian security alliance.[47]

Subsequently, consideration of Indian attitudes twoard the proposed Southeast Asian security alliance was rather bruskly cast aside by the American insistance that the proposed alliance be strongly anti-communist in purpose. After that development the Australian Government could no longer reconcile its desire to strengthen its relations with its Asian neighbors while simultaneously promoting a greater

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[47]Harper, op. cit., pp. 178-9.

infusion of Western power into the Southeast Asian region. When it was eventually forced to choose between those options, the Australian Government concluded that it was essential to create a security organization acceptable to the Americans which would include those Asian nations willing to join, rather than to delay and risk a cooling of American interest in the hope that other Asian nations like India might at some later time agree to participate. In other words, the situation in Southeast Asia was held to be far too urgent and dangerous to delay action further in the hope of securing wider membership. The Australian Government took the position that one could always hope that reluctant Asian nations would in time come to see that it might be in their interest to join the proposed security organization, but if they did not or if they were critical of the organization established without them, that could not be helped.

Any assessment of SEATO's effect on the security of Australia must be evaluated in terms of its capacity to facilitate implementation of the Forward Defense Strategy, for this was the dominant rationale for Australian participation in the security organization. Indeed, Mr. McBride, Australian Minister for Defense, argued during the SEATO negotiations that it was vital to maintain the prevailing security barrier between Australia and Asia, and hold:

> . . . the present high water mark of the southward flow of communism. Should this gap narrow the nature and scale of attack on Australia would become intensified

> as distance shortened. Finally, should the tide of aggressive communism lap on our shores, we would face an intolerable defense burden and a scale of attack which would be beyond our capacity to repel alone.[48]

The problem with this rationale was that no one really explained the precise nature of the threat to Australia. Furthermore, the Government subsequently indicated its assessment of the likelihood of "aggressive communism" lapping Australian shores by further reducing defense expenditures. This suggests that in addition to being a recognition of Australia's inability to defend itself without external assistance, the Forward Defense Strategy was predicated on the assumption that beyond an unspecified point the greater the Anglo-American commitment to the preservation of a strategic barrier between Australia and Asia, the smaller would be the defense burdens which the Australian electorate would have to bear. In short, the more the United States and Great Britain did, the less Australia would have to do in order to insure its own security.

When approached from this perspective, SEATO possessed several important advantages for Australia. To begin with, the "Treaty Area" was defined so as to cover the geographic region of principal strategic conern to Australia (the area between Australia and Asia) while excluding those regions of potential conflict which were of secondary interest to Australia (Hong Kong and Formosa).

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[48]C.P.D. (1954), IV, p. 66.

In addition, SEATO complemented ANZUS by commiting the United States (so far as "constitutional processes" would allow) to the defense of mainland Southeast Asia against communist aggression and thereby assured that the Americans would hold the outer ring of Australia's defense (by interposing American force between the "Communist tide" and Malaya, Singapore, and Indonesia) instead of merely coming to Australia's assistance when and if she were directly attacked. Moreover, SEATO complemented ANZUS by providing an additional institutional framework for a wide range of continuous liaison with the American intelligence and planning staffs and diplomatic representatives. Finally, SEATO remedied the defect of ANZUS by bringing Great Britain and the United States into joint strategic planning for the Southeast Asian region as well as emphasizing the importance of guerrilla warfare in a region where the potential for subversive incursions was extremely high.

THE ANZAM AGREEMENT

The signing of the Southeast Asian Collective Defense Treaty at Manila on September 8, 1954, marked the high water mark of Australian efforts to establish a formal institutional framework to insure the security of the Indo-Pacific region. A very important strategic consideration in the establishment of both ANZUS and SEATO was a shift, beginning with the fall of Singapore in 1942, in Australian

strategic planning away from the Middle East to the Malayan area in particular and the Southeast Asian region in general. There remained, however, another final development in the shft in the Australian strategic persepctive. That development led to the conclusion of what has become known as the ANZAM Agreement.

The word ANZAM stands for the Australia, New Zealand, and Malayan area. Apparently, the word was coined by British military staff personnel to designate the Commonwealth defense area in Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific. In 1953 and 1954, British strategic planning for that area led the Imperial General staff to engage Australian and New Zealand authorities in discussions concerning the problems of defending Malaya (then in insurrection), Commonwealth island territories in the region, and Australia and New Zealand. Those discussions eventually led to an Australian and New Zealand commitment to what was called the "Commonwealth Strategic Reserve"--a combined British-Australian-New Zealand brigade group, plus naval and air units.

Deployment of the Commonwealth Strategic reserve subsequently was determined under the ANZAM agreements. Those arrangements remain shrouded in such secrecy that the precise nature of the rights acquired and obligations undertaken by the participants in regard to the defense of the Malayan area are not fully known. The most comprehensive account

available of ANZAM is that given by T. B. Millar.[49] Millar states,[50] and Alan Watt concurs,[51] that there is no formal ANZAM Treaty. Rather, ANZAM is an operational agreement for military staffs to consult and to coordinate military planning and activities. Although the scope of that agreement is unclear, it seems likely that British pressure for Australia and New Zealand to contribute to the on-going counter-insurgency operations in Malaya led the ANZAM consultative bodies to assume the planning responsibility for the defense of the Malayan area. In turn, that development precipitated the Australian Government's announcement of April 1, 1955 that it planned to station Australian troops in Malaya. That decision represented the first occasion during peacetime that Australian ground combat troops had been stationed overseas (air and naval units had previously been assigned to various Commonwealth bases, most notably in the Middle East). In announcing the decision, Mr. Menzies restated the Forward Defense Strategy in the following words:

> There was a time when we permitted ourselves to think that we were remote from the dangers of the world, and that any great war would be thousands of miles away from us. But that day has gone . . . I call upon all Australians to realize the basic truth . . . that if there is to be war for our existence, it should be carried on by us as far from our soil as possible.

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[49] T. B. Millar, Australia's Defense (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1965).

[50] Ibid., op. cit., pp. 68-76.

[51] Alan Watt., op. cit., p. 165.

> It would be a sorry day for the security of Australia if we were driven to defend ourselves on our own soil, for that would connote the most disastrous defeats abroad and the most incredible difficulties for our friends and allies desiring to help us . . . . The simple English of this matter is that with our vast territory and our small population we cannot survive a surging Communist challenge from abroad except by the cooperation of powerful friends, including in particular the United Kingdom and the United States . . . we cannot accept the collaboration of our friends and allies in a comprehensive defense against aggressive Communism unless we as a nation are prepared to take our share of the responsibility.[52]

According to Norman Harper, the decision to station ground forces in Malaya represented an important operational manifestation in the changing focus of Australian defense planning. He has commented on that decision as follows:

> Strategically, it involved a revolutionary switch in Australian policy. In the last two world wars, Australian troops had fought as part of a British defense force in the Middle East. Malaya had now become the pivot of Australian defense, and the Middle East had been tacitly abandoned, with British consent, as an Australian responsibility. It meant the peacetime commitment of Australian ground troops outside Australia's territorial limits. While a bomber and transport wing of the Royal Australian Air Force had previously been temporarily stationed in Malaya, this was in fact a significant departure in Australian defense planning.[53]

Although the decision to station Australian troops in Malaya did signal an important shift in Australian strategic planning, it also should be noted that the decision was a rather belated recognition of the lessons of World War II. As T. B. Millar has noted in commenting

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[52]Current Notes, XXVI (1955), pp. 278-9.

[53]Harper, op. cit., p. 189.

on the decision:

> In retrospect it seems that for ten years, Australian governments had not grasped the immense exhaustion of the military capacity of the major participants in the Second World War, other than the United States. For seven or eight years, they had not acknowledged the indigenous impetus or the size of the threat to international stability of the nationalist and communist revolutions in Asia. In common with other states, Australia did not quickly gauge the effects of a nuclear "balance of terror" on the propensity towards limited warfare.[54]

Professor Millar's observation suggests that Imperial-oriented Australian spokesmen (such as Mr. Menzies) were slow to either accept or recognize the true import of what had occurred at Singapore in March 1942. Indeed, that tendency would be a problem which would haunt Mr. Menzies and the Government he led for most of the remainder of his public life.

LIBERAL-COUNTRY PARTY POLICY TOWARD ASIA

Thus far our analysis of Australian foreign policy during the decade of the 1950's has concentrated on the Liberal-Country Party Government's efforts to strengthen Australia's military posture _vis-a-vis_ a politically volatile Asia. Parallel to that effort, the Government also pursued an active diplomatic offensive which sought to enhance the stability of the Indo-Pacific region. In large

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[54] T. B. Millar, "Australian Defense, 1945-1965" in Gordon Greenwood and Norman Harper, eds., _Australia in World Affairs, 1960-1965_ (London: Angus and Robertson, 1968), p. 273.

measure this parallel effort took the form of support for the _status quo_ in Asia, or, more specifically, support for the maintenance of Western political and economic influence in Asia.

Neither time nor space permits a complete analysis of Australian policy toward the principal Asian powers during the decade of the 1950's. An appropriate and reliable manifestation of that policy, however, was the response of the Australian Government to the impact of increased non-Western influence in the United Nations. In general, the Australian response to that development focused on two issues: the expansion of the General Assembly's security responsibilities at the expense of the Security Council's powers and the General Assembly's actions in the area of decolonization.

As indicated previously, the Liberal-Country Party leadership from the beginning had been suspicious of efforts to democratize world politics by investing the General Assembly with a maximum of powers and responsibilities. They believed that Australia, a colonial power close to a region where in their opinion the risks to world peace were greatest, could scarcely feel certain that its demands for "responsible and realistic" behavior would be met in an open forum whose members were mostly small, poor, vigorously anti-colonial and independently-minded. It was that sentiment which in the mid-1950's led Mr. Spender to limit the

function of the General Assembly to that of a "world conscience" attempting to moderate great power differences.[55]

It was not surprising, therefore, that during the decade of the 1950's Australia rarely favored any strengthening of the General Assembly's powers: that is, it opposed any significant growth in Assembly powers or reduction in national decision-making prerogatives. In this regard, Australia adopted a position which was more conservative than that held by the United States or Canada. In its stress on the need for recognition of political realities, the Australian position was much closer to the position that would be adopted in the mid-1960's by France and the Soviet Union.

Although the Australian Government did not demand great power unanimity as a precondition for United Nation's action, it did maintain that the United Nations could not accomplish much when the great powers were in disagreement. Therefore, the Australian Government insisted that recourse to the General Assembly (to escape paralysis in the Security Council) could not mean escape from great power opposition. Indeed, when later confronted by repeated non-Western efforts to by-pass the Security Council, the Australian Government increasingly came to view the British and American veto

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[55] C. F. Doxford, "Australia and the General Assembly Security Role," Australian Outlook, XXII (1962), no. 3, p. 281.

authority in the Security Council as necessary for the protection of Australian interests. In fact, it eventually adopted the position that by-passing the Security Council should be made more difficult, not easier.[56]

The Liberal-Country Party had been in office less than a year when its response to the rise of the non-West in the United Nations was tested by the outbreak of the Korean War. A direct outcome of the Korean struggle was the scheme for using the General Assembly rather than the Security Council to organize the United Nations' peace preservation powers. That scheme found expression in the adoption of the Uniting for Peace resolutions which simultaneously by-passed the deadlocked Security Council and enabled the General Assembly to play a decisive role in matters of peace and security; that is, it circumvented the veto and in so doing tended to invert the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

The initial Australian response to that development was one of surprise. Since the Australian Government could not envision the United Nations, with its permanent members in disagreement, ever acting to maintain international peace and security, it apparently had not contemplated any security function for the General Assembly. Therefore, when the Australian Government recovered from its surprise at the passage of the Uniting for Peace resolutions, its response

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[56]Ibid., p. 289.

indicated a mixture of differing attitudes. On the one hand it welcomed this development as a means of both increasing American influence in the United Nations at the expense of the Soviets and turning the United Nations into an anti-communist instrument. On the other hand, acceptance of these advantages was counter-balanced by a reluctance on the part of the Australians to entrust security powers to a potentially unwieldly and unpredictable body which might use its expanded authority to infringe upon national prerogatives. Therefore, the Australian response to the Uniting for Peace resolutions was characterized by caution and considerable deliberation. In contrast to the American desire to rush the resolutions through the United Nations during a period of Soviet confusion, Australia adopted a deliberate "go slow" policy. Although Australia eventually did support the resolutions and subsequent action pursuant to them, several features of its response are illustrative of the complex nature of Australian attitudes toward the non-West.

To begin with, Mr. Spender criticized that portion of the initial resolution which called for the establishment of a General Assembly Collective Measures Committee empowered with the authority to not only recommend enforcement actions but also to exert a significant degree of control over the initiation, conduct, and conclusion of any such operation. Since that proposal conflicted with the Australian view that effective security measures required

specific secret military planning by small groups of faithful allies and involved well defined enemies, theaters of operation, etc., Mr. Spender complained that not only were the proposals vague but also that if they involved military planning vis-a-vis no specific enemy they would be futile whereas if they were directed against a well defined enemy they would be highly dangerous since that enemy would presumably be a Member of the United Nations with access to that planning. He also pointed out that since the Soviet bloc would certainly refuse to participate in the collaborative planning efforts envisioned by the Uniting for Peace resolutions, even the collection of information by the Collective Measures Committee would handicap the Western powers by making their military strength public while that of the Soviet bloc remained secret.[57] In other words, the Australian Government considered the United Nations to be a most inappropriate body in which to undertake collaborative planning in the security field.

Although Mr. Spender's criticism was subsequently ignored and the Uniting for Peace resolutions were passed without change (Australia proposed no amendments to the resolutions), Australia did accept the offer of membership on the Collective Measures Committee. Irrespective of whether Australia greatly influenced the activities of the Committee, its work was very much along the lines which

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[57]Geoffrey Sawer, op. cit., p. 120.

Mr. Spender had suggested it should follow. It engaged in no specific planning vis-a-vis a specific enemy and largely confined itself to the preparation of studies which explored what sort of United Nations' collaboration might be possible in the security field.[58]

An equally interesting aspect of the Australian response to the Uniting for Peace resolutions was the concern expressed lest a precedent be established by the passage of the resolutions. Although Australia acquiesced their passage, it made abundantly clear its view that actions under the United Nations collective security system could not be made automatic nor involve prior commitments on the part of Member states; that is, the United Nations would have to decide in each case what particular enforcement measures were to be considered. Furthermore, Australia stressed that the General Assembly was being authorized only to make recommendations in the security field, not binding decisions, and then only when enforcement action by the Security Council had broken down. Therefore, while the Australian Government demonstrated that it was willing to concur in United Nations enforcement actions when a temporary set of interests permitted and required such a course of action, it also held to the view that such a set of circumstances would present themselves on only rare occassions.

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[58] Ibid., p. 121.

it simply was not willing to incrase--by doubtfully legal means--the coercive powers of a veto-free and potentially irresponsible General Assembly whose increasingly anti-colonial posture not only heightened Australian apprehensions about the future of their own colonial possessions but also raised the spector of United Nations actions being undertaken against her "great and powerful friends."[59] In this regard, the position of the Australian Government was particularly clear: the United Nations should be reflective of international relations and not directive of them. The United Nations was to react to developments in international relations, not try to mold them.

The Australian Government's attitudes toward its Asian neighbors once again found expression through its response to proposals for United Nations action during the Suez Crisis of 1956. Throughout that episode the Australian Government lent its full support to those efforts which would have resolved the crisis outside the United Nations framework. Starting from a position of lukewarm support for the concept of a universalist approach to collective security, it rather quickly moved to a position of open hostility toward United Nations action in the security field.

As perceived from Canberra, the Suez Crisis posed a fundamental dilemma for Australia; that of having to choose between the collective security machinery of United Nations

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[59] Doxford, op. cit., p. 293.

and the Anglo-American alliance as the foundation of Australian security. When confronted by that choice, the majority of the Australian Government, and Mr. Menzies in particular, argued that the defense of Australia rested upon the strength and cohesiveness of the Anglo-American alliance and not upon the whim of a group of weak nations which demonstrated only a questionable capacity and will to implement security decisions. Throughout much of the Suez episode, therefore, the Australian Government argued that it made little sense for its allies to assign some control over their policies to a group of nations which not only was less able and willing to bear the responsibility for maintaining peace, but which also had given little indication of any permanent convergence of interests upon which a viable collective security system could be built.

The Egyptian nationalization of the Suez Canal Company found Mr. Menzies in London. His immediate response to that development was to strongly President Nasser's actions and stress the need for negotiating some new international agreement which would ensure continued use of the Suez Canal as an international waterway. Throughout, he deprecated proposals for associating such an agreement with the United Nations.

Mr. Menzies subsequently took an active role in the first London Conference (16-23 August, 1956), which was called to resolve the crisis and strongly supported the

the Conference's decision to insist upon international control of the Canal, and led the five-member delgation which carried that decision to President Nasser (3-9 September, 1956). Later, he concurred in the formation of the Suez Canal User's Association by the second London Conference (19-21 September, 1956) and subsequently remained silent when Great Britain and France requested that the situation be considered by the Security Council after Egypt had refused to recognize the Canal User's Association.

Mr. Menzies returned to Australia on September 18, after an absence of nearly four months. During his absence, the Australian Cabinet in Canberra was, and would continue to be, divided over the actions of their Prime Minister. Although a pro-British majority in the Cabinet fully supported Mr. Menzies and was prepared to back Great Britain to the hilt despite harboring considerable unease about some of the consequences which might follow from such a policy, there also was a significant Cabinet minority, centered around Mr. Casey, which steadfastly opposed any resort to force and argued that any British military action against Egypt would touch off widespread Asian opposition which could both split the Commonwealth of Nations and dash Australian hopes for maintaining the presence in Asia of her "great and powerful friends." In addition, there was universal unease within the Cabinet over Great Britain's failure to consult Australia prior to several important policy changes; for

example, Australia had no foreknowledge of the decision to establish the Canal User's Association.[60]

On September 25, two days after the Suez Crisis had been referred to the United Nations Security Council, Mr. Menzies went before the Australian Parliament to outline the policy his Government intended to follow in response to Egyptian nationalization of the Canal. During that address, the Australian Prime Minister suggested that the economic implications of a threat to the Canal were paramount. In a statement which echoed the pre-war "defense of the center of the Empire" thesis, he argued that:

> An open canal is essential to British prosperity, and . . . a closed canal could mean mass unemployment in Great Britain, a financial collapse there, a grievous blow at the central power of our Commonwealth, and the crippling of our greatest market and our greatest supplier.[61]

Mr. Menzies then went on to review the origins of the Suez Crisis and the course of British policy. Here, he vigorously repudiated the view that the dispute should have been referred immediately to the United Nations and defended the London Conference resolutions which he had carried to Cairo, for:

> No fairer or more generous proposal ever emerged from a Conference . . . while these proposals gave adequate protection to the interests of Canal users, and assured the future of the Canal as a non-political waterway, and provided financial guarantees for its maintenance and expansion, there were also enormous advantages for Egypt.[62]

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[60] Norman Harper, Australia and Suez," in G. Greenwood and N. Harper, eds., Australia in World Affairs 1950-55 (Melbourne: F.W. Cheshire, 1957), pp. 350-2.

[61] C.P.D. (1956), p. 824.

[62] Ibid.

Perhaps the most revealing portion of Mr. Menzies' statement, however, was that part in which he dealt with the problem of any possible resort to the use of force in order to resolve the crisis. He squarely faced this problem and rejected both those positions in favor of an immediate recourse to force as well as those which repudiated any resort to force except through the United Nations. He compromised by arguing that:

> . . . we must avoid the use of force as a solution. But we should not, by theoretical reasoning in advance of the facts and circumstances, contract ourselves out of its use whatever those facts and circumstances may be.[63]

As Norman Harper has noted, what was particularly significant about this line of argumentation was that by insisting that force might properly be used for purposes other than self-defense or to enforce a United Nations decision, Mr. Menzies was advocating a view which was inconsistent with Australia's obligations under the United Nations Charter.[64]

In concluding his foreign policy review, Mr. Menzies then posed the alternatives facing Australia and her allies in the following manner. He observed that should recourse to the United Nations be blocked by the Soviets' use of their veto in the Security Council:

> . . . we can organize a full-blooded program of economic sanctions against Egypt, or we can use force to restore international control of the Canal, or we can have further

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[63]Ibid., p. 815.

[64]Norman Harper and David Sissons, Australia and the United Nations (New York: Manhattan Publishing Co.,)1959, p. 130.

> negotiations, provided we do not abandon vital principles, or we can 'call it a day,' leave Egypt in command of the Canal, and resign ourselves to total collapse of our position and interests in the Middle East, with all the implications for the economic strength and industrial prosperity of nations whose well being is vital to ours.[65]

Of these alternatives, Mr. Menzies preferred the use of economic sanctions against Egypt in the event of the United Nations failure to find a solution. In short order, however, his position was overtaken by the course of events.

The Israeli attack on Egypt and the subsequent Anglo-French invasion of the Canal Zone took the Australian Government completely by surprise. After Mr. Menzies had dismissed Great Britain's failure to consult on the grounds of emergency, the Australian Government reacted swiftly and almost instinctively to support the British Government as it had in 1914 and 1939. It accepted at face value British assurances that the purpose of the intervention was to localize the conflict and protect the Canal, and that as soon as the Security Council had dealt with the situation, British forces would be withdrawn.

Indeed, Mr. Menzies expressed the view that the Anglo-French intervention "was not a means of provoking war but of averting war."[66] Moreover, he felt that the Anglo-French military activities were "well justified in the result" since "the United Nations itself has been galvanized into action,"[67] and all this had tended to support his view that:

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[65]C.P.D. (1956), p. 825. [66]Ibid., p. 2115.

[67]Ibid., p. 2115.

> The purpose of the United Nations was not to make great powers impotent and small powers truculent, but to reconcile the strength of the great nations with the strength of an international organization; to use great power not for aggression, but in support of resistance to tyranny.[68]

As might have been anticipated, the policy of automatic support for Great Britain brought virtual isolation for Australia in the United Nations. When the General Assembly was hastily convened in emergency session under the 1950 Uniting for Peace resolution, it passed an American resolution (65 for; 5 opposed, Australia included; and 6 absentions)[69] urging an immediate cease-fire and the halting of the movement of all military forces and arms to the Suez area. In opposing that resolution, Australia found itself in a minority which included the three belligerent powers and New Zealand. Subsequently, Australia also abstained both on the Canadian resolution requesting the Secretary-General to submit a plan for the creation of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) and on a second Canadian resolution establishing a United Nations Command and authorizing the recruitment of officers from states other than the permanent members of the Security Council. Throughout the process of UNEF's establishment, Mr. Menzies was offended by what he perceived as United Nations interference with Anglo-French actions, and as a consequence of that perception, he

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[68]Ibid., p. 2117.

[69]General Assembly, Official Records, 1st Emergency, Special Session, 561st and 562nd Plenary Meetings, November 1, 1956.

denounced the Assembly's assumption of executive powers as irresponsible and contrary to the terms of the Charter. In his view, the advocates of United Nations action--particularly the United States--did not understand the basic facts of the situation. According to Mr. Menzies the basic facts were:

> Great Britain and France have been ordered out of Egypt by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Their forces are being replaced by a fragmentary United Nations force which is pretty clearly not designed to be a fighting body. The whole operation appears to be based on the consent of Colonel Nasser and subject to whatever conditions he thinks fit to impose. This means that Egypt's military defeat having been arrested on the very threshold, Colonel Nasser remains in possession of the field and appears to be dictating terms as if he were a victor.[70]

Throughout the Suez episode, then, maintenance of Australian security was conceived as a function of military power, and this tended once again to align Australia with "colonialist powers" in the eyes of many Asian Governments. In general, Mr. Casey's assessment of Asian reactions to British and Australian policy proved to be painfully accuratte. India had advanced its own proposals for a compromise mainly favorable to Egypt, condemned the Canal User's Association scheme and branded the Anglo-French attack on Egypt as naked aggression which could not be tolerated by independent Afro-Asian nations. Similarly, Pakistan, a member of the SEATO and Baghdad Pacts, condemned the Anglo-French actions as aggression which threatened the security of the entire Arab world.

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[70]Current Notes, XXVII (1956), pp. 748-9.

Even Thailand and the Philippines joined the other Asian powers in demanding a cease-fire and United Nations action to deal with the crisis. In other words, Australian policy concerning the Suez Crisis appeared likely both to weaken SEATO and undo much that had been accomplished through the Colombo Plan to establish friendly relations between Australia and her Asian neighbors. In brief, the Suez episode left Mr. Casey with a great deal of work necessary to restore Australia's position in Asia.

Two years later, during the 1958 Lebanon Crisis, the Australian Government followed a policy parallel to that which it had pursued during the Suez episode. On this occasion, Australian policy focused on retention of control within the purview of the Security Council over any proposed United Nations peace-keeping action. Therefore, when the General Assembly was called upon to deal with the crisis, Mr. Menzies once again was hostile. In his view, the decision to have recourse to the General Assembly was "a deadly blow at the power and significance of the Security Council," and in reaffirming the need for Australia to support the Security Council's powers, Mr. Menzies warned:

> . . . all honorable members (of the United Nations) that Australia, as she looks about her, and particularly at Papua and New Guinea, has much to lose by the destruction of the power and significance of the Security Council, in which such influence can be exercised by our great British and American friends.[71]

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[71] Doxford, op. cit., p. 287.

In a similar manner, the Australian Government resisted the expansion of General Assembly powers into other areas. In particular, it consistently opposed an expansion of United Nations activity in the area of human rights. Most importantly, it resisted actions directed at the South African policy of apartheid, and supported the contention that the apartheid policy was a matter of domestic concern and therefore excluded from the jurisdiction of the General Assembly. Unfortunately, that rigid and excessively legalistic Australian position conveyed the impression that the Australian Government was sympathetically disposed toward South Africa's racial policies and held reactionary views on such subjects when in reality the apartheid policies were repugnant to the Government. What led to that Australian posture was not sympathy for South African racial policies, but a belief in the necessity of defending the domestic jurisdiction clause of the United Nations Charter no matter what the issue under consideration, out of fear that if that were not done, the General Assembly's prerogatives might be expanded to the point where at some future date the way would be open for international discussion and possible action with regard to Australia's policies toward her aboriginals, the New Guinea territories, and restrictive immigration legislation.

Australia also resisted the persistent attempts of General Assembly majorities to turn the Trusteeship Council's

reporting system into an arrangement which would give the United Nations supervisory jurisdiction over non-selfgoverning territories. Here again, the positions taken by the Australian Government, on occasion, unfortunately placed it in rather unsavory company. Unlike some of the other nations with colonial possessions, however, Australia did not blatantly flout General Assembly expression of concern for the welfare of dependent peoples. Rather, the Australian Government's policy was characterized by extreme frustration or exasperation over what it considered to be unfair or unjustified criticism of its colonial policies by the more rabid anti-colonialist United Nations members. It took the position that while Australia was busily engaged in projects of colonial uplift it was being rewarded only by accusations of imperialism; that in its application of unique expertness and wisdom to the administration of backward regions it was being handicapped by the intrusive ignorance of bumptious amateurs. Feeling itself unappreciated and maligned, the Australian Government reacted by falling back upon a very strict interpretation of both its legal obligations under the Charter and United Nations competence to intervene in colonial matters. Subsequently, the Australian Government argued that Chapter XI of the Charter was merely a unilateral declaration of enlightened policy which in no way reduced Australia's sovereign right of control or authorized international meddling in the administration of its Trust

Territory. Therefore, Mr. Casey told the General Assembly in 1954:

> We in Australia have no objection to constructive criticism, but we resent the sort of criticism and insinuations to which we have been subjected and which we regard as unfounded and captious. Please let me say, with respect to our critics, that the United Nations trusteeship system does not mean that the United Nations is in charge of our Trust Territories. We are in charge of them and we are footing the bill, and we are meeting our obligations toward the Trust Territories with all the energy and sympathy and expert experience that we can bring to it.[72]

It should be noted, however, that in spite of these expressions of frustration over the rising anti-colonial fervor of General Assembly majorities, the Australian Government never sought to avoid or dismiss the responsibilities it had contracted under the New Guinea Trusteeship Agreement. Indeed, the periodical inspection of the Trust Territory by the United Nations parties eventually came to be appreciated by the Government as a means by which the real difficulties of administering the Territories could be demonstrated or communicated to the representatives of even the staunchest anti-colonial Governments.

As seen by Australian policy in the United Nations, then, Australian attitudes toward Asia, or, more generally, the rise of the non-West, were characterized by great uncertainty which in turn led to a foreign policy which, while technically correct, was excessively rigid and legalistic. Although that policy rightly focused on the acute and

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[72]Quoted in United Nations Review, I (November, 1954), p. 83.

difficult problems that followed from the growing divorce between power and responsibility in world politics, the overall tenor of that policy all too frequently appeared hostile and unsympathetic to the aspirations of Australia's Asian neighbors. As Gordon Greenwood has astutely observed:

> . . . the (Australian) Government's approach had the disadvantage of ignoring other realities in the international situation. The vital fact after all was that these developments had occurred, and that account had to be taken of them. The United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union--all far more vitally involved than Australia--had adopted their policies for both propoganda and practical purposes to the new alignments and influences operating in the General Assembly. Australia, because it disapproved of many of these trends, too often adopted attitudes, notably over questions of domestic jurisdiction, South Africa, the West New Guinea dispute, summit conferences, and colonial issues like Algeria and Cyprus, which gave deep offense to the newer members, and left the impression that Australia was either reactionary in outlook or simply a satellite of the major western powers.[73]

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Throughout much of the 1950's, then, Australian foreign policy was characterized by a singular purpose: namely, the building of a network of security alliances based upon the military power of the United Kingdom and the United States which, in the process of formally commiting those two "great and powerful" nations to the defense of the South and Southeast Asian region, would contribute to

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[73]Gordon Greenwood, "Australian Foreign Policy in Action," in G. Greenwood and N. Harper, eds., Australia in World Affairs 1956-1960, (Melbourne: F. W. Cheshire, 1963), pp. 87-8.

the maintenance of an impregnable strategic barrier between Australia and its Asian neighbors.

During the early years of the Liberal-Country Party Government, Australian efforts to realize that objective were marked by considerable imagination, skill, and experimentation. By the late 1950's, however, pursuit of that now familiar objective was complicated by the fact that the major thrust of Australian foreign policy ran counter to several pervasive developments in the international arena. Most importantly, that policy ran counter to both the process of decolonization which hastened the retreat of European power from the Asian region and to a tendency on the part of traditional or classical power configurations to have progressively less impact on the politics of a region in which national policies increasingly emphasized nationalism and neutralism. Unfortunately, that situation bred considerable rigidity or inflexibility in the Australian Government's approach to its Asian neighbors. Nowhere was that rigidity more evident than in the Australian response to the changing character of the United Nations. Here again, Gordon Greenwood's comments are noteworthy. While drawing attention to the difference in Australian policy between the two periods 1950-55 and 1956-60, he has written as follows:

> Looking at the period 1956-60, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that policy had become stereotyped, that it proceeded along familiar routes and was simply continuing or repeating earlier initiatives without devising new techniques or discovering fresh possibilities. A good deal of the imagination, the probing,

> the experimentation, the search for new ways of applying policy, which characterized the Government's approach five years before, had been lost. This more imaginative and adventuresome policy needs to be recaptured. There are possibilities for much greater manoeuvrability, for accommodation between the west on the one hand and Asia and Africa on the other, and for fertile suggestion in international policy-making--always provided the level of thinking is high enough. This requires no weakening in existing western relationships, and no abandonment of positive statements of belief by Australia; but it does require the adoption of less fixed positions and the exercise of a greater independence of judgment.[74]

In spite of the considerable problems that followed from rigidity in its approach to changes in the international environment, however, the Australian Government seemingly was remarkably successful in its quest to construct a formal Anglo-American strategic barrier that not only would sheild Australia from any Asian aggression but also contain any potential Asian conflict far to the north of Australian shores. On the one hand, a British Government which grew increasingly disenchanted with the entire notion of empire remained firmly committed to the maintenance of "a presence East of Suez" and continued its deep involvement in the suppression of a communist inspired insurrection in Malaya. On the other hand, an American Government that was noticeably ambivalent about the nature of its security interests in the South and Southeast Asian region entered into formal agreements committing itself to insurance of that region's security against communist pressure in the case of SEATO, or aggression of any form in the case of ANZUS. Indeed, in the case of ANZUS

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[74] Ibid., p. 102.

the American Government had even made an exception to its policy of not insuring the security of colonial territories and guaranteed the security of Australia's New Guinea territories--an area that was of far less strategic importance to the United States than some of the principal colonial possessions of its British and French allies.

Unanswered at the close of the decade, however, were several important questions concerning whatever success the Australian Government had enjoyed in constructing a strategic barrier in the northern approaches to Australia. Specifically, there remained uncertainty as to whether the forging of that barrier had been principally a function of Australian foreign policy or of a particular set of political and strategic circumstances which followed from an extension of the cold war conflict into the Asian region. Also unanswered were important questions as to whether the alliance systems which served as the formal basis of that strategic barrier would either withstand the test of time or become operational if the need arose. Those were questions which would be answered in the decade of the 1960's.

Chapter 11

THE LIBERAL-COUNTRY PARTY IN OFFICE: THE SECOND DECADE

CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP, GENERAL OUTLOOK AND ATTITUDES

During the decade of the 1960's, the foreign policy of the Liberal-Country Party Government continued to be characterized by an attempt to work out for Australia the implications of several developments in international politics which had gained increased momentum after World War II. As indicated in the preceeding chapter, the international developments of greatest concern to the Australian Government were those which involved the dismantlement of European colonial empires and the withdrawal of European power from Asia and the Pacific Basin.

Although the search for security would continue to dominate the Australian process of adjustment to changes in the international enivronment, the continued contraction of European power during the 1960's would both necessitate that Australian foreign policy increasingly focus on developments in Southeast Asia and require that further changes in emphasis be given to the component parts of the three-pronged foreign policy approach which had been formulated

in the immediate post-war period. Close association with the United Kingdom had to be modified in response to Great Britain's eventual abandonment of a global security role, possible British membership in the European Economic Community and the development of the Commonwealth of Nations as a multi-national and multi-racial association of free states which posed a new challenge to a country with a traditional, if not provocative immigration policy. Similarly, collaboration in security matters with the United States had to be intensified following Great Britain's eventual retreat from a "presence East of Suez" and the massive American involvement in the security affairs of the Southeast Asian region. Finally, the extension of the Colombo Plan and expanded Australian participation in the economic and commercial life of the Southeast Asian region greatly enhanced the opportunities for the development of mutual sympathy and understanding with important areas of non-Communist Asia. As a result of these changes in the international environment and the subsequent Australian response to them, the decade of the 1960's became a period of major transition in Australian foreign policy; a period in which a policy characterized by traditional political allegiances and diplomatic alliances would give way, albeit hesitantly, to a more pragmatic and contemporary policy which no longer was inspired by a vision of the past, but by a cautious vision into the future.

The new decade began with several important changes among the group of men most influential in the shaping of Australian attitudes toward world affairs. In January, 1960, Mr. Casey was elevated to a peerage and retired from elected office. In a sense, his departure from the Department of External Affairs represented an end of an era, not because it led to vital changes in general Australian foreign policy objectives, but because it modified the weight to be given to traditional foreign policy instruments and power calculations. With Mr. Casey's elevation to a Life Peer (he would later serve as Governor-General of Australia for much of the decade), Mr. Menzies assumed the added responsibility of the External Affairs portfolio for a period of almost two years. His tenure as Minister for External Affairs would prove to be the last stand for that group of men in the Liberal-Country Party whose ideas and conceptions about foreign affairs were formed prior to World War II, and who were advocates of a traditionalist approach to foreign policy formulation and implementation. Under Mr. Menzies' direction the problem of policy inflexibility mentioned in the preceeding chapter would become acute as well as lead to an agonizing reappraisal of Australian devotion to the concept of the Commonwealth of Nations.

After failing to halt a process which he felt would lead to the dissolution of the Commonwealth of Nations, Mr. Menzies passed the External Affairs portfolio to

Sir Garfield Barwick. A lawyer by training who possessed a keen intellect but very little diplomatic experience, Sir Garfield attempted to introduce a degree of great flexibility into Australian foreign policy, particularly with respect to policy toward Indonesia during the West Irian dispute. After remaining in Sir Garfield's hands for just over two years, the External Affairs portfolio again changed hands. This time, the portfolio passed to, and remained for most of the remainder of the decade with Mr. Paul Hasluck, an Australian whose knowledge of and experience in foreign affairs was second only to that of Mr. Casey. Having previously held important positions in the Department of External Affairs during both the war and crucial post-war periods, from which he resigned to pursue an academic career, and most recently having served ably as Minister for Territories, Mr. Hasluck was well-versed in both the theoretical and more practical aspects of foreign policy formulation as well as being intimately familiar with problems concerning the future status of New Guinea. His general approach to foreign affairs was that of a conservative and a rather diffident academician. In fact, there was remarkable parallel between Mr. Hasluck's approach to that of his American counterpart, (Secretary of State) Dean Rusk.

The year 1960, also saw a change in the leadership of the Australian Labour Party. In February, Herbert Evatt retired from public life after serving as leader of the

Opposition since 1951. Throughout that period he had continued to champion a foreign policy for Australia that was a logical extension of the policies he had helped formulate in the immediate post-war period. He never was able, however, to grasp effectively the nature of the Communist challenge to both the domestic and international security of Australia. Therefore, while he had continued to urge more welfare for the people of Asia, more assistance to relieve those suffering from poverty, disease, and lack of educational facilities and placed less emphasis than the Government on military preparedness, Dr. Evatt was unable to offer a feasible alternative to ANZUS or SEATO, nor could he effectively sketch the vision of an Australian nation pitched midway between the ideologies of the United States and the Soviet Union. Not only did the political formulation he espoused not appeal to an Australian electorate which refused to remain neutral in the cold war struggle, but perhaps more importantly, it met a hostile reception from a significant portion of Dr. Evatt's own party; namely the right-wing of the Australian Labour Party which was deeply committed to a crusade against communism both in the international arena and in the trade unions. Due in no small measure to several political blunders on Dr. Evatt's part, differences over what posture Labour should take toward the communist challenge eventually led to an irreparable split in Labour's ranks and the establishment in 1957, of the Democratic

(Anti-Communist) Labour Party. As a party, the Democractic Labour Party was pledged to make Australia and the world safe for democracy. As every federal election since its establishment has demonstrated, however, the Democratic Labour Party has succeeded to date only in making Australia safe for the Liberal-Country Party coalition and in so doing often denying Australia an effective Opposition at the level of federal politics.

After Dr. Evatt's retirement, Mr. Arthur Calwell assumed leadership of the Australian Labour Party until 1967. A product of the archaic trade union political machinery, Mr. Calwell proved incapable of either healing the split in Labour's ranks, or modernizing the increasingly ineffective and burdensome party apparatus, or of forging a vision of an Australian society which would appeal to the Australian electorate. Only after Mr. Gough Whitlam replaced Mr. Calwell as leader of the Opposition and emerged as perhaps the most attractive figure on the Australian political scene, would Labour formulate a policy platform which represented an attractive and viable alternative to the Government's foreign policy.

In addition to important changes in political leadership, the decade of the 1960's also saw a growth in maturity and sophistication in Australian attitudes toward foreign affairs. Whereas Australian political life previously had been characterized by an alarming disconcern for foreign

policy, apart from times of war, the new decade was notable for its encouraging signs of intensified public interest in foreign affairs. Although old political habits died hard, the lucury of domestic concentration increasingly was recognized as being incompatable with Australia's changing position in the world. While much of this increased public interest in foreign affairs followed from the increased pressure of the world situation on Australia, much of the credit for this development must go to the Australian academic community. Under the able leadership of such distinguished scholars as Gordon Greenwood, Norman Harper, David Sissons, Geoffrey Sawer, to name but a few, the concentration of Australian universities on the agricultural and mechanical sciences began to fade and were replaced by, among others, a social science discipline which rested upon the recognition that a nation whose future increasingly was likely to be determined by the outcome of international issues could not afford to avoid the study of world politics.

In addition to changes in political leadership and growing Australian political sophistication, the changing background of world politics during the 1960's inevitably influenced Australian attitudes toward foreign affairs and to some extent modified the foreign policy of the Australian Government. Whereas the almost continual violence and tension of the previous decade had tended to confirm the Government in its view that close cooperation with the

Western allies and a strong military posture were necessary to contain the spread of communist influences in Asia as well as in Europe, the events of the 1960's brought home to the Government the necessity of modifying policy in an effort to reach agreement on such fundamental issues as the control of nuclear weapons and the reduction of East-West tensions. In particular, the explosion of many Western assumptions about the monolithic nature of communism as a result of the Sino-Soviet rift, and the demonstration during the Cuban Missile Crisis of the potential for catastrophe implicit in the logic of the cold war situation dramaticized for the entire world both the need and possibility for coexistence between East and West.

In general, however, the Australian Government was slow, or even reluctant, to respond in a positive or constructive manner to these changes in the international environment. In large measure, that reluctance or slowness on the part of the Australian Government can be traced to the fact that the cold war situation had facilitated the construction of the alliance system which served as the formal basis of the Forward Defense Strategy. After all, ANZUS was a by-product of the cold war struggle, the American commitment under SEATO was restricted to the defense of communist aggression and Australian advocacy of the "domino theory" of communist subversion would illicit the desired response in Washington and London only as long as cold war

tensions persisted unabated. In other words the success of the Forward Defense Strategy was predicated upon the continuation of the cold war struggle and the perception on the part of Washington and London of a clear and present communist menace in the Southeast Asian region. Therefore, since the Australian Government was unwilling to abandon the Forward Defense Strategy until the security situation in Southeast Asia stabilized, it found itself forced to remain committed to an extremely strong anti-communist posture at a time when both of the principal cold war antagonists were devoting considerable effort to the lessening of world tensions. As a consequence of that problem, official Australian foreign policy statements increasingly appeared to be unduly alarmist and out of step with the changing pattern of world politics. For example, while the British and the Americans increasingly came to recognize that much political unrest in the non-West was the product of uncontrolled expressions of nationalism, rather than Soviet or Chinese policies, the Australian Government would tend to persist in the questionable practice of branding almost any Southeast Asian political disturbance as communist inspired. Throughout most of the 1960's, then, the increasing but hesitant willingness on the part of the Australian Government to support policies aimed at East-West coesistence followed not so much from decisions independently arrived at, as from an acceptance of the judgment of the British Prime Minister or the American President

that coexistence and some lessening of East-West tensions had become a necessity.

In spite of the Australian Government's reluctance to abandon anti-communism as a vehicle for maintaining American and British interest in the assurance of Australian security, the lessening of East-West tensions during the 1960's required that prior heavy reliance upon anti-communist security alliances to achieve that end be supplemented by a new policy formulation that was more in harmony with the realities of the changing international environment. In large measure, that supplementary policy formulation was the product of the combined intellect of Messrs. Barwick and Hasluck. Taking as a point of departure the long-standing conflict between Australia's cultural heritage and geographic setting, they reversed the traditional Australian approach to that issue and reasoned that the limitations implicit in the Australian situation actually could be turned to advantage. That could be accomplished, they argued, if the Australian Government could capitalize upon what heretofore had been perceived as the limitations of the Australian situation, in order to perform a unique role in world affairs which would promote Australian security by serving the interests of both Australia's "great and powerful friends" as well as those of its Asian neighbors. The core of the new conception was the conclusion that Australia was uniquely situated to perform the role of a

much needed and useful diplomatic bridge or liaison country between the Australian's Western allies and the non-communist nations of Asia. This new dimension in Australian foreign policy was given early expression in Sir Garfield Barwick's observations that:

> Australia is a middle power in more senses than one. It is clearly one in the general sense in which the expression is used. But also it has common interests with both the advanced and the underdeveloped countries; it stands in point of realized wealth between the haves and the have nots. It is at the one time a granary and a highly industrialized country. It has a European background and is set in intimate geographical propinquity to Asia.
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> This ambivalance brings some strength and offers promise of a future of which Australia can be confident, a future of increasing influence. But it poses continuing problems in identifying peculiarly Australian objectives and in finding balance in the policies devised to attain them.[1]

What was particularly noteworthy about this new conception of an Australian role in world affairs was the implication that Australia's geographic setting need no longer necessarily be feared or perceived as a distinct liability which somehow must be compensated for or overcome. Since that conclusion involved a major reassessment of a long-standing assumption about Australia's position in world affairs, it was not surprising that for many years the new conception would have to vie in the foreign policy formulation process with the older conception of Australia as an anti-communist Western ally. In the area of strategic planning in particular, Australia would continue to rely heavily upon the operation of the security alliances it had helped establish

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[1]C.P.D. (1964), XLI, p. 484.

in the 1950's. In matters involving economic and general foreign policy issues, however, the newer conception increasingly would serve as the theoretical inspiration for decision-making at the operational level of foreign policy implementation.

THE DECLINE IN IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF NATIONS

Whereas Australian participation in world affairs during the 1950's had been mainly political, the movement during the 1960's of centers of conflict and tension closer to Australia required that the Government develop much more specific and operationally oriented policies toward particular problems and particular areas. One of those requirements followed from the conversion of the Commonwealth of Nations from an association which was largely, though not wholly, homogeneous in race, culture, and historical experience, into an association of which the most notable features were diversity of race and background and a shift in numerical balance from an association predominantly European in origin and outlook to one predominantly Asian and African.

In general, the 1960's witnessed the second phase in the post-war transformation of the Commonwealth of Nations. The initial phase of that transformation had been peculiarly Asian in geographic focus and had occurred at a time when

Australia was reshaping its foreign policy in the post-war years. One obvious conclusion which had been drawn from that period was that Australia developed a much closer relationship with the Asian nations to its north. Therefore, the admission of Asian members within the Commonwealth of Nations had coincided exactly with Australian policy interests and seemed to offer a firm foundation upon which to develop close ties with particular Asian countries. Although that process would continue during the 1960's--Malaysia and Singapore would become Commonwealth members--its logical extension to the remaining British colonies shifted the geographic focus of Commonwealth expansion away from Asia to Africa and gave weight in Commonwealth affairs to issues which had not been anticipated in the immediate post-war period.

What particularly disturbed the Australian Government about the changing character of the Commonwealth of Nations was the fact that growing dominance of the Asian and African members meant that matters related to decolonization and racial policies acquired a new prominence in Commonwealth affairs. During the 1960's those issues were brought to the forefront of world and Commonwealth affairs by developments in southern Africa.

As indicated in the preceeding chapter, throughout the 1950's the Australian Government had taken the position that the South African Government's policy of apartheid was

a matter of domestic concern to South Africa and therefore was excluded from consideration by either the Commonwealth of Nations or the United Nations. In March, 1960, however, that issue acquired a new emotional impact, and therefore a degree of political urgency, as a result of violent incidents at the townships of Sharpeville and Langa where South African police fired at crowds of African demonstrators, killing 70 and wounding 186. Given the climate of world opinion following those incidents, the refusal of South Africa to heed United Nations resolutions had the determination of the Afro-Asian bloc to push their view, the Australian position that apartheid was not a matter of genuine international concern became untenable. The contradiction inherent in South African policies of racial discrimination and the values of a multi-racial Commonwealth could no longer be avoided.

When the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference met in London in May 1960, the meeting was dominated by the question of South Africa's racial policies. In the face of African and Asian proposals that the South African issue be fully aired at the Conference, Mr. Menzies reaffirmed his Government's position that however misguided South African policy might be, it was a matter of domestic concern and agreement to discuss the internal affairs of member states could only lead to greater dissensions within the conference and ultimately, perhaps, to the disruption of the Common-

wealth of Nations.[2] Although Mr. Menzies' view prevailed at the 1960 Conference, the refusal of the Conference members to grant prior approval to South Africa's continued membership in the Commonwealth should she become a republic precipitated South Africa's withdrawal and demonstrated that Great Britain had lost effective control over the Commonwealth of Nations.

After South Africa's withdrawal from the Commonwealth of Nations, the Australian Government finally abandoned its long-standing legal objections to formal discussion of the apartheid policy. Finding themselves in shrinking and embarrassing diplomatic company, Australia and Great Britain voted for the two 1961 United Nations General Assembly resolutions condemning South Africa's racial policy and calling upon the South African Government to negotiate with India and Pakistan on the treatment of citizens of Indian origin within the Union.

The crisis in Commonwealth affairs which led to South Africa's withdrawal coincided with still another Commonwealth of Nations crisis that followed from the British decision to apply for entry into the European Economic Community. Taking as a point of departure the conclusion that the eventual goal of the European Economic Community was the creation of a united Europe, Mr. Menzies

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[2] Current Notes, XXXI (1960), pp. 260-61.

reacted negatively to the British decision to apply for membership. While he did not minimize the strength of the many political and economic arguments in favor of British entry, he was concerned that such a course of action would result in both the diminution of British independence of action and adverse modification of an historic set of relationships which together would prevent the British Government from sustaining its role as the most influential member and heart of the Commonwealth. In other words, Mr. Menzies feared that entry into the European Economic Community would lead to the end of Great Britain's position as a great power, for in his view Great Britain as head of the Commonwealth and Great Britain in a federated Europe was a contradiction in terms.

> In short, if Great Britain eventually became a member state in a European federation . . . she would no longer be sovereign as the other Commonwealth countries are. The Commonwealth would have ceased to be an association of sovereign and fully self-governing states . . . . United Kingdom membership of an actual European federation involving the great change in the Commonwealth to which I have referred, would be a mistake.[3]

In spite of those concerns, by late 1962, Mr. Menzies had resigned himself to British entry into the European Economic Community. By that time, however, his acceptance of the British decision reflected less his concern for its impact on the Commonwealth than his contemporary assessment of the

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[3]C.P.D. (1962), XXXVI, pp. 234-35.

value of the organization and his dwindling faith in its future. Following his October 1962, return from a Prime Ministers' Conference in London, he assessed the state of Commonwealth affairs in the following manner:

> I think that twenty years ago I might have become more impassioned about this matter, but the Commonwealth has changed a lot since then. Its association has become much looser. For most of its members, the association is, in a sense, functional and occasional. The old hopes of concerting common policies have gone. Under these circumstances, it may well prove to be the fact that even if federation be achieved in Western Europe, the anomalous position of Great Britain in the Commonwealth which would then emerge, would be regarded as no more anomalous than many other things which have been accepted, and with which we have learned to live.[4]

Most of what remained of Mr. Menzies' dwindling faith in his most cherished ideal was erroded in succeeding years by tactics employed by the Asian and African members in their continuing anti-colonial campaign. Particularly frustrating to Mr. Menzies was the tendency on the part of those nations to turn Prime Ministers' Conferences into public forums in which to expound their anti-colonial views and even attack other Commonwealth members. Thus, in reporting to the Australian public on the course of the 1964 Prime Ministers' Conference, Mr. Menzies was moved to observe that,

> . . . Prime Ministers' Conferences are held in private and all the papers that you receive and all the records of the proceedings are heavily marked "Private" and "Confidential," but I found that in a great number of cases the speeches that were being made were written and handed out even before they were delivered which no doubt was very convenient from the point of view

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[4]Ibid., p. 284.

> of the London Press but seemed to me to be a little difficult to reconcile with having a private meeting. and as I don't read my speeches at these conferences, there was nothing to hand out. So if you read the London Press, you would be hard put to find out if I had said anything, but I said a good deal, but in private, in a private conference.[5]

Furthermore, Mr. Menzies could not reconcile the emphasis given to the question of colonialism by the Asian and African Commonwealth members, for in his view,

> . . . everyone who was there was there because in his particular case colonialism had ended, and from a reasonable point of view, I didn't find it necessary to discuss colonialism very much. It seemed to me to be a matter of past history, but it still exists not only their vocabulary but in their minds.[6]

Equally disturbing to Mr. Menzies was the tendency on the part of the "neutralist" non-Western Commonwealth members to take little cognizance of what he considered to be the serious Communist Chinese threat to Southeast Asia.

> There was a tendency to brush this aside, particularly on the part of the African countries because it was said that was cold war talk and the cold war was an irrelevant thing to the Commonwealth and Commonwealth considerations. This is based upon some idea that the cold war is a sort of domestic conflict between the United States and Communist powers. Well, I did my best to explain that matter; I am afraid not with much success. I even ventured to say that if the Western Powers had not been successful in the cold war so far, we might not have been sitting there having a conference.[7]

It was that concern which led Mr. Menzies to state during a London press conference that it was his conclusion that the Communist Chinese were making important progress in

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[5]Current Notes, XXV (1964), no. 7, p. 35.

[6]Ibid., p. 36. [7]Ibid.

influencing the behavior of some Commonwealth members, for he had found,

> . . . perceptible signs of penetration by China in at least an ideological way. I think they have a real influence and perhaps a growing influence in some African countries.[8]

What finally destroyed any remaining enthusiasm on Mr. Menzies' part for the older Commonwealth ideal was the response of the Asian and African members to the dilemma caused by Southern Rhodesia's defiant adherence to racially discriminatory domestic policies and its eventual unilateral declaration of independence from Great Britain. In large measure, the response of the Asian and African Commonwealth members to that development took the form of an effort to strongly influence, if not dictate to the British Government, what course of action it should follow toward the Government in Salisbury. To Mr. Menzies, such an effort amounted to an open, if not deliberate, challenge to Great Britain's leadership position in the Commonwealth of Nations. In commenting on this development, he confessed to adherring to what was:

> . . . apparently the old-fashioned view that if Great Britain is accepted as the negotiating power and the only one at the table competent to carry on negotiations, she ought not to be handicapped by a lot of advice or-- as I put it myself-- riding instructions. Certainly not to receive orders from a number of governments without the responsibility or authority to deal with the matter.[9]

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[8]Current Notes, XXXVI (1965), p. 353.

[9]Current Notes, XXV (1964), p. 34.

Subsequently, when the Asian and African Commonwealth members persisted in their course and forced the convening of a Commonwealth Conference on Ghodesia to be held in Lagos, Nigeria in January 1966, the Australian Government demonstrated its displeasure with the course of Commonwealth affairs by declining an invitation to be represented at Lagos. The reaction of the Australian Government to that development was summarized by Mr. Menzies' observation that:

> . . . if Britain can be instructed or coerced by the Commonwealth--or most of its members--in a matter which is, by concession, hers and hers alone to deal with, then Australia can some day be instructed or coerced on some matters in which the sole jurisdiction resides with Australia.[10]

By the end of 1965, then, the Commonwealth of Nations had become for Australia also, little more than a functional and occasional association.

INDONESIAN "CONFRONTATION" TOWARD WEST NEW GUINEA

In addition to adjusting to the new character of the Commonwealth of Nations, the Australian Government was preoccupied during the first half of the 1960's with designing a prudent yet strong response to the successive stages of the Indonesian policy of "confrontation." In general, the Australian response to that development was characterized by the deep and long-standing Australian ambivalance toward

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[10] Current Notes, XXXVII (1966), p. 22.

Asia. On the one hand, there was the Australian view of Indonesian actions which followed from older strictures about the "Yellow Peril." Taking as a point of departure the assumption of unified Asian pressure on Australia, that view portrayed Indonesia as the speerhead of a southward Asian thrust toward Australia. Within that perception, Indonesia was the essence of everything which the Australians feared about Asia. It was ethnically alien to those cultural traits which Australia held near and dear, poverty ridden, opposed to European domination of Asia, and possessed of a teeming population. Indeed, no place could be more characteristic in its leading social elements with those qualities which the majority of Australians associated with Asia and feared. Of course, the bellicose and stringent nature of Indonesian nationalist rhetoric did little to assuage those traditional Australian fears.

Opposed to the more traditional perception of Indonesia was the view (held by a small but growing number of Australians) which recognized the many inconsistencies in the rhetoric of the more extreme Indonesian nationalists and perceived that Australia and Indonesia shared many common interests in world politics.[11] That view recognized the situation in Asia as being the traditional one of fluctuating

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[11]For an excellent example of this approach, see: A. J. Rose, "A Strategic Geography and the Northern Approaches," Australian Outlook, vol. 13, no. 4, pp. 304-13.

national interests and power politics over-laid with a thin veneer of nationalist rhetoric of ideological dogma; a situation in which aggression or expansionary behavior on the part of an Asian nation was unlikely to go unchallenged by other Asian nations, irrespective of the repeated difference which was paid to such euphamisms as the "Spirit of Bandung." Once that premise was accepted, it then could be concluded that rather than being the spearhead of a unified Asian drive twoard Australia's open spaces and material wealth, Indonesia might have even more to fear than Australia from any southward thrust on the part of a major Asian power.

Such a conclusion followed from a pragmatic power-political analysis of Indonesia's demographic and strategic situation. To begin with, it focused on the fact that Indonesia had more resources to offer and was nearer or more accessible to the Asian mainland than Australia. More specifically, it recognized that with the exception of the densely populated island of Java, Indonesia presented its more crowded northern neighbors with the only extensive tracts of more-or-less virgin paddy land in the entire Southeast Asian region. Furthermore, those Australians who held that Indonesia represented a far more promising target for mainland Asian aggression than the largely barren and semi-arid lands of a remote Australia had only to recall the course taken by the Japanese during World War II, when they had had

to choose between continuing their drive southward into Australia or turning westward into the Indonesian islands. Moreover, the holders of the power-political approach to interpreting Indonesian national behavior drew many parallels between the Indonesian and Australian strategic positions; parallels which suggested the security of Indonesia and Australia were interdependent andany action which compromised the security of one nation would also impair the territorial integrity of the other. Starting from an emphasis on the insular quality of both nations, they reasoned that since no Asian nation possessed a navy capable of supporting large-scale amphibious landings on hostile shores, any drive southward by a mainland Asian power would have to involve the use of the Indonesian islands as stepping sontes. From that line of argumentation it then was concluded that Indonesia was unlikely either to encourage or facilitate any move against Australia from the Asian mainland, or to demonstrate any more inclination to invoke mainland aid to gain Australia itself than the Yugoslavs had had to call in the Soviet Army in order to gain Trieste at the end of World War II. In general, then, advocates of the pragmatic power-political approach to foreign policy analysis considered that it was unlikely that the threat which many Australians believed inherent in the gradation between their own and Asian living standards would arise from Indonesia.

As indicated in Part I of this essay, the origins of post-war Australian concern over the status of New Guinea pre-dated even the confederation of the Australian colonies. Although ambitious post-war Government programs to develop Australia's New Guinea territories obviously had widened the base of Australian interest in the island, those interests remained predominantly strategic in nature.

Within the framework of Australian strategic planning, New Guinea always had held a position of paramount importance. Ironically, that importance was derived from the negative strategic qualities of New Guinea, for if the island were to disappear under the sea the net result for Australia, when looked at in purely strategic terms, would be a gain.[12] Therefore, what was strategically important about New Guinea was that access to the island be denied to a hostile power, or preferably to any foreign power. New Guinea in Australian hands was considered a restraint upon any hostile power which might enter the northern approaches to Australia, while New Guinea in hostile hands would make attacks on Australia's east coast much easier, seriously endanger Australia's vital shipping and air routes. In other words, Australian defense planners concluded that New Guinea could serve equally as well as a defensive bastion against direct attack on Australia and as a base for offensive actions against hostile

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[12] T. B. Millar, Australian Defense, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1965), p. 150.

forces operating in the northern approaches--a conclusion which seemingly had been borne out by Australia's World War II experience. Moreover, not only had New Guinea always been perceived as the last important stepping stone in the island bridge which led from the Asian mainland to Australia's exposed northern coastline, but more recently it had been officially sanctioned by the Forward Defense Strategy as the final link in the strategic barrier which separated Australia from its northern neighbors. Even more recently, New Guinea had come to be perceived as essential as a buffer against an expansionist and possibly communist Indonesia. Therefore, New Guinea always had been considered and continued to be considered vital to Australian security. Indeed, in one of his earliest foreign policy statements, Mr. Spender had chosen to reassert Australian interest in the status of New Guinea by proclaiming that the island was "an absolutely essential link in the chain of Australian defense" and his Government bore:

> . . . the duty of ensuring by every means open to us that, in the island areas immediately adjacent to Australia . . . nothing takes place that can in any way offer a threat to Australia.[13]

When viewed against that background, it was not surprising that the Indonesian claim to West New Guinea generated much consternation within the Australian Government. Not only was the Australian Government disturbed by the prospect of

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[13]C.P.D. (1950), CCVI, p. 633.

having for the first time to share a common border with one of its Asian neighbors, but also with one of the most politically volitale of its neighbors at that, for in the succeeding years the advance of communist influences in unstable Indonesia added to the Australian Government's concern and general distrust of its nearest Asian neighbor.

Initially, then, the Australian Government's response to the Indonesian claim to West New Guinea proceeded on the assumption that the claim represented a threat to Australian security even if there wasn't any evidence of hostile Indonesian intentions. Later, following the Dutch withdrawal, those same suspicions would continue unabated and lead Mr. T. B. Millar, Australia's foremost strategic analyst, to conclude that:

> A country with which Australia shares a common border, which has developed large military forces, which is an unsatisfied dictatorship, must be presumed to be a potential threat to security.[14]

Therefore, for strategic reasons the Australian Government wanted a continuing Dutch presence to the north of Australia and feared that Indonesian acquisition of East New Guinean not only would compromise Australian security but also set the stage for future Indonesian claims to Australia's own New Guinea territories. Therefore, throughout most of the 1950's Australia sought to assure a

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[14]T. B. Millar, "The Defense of New Guinea." New Guinea I (1965), no. 1, p. 69.

continuing Dutch presence in West New Guinea by virtually ignoring the merits of the Indonesian claim, cooperating with the Netherlands Government and lobbying at the United Nations to frustrate Indonesia's efforts to obtain international backing for its claims. At the same time, however, the Australian Government was anxious for friendly relations with Indonesia since the strategic assumptions which served as the basis of so much of Australian foreign policy also required that if at all possible, Australia maintain good relations with the Government which controlled most of the island chain that connected mainland Asia with Australia. Not surprisingly, that inherent conflict in Australian interests led to some contortions in Australian policy toward Indonesia.

Those contortions in Australian policy received ample public exposure following the conclusion of the Australian-Netherlands Agreement of 1957 concerning cooperation in the administration of their respective New Guinea territories. In terms of political inspiration, the agreement contemplated the possibility of the Papuans in all parts of New Guinea eventually reaching a stage of education and self-government in which they might prefer to create a United Melanesian Republic covering the entire island. Both tacit and overt Dutch and Australian support for the Melanesian idea was motivated in part by the opportunity it offerred both to pre-empt the Indonesian claim to West New Guinea as well as enable the Dutch and Australian Governments to argue that

they also were vitally concerned over the Papuans right to self-determination. In other words, promulgation of the Melanesian idea involved an effort on the part of the Dutch and Australian Governments not only to create a future policy option which was clearly less undesirable than Indonesian control over West New Guinea but also to discredit the Indonesian claim by focusing world attention on the fact that Papuans shared little in the way of a common ethnic, racial or historical background with the Indonesians. As such, Dutch and Australian discussions concerning the creation of a Melanesian Republic caused much consternation amongst the Indonesians and their Afro-Asian supporters, "who condemned it, inter alia, as trying to put nationalism on the 'obsolete basis of ethnic, racial and geographical unity.'"[15] As a practical matter, however, the Melanesian gambit was doomed to failure since in the world of the late 1950's and early 1960's, "anti-colonialism rated more votes than self-determination, and a United Nations settlement might not be to the advantage of the peoples of West New Guinea."[16]

During the late 1950's, Australia appeared indeed to be looking toward a Melanesian Republic, though without

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[15]Cited in Geoffrey Sawer, "The United Nations," in G. Greenwood and N. Harper, eds., Australia in World Affairs 1956-1960 (London: F. W. Cheshire, 1963), p. 160.

[16]Norman Harper, "Australia and the United States," in G. Greenwood and N. Harper, eds., Australia in World Affairs 1960-65 (London, Angus and Robertson, 1968), p. 325.

openly announcing it for fear of further alienating the Indonesians. Certainly that was, to some extent, the logical outcome of the attempt to cooperate with the Dutch and align the advance of the two halves of New Guinea. In practice, however, the Australian Government never showed as much enthusiasm for the Melanesian idea as the Dutch. While the 1957 agreement worked well on a purely consultative level, it did not become, as the Dutch had hoped, a common basis for joint political development. Rather, the Australian Government refrained from embracing the Melanesian idea for fear of the future problems which it might lead to both in relations with the Indonesians and in Australia's own New Guinea territories. Actual cooperation between the Dutch and Australian administrations was minimal because the Australian Government recognized that a more firm commitment to join political development might prove embarrassing unless it was certain that Indonesia would not be able to realize her claim to any part of New Guinea. Moreover, the pace of political development implicit in the Melanesian idea was inconsistant with the principal thrust of Australian administrative policy. Whereas Australian administrative policy stressed slow and broad-based "uniform development," the Melanesian idea implied a rapid movement toward self-government through the creation of a political elite. Therefore, the Australian Government officially took the position that while the 1957 agreement recognized common interests and common links in

New Guinea, it meant only that no artificial barrier should be raised to the possibility of an eventual political union of the New Guinea territories. As explained by Mr. Casey, the agreement did not represent a decision that New Guinea necessarily would become a single political unit in the future, but only an agreement not to allow Australian and Dutch policies to exclude the possibility of letting the inhabitants of the island opt for "such a choice later on."[17]

By mid-1960, however, it was quite clear that the Dutch were moving West New Guinea toward self-government too fast for Australia's liking. During that year, the Dutch announced that irrespective of what the Australians might choose to do, they were undertaking an ambitious program to create a political elite in West New Guinea and they expected to have their territory ready for self-government within ten years. Added to Australian apprehensions caused by that development was the tragic Congo episode which tended to confirm all the worst fears held by the Australian Government concerning movement of dependent peoples toward self-government too quickly. By the end of 1960, then, the Australian Government clearly was parting company with the Dutch over the Melanesian idea. The Australian Government had concluded that it was preferable to settle for a divided New Guinea over which it exerted partial but direct control than to opt for a unified New Guinea whose future for many years would remain uncertain.

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[17]C.P.D. (1957), XVII, p. 2921.

By 1960, moreover, developments even more important than the passing of the Melanesian option were overtaking Australian policy on West New Guinea. Up until 1958, Australian support for the Dutch in New Guinea had rested on the all important assumption that the American and British Governments were in favor of a continued Dutch presence there. During that year, however, several developments brought the assumption of Anglo-American support into sharp question. To begin with, the British promised to support the Australian position only "on the plane of the United Nations"[18] and despite private Australian exhortations, the United States refused either to issue a public warning to Indonesia not to use force to realize its claim or to give any assurance to Australia as to what it would do if Indonesia did use force. Of even greater significance, however, was the American and British decision, made without regard to Dutch and Australian protests, to resume arms shipments to Indonesia in the hope of stemming the rising tide of Soviet influence on the Indonesian Government.

By 1961, the international political environment had undergone such fundamental change that irrespective of lagging Australian public sentiment, the Government was eventually forced to alter its position. By that time, the Indonesian

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[18]Hanno Wisebrod "Sir Garfield Barwick and Dutch New Guinea," Australian Quarterly, XXXIX (1967), no. 2, p. 26.

Government had lost interest in legal means for solving the West New Guinea situation and after the arrival of heavy arms shipments from the Soviet Union, many observers felt it only a matter of time before they would use them in a contest of power with the Dutch. What turned the diplomatic tide against the Dutch and Australians more than any other development, however, was the conclusion reached in 1961 by the principal Western governments--particularly the American Government--that the West New Guinea dispute had become a burning political issue in Indonesia, and that Dutch and Australian intractability was facilitating the growth of communist influences within the Indonesian Government.

It was against that political background that an unexpected and distant political development--namely, India's move to end Portugal's colonial presence in Goa--set the stage for the final resolution of the West New Guinea dispute. The relevance of India's action to the West New Guinea dispute was immediately apparant to all concerned. The day after the Indian invasion of Goa, the Indonesian Government ordered a general mobilization. Shortly thereafter the American Government, anxious to avoid a repetition of the Goa incident and to head off the outbreak of a series of such incidents, made it unmistakeably clear that it wanted to effect a quick settlement of the West New Guinea dispute in Indonesia's favor and subsequently intensified its efforts toward getting the

Dutch and Indonesians to the conference table. In fact, by the end of 1961 even the Dutch seemingly had reconciled themselves to the idea that they would have to bow to the Indonesian military and American diplomatic pressures when they attempted to devolve responsibility for West New Guinea onto the United Nations.

For a few weeks more, Australia tried to stem the tide, most notably by seeking to get the American Government to warn Indonesia that the use of force would be met by American power. When the United States proved unwilling to issue such a warning for fear of antagonizing Indonesia and the Afro-Asian bloc generally, the Australian Government reversed its previous military assessment of an Indonesian presence in West New Guinea (there was now no evidence whatsoever of a present threat to Australia or to any Australian territorial interest since the preponderance of American naval power in the Pacific made any repetition of Australia's World War II experience unlikely)[19] and Mr. Menzies moved to amend Australian policy by acknowledging that since his Government could not obtain the support of the "great free powers" . . . "the hard facts of international life" had forced the Government to admit that it could not take "any action affecting the safety of Australia on the issues of war or peace in this area except in concert with

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[19]Ibid., p. 29.

our great and powerful friends."[20] In fact, since his Government had become convinced that "right or wrong, Indonesia will get control of (West) New Guinea"[21] the only policy open to Australia lay in working for a speedy but reasonable settlement. Therefore, during the on-again-off-again negotiations of the next six months (which were punctuated by armed clashes between Dutch and Indonesian forces) the Australian Government used every opportunity to enlist diplomatic support for bringing pressure on the disputants to settle quickly and without recourse to open warfare.

When the final terms of the West New Guinea settlement were announced on August 15, 1962, the Australian Government was relieved for they were surprisingly close to what it thought to be the best possible terms. All that remained of the West New Guinea episode was an American _quid pro quo_ designed to ease domestic political pressure on the Australian Government over what had happened. In brief, that arrangement involved a strong American commitment to defend East New Guinea in return for Australian acquiesence in the West New Guinea settlement. As part of that arrangement, the United States' Government had sent a delegation led by Secretary of State Dean Rusk and including Admiral Felt (Commander-in-Chief in the Pacific) as well as Mr. Paul Nitze

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[20]Current Notes, XXXIII (1962), no. 1, p. 42.

[21]Ibid.

(Assistant Secretary for Defense for International Security Affairs) to the 1962 meeting of the ANZUS Council held at Canberra, May 8-9. In addition, to looking toward an early and peaceful settlement of the West New Guinea dispute, the final communique of the Canberra meeting had removed any ambiguities over the scope of the American commitment to defend East New Guinea by the insertion of part of Article V of the ANZUS Treaty in the communique as well as the notation that the:

> Ministers called attention to the fact that these obligations applied to in the event of armed attack not only on the metropolitan territory of any of the parties but also on any island territory under the jurisdiction of the three governments in the Pacific.[22]

The 1963 meeting of the ANZUS Council was held at Wellington on June 5-6. The American delegation to that meeting was led by Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Mr. Averall Harriman, who paid an official and highly publicized visit to Canberra before proceeding to Wellington. In both Canberra and Wellington, Mr. Harriman publicly declared that the United States "would fight" to defend East New Guinea.[23] The final communique of the Wellington meeting also drew attention to the point that:

> . . . anything which happens in the Pacific area is of vital concern to all three, and that a threat to any of the partners in the area, metropolitan and island territories alike, is equally a threat to the others.[24]

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[22]Department of State Bulletin, XLVI (1962), p. 866.

[23]Current Notes, XXXIV (1963), p. 5.

[24]New York Times, June 4, 1963.

What was significant about these statements and visits was not their substantive content, but the fact that they were considered extremely important by an Australian Government which clearly had not prepared the Australian public for what had been the most logical outcome of the West New Guinea dispute ever since at least 1958 when the United States had first indicated that it was not prepared to use military force in support of the Dutch and Australian position. Support for this conclusion is found in Mr. J. G. Starke's observation that:

> . . . there could not be the slightest doubt that Article V (of the ANZUS Treaty) applies to the dependencies of and the trust territories administered by any party, and that accordingly the Territory of Papua and New Guinea . . . is within the scope of the article.[25]

When viewed in retrospect, Australian policy on West New Guinea was both an extension and the culmination of the rigid status quo oriented foreign policy which had emerged during the latter half of the 1950's. In a very real sense, the uncertainty and hesitation which characterized Australian diplomatic behavior throughout the West New Guinea episode served to dramatize the weaknesses of that policy and demonstrate that something more was demanded of the Australian Government than efforts to manipulate power relationships which had been forged in the early 1950's.

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[25]J. G. Starke, The ANZUS Treaty Alliance (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1965), pp. 144-45.

In particular, three aspects of Australian policy on West New Guinea are open to specific criticism.

To begin with, it was presumptious and self-defeating for the Australian Government to insist that Australian "vital interests" were involved in the West New Guinea dispute. Even if the Government had continuously believed that Australian vital interests were involved, it could not have succeeded in protecting them since the developing situation simply was not under Australian control. Subsequently, having taken a strong public position, the Australian Government found it difficult to redefine its position, for as long as the Dutch remained in West New Guinea, if the Government hadtaken the position that Australian interests in the territory were no longer vital but only important, an announcement to that effect might have been interpreted by the Indonesian Government as an open invitation to bring further pressure to bare upon the Dutch. Such an Australian action would have been justified only if the Government had been ready to advise the Dutch to settle with Indonesia in the hope of acquiring some credit with the latter in the process. Although there were indications that the Government did desire to reassess the West New Guinea situation and move closer to Indonesia, its efforts in that direction ran into another obstacle; namely, domestic opposition to any weakening of Australian opposition to the Indonesian claim. Throughout the West New Guinea episode

Australian public opinion lagged behind the developing situation and there is scant evidence to suggest that the Government did much to correct that situation.

Furthermore, the Australian Government's excessively rigid policy prevented it from responding effectively to the issue of political development in its own New Guinea territories. Therefore, when the Dutch decided to force the pace of self-government for West New Guinea, it threw an uncomfortable light upon the relatively slow or uncertain pace toward self-government in East New Guinea. The Australian Government could not complain, however, because the Dutch gave it every opportunity to coordinate the rate of political development in the two territories, and indeed to pursue a common objective for the territories. In fact, Australian rejection of Dutch approaches seeking common action for a Melanesian Republic suggests that West New Guinea was regarded as important to Australia, but not vital.

Finally, after September 1961, continued Australian opposition to the Indonesian claim was wholly without merit. When the Dutch took the logical step of offering to place West New Guinea under a United Nations trusteeship, the Australian Government was then free to take the equally logical step of notifying Indonesia that it no longer supported Dutch control or Dutch proposals. In fact, such a step could have been taken as early as September 1960, when the Dutch Foreign Minister publicly confirmed reports

that his government was considering United Nations trusteeship. An approach by Australia to Indonesia then might well have helped to foster Indonesian goodwill. Instead, the Australian Government again hesitated and clutched uncertainly to past policies. By failing to back the Dutch, the Australian Government probably forfeited any remaining Dutch support for its position in East New Guinea, and by failing to support Indonesia it failed to improve relations with that country. In the end, then, the Australian Government was left in the awkward position of finding itself with no alternative but to acquiesce in the final West New Guinea settlement.

INDONESIAN "CONFRONTATION" TOWARD MALAYSIA

Following Indonesian acquisition of control in West New Guinea (May 1, 1963), the Indonesian Government was exultant. In his Independence Day Address of August 17, 1963, President Sukarno described the preceeding 12 months as the Year of Triumph. Further, he announced that analysis of world politics indicated that history was on the side of Indonesia--which typified the new emerging forces opposed to the old established order--and the policy of "confrontation" was the key to success. Not only had that method been tested against the Dutch, but by the time the President made his speech "confrontation" was being applied against

the inhabitants of the area designated to constitute the new Federation of Malaysia. In those circumstances, Australia became involved in another Indonesian confrontation when Menzies announced on September 25, 1963, the Australian Government's decision to help maintain Malaysia's political independence and territorial integrity against Indonesian pressure.

It is unnecessary to trace in detail the significant developments which led to the Indonesian policy of confrontation toward Malaysia. Here it is necessary only to point out that the Australian decision to oppose that policy was made with full awareness of the risks to Australian-Indonesian relationships in the event that if in the pursuit of the "confrontation" policy Indonesian forces should meet Australian forces in combat. Furthermore, the Australian Government's decision was not taken hastily or without careful analysis. Indeed, the Australian Government's policy on Malaysia stood in marked contrast to its policy on West New Guinea.

The Australian decision to oppose Indonesian encroachments on Malaysia followed a long period of diplomatic activity during which every effort was made by the Australian Government to improve Australian-Indonesian relations and to induce the Indonesian Government to seek an agreed and peaceful solution of its differences with the Government of Malaya regarding the creation of Malaysia.

Only after the Indonesian Government rejected a United Nations report which found a sizeable majority of the people of Sabah and Sarawak wished to enter into a Malaysian Federation, and after President Sukarno had reiterated his intention to "crush" Malaysia, did the Australian Government reluctantly conclude that it could no longer avoid opposing the Indonesian "confrontation" policy. To have acted otherwise would have been to deny a basic premise of the Forward Defense Strategy: namely, that the security of the Malayan area was a matter of vital Australian concern. Beyond this, there were considerations involving Great Britain's position in Malaya. Indeed, it might be said that in a difficult situation Australia had elected for Malaysia, and perhaps even more for support of the traditional ties with Great Britain. In keeping with the thrust of the Forward Defense Strategy, even partial reliance upon Great Britain meant in turn the obligation to assist her efforts to resist aggression in Southeast Asia. As Mr. Menzies explained, "we know and she knows that in this part of the world we look to her, and she looks to us. We each apply in a spirit of mutual confidence a gold rule of mutual obligation."[26] In those circumstances, Mr. Menzies went on to make it abundantly clear where Australia's support would lie, even if this carried the disadvantage of deteriorating relations with an

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[26]C.P.D. (1963), XL, p. 1339.

Indonesian Government with whom Australia was anxious to maintain a spirit of cooperation.

Subsequent developments need not be described in detail other than to state that within the framework of increasing international recognition and support for the Federation of Malaysia, the Australian Government showed firm determination to help Malaysia. In the face of successive crises and gathering Indonesian extremism, the members of the Australian Government not only kept their heads but refused to depart from the course that had been chosen.

What was most impressive about Australian policy throughout the Indonesian "confrontation" toward Malaysia was the skill and dexterity the Australian Government demonstrated in handling the difficult problem of supporting Malaysia while at the same time seeking to maintain friendly relations with Indonesia. Thus, while building up its military strength and supplementing its contributions to the Commonwealth Strategic Reserve, the Australian Government deliberately sought to minimize the likelihood of any action which might provoke outright war or involve Australian troops in direct combat with Indonesian forces. While Australian forces eventually did confront Indonesian troops in limited military engagements, a deliberate effort was made to deploy Australian forces in relatively secure areas where they were likely to avoid combat but at the

same time free "Malaysian forces for other tasks."[27] Although that led to a situation in which Australia can fairly enough be criticized for bearing both in cost and men less than her fair share of the burden, it followed from an honest concern on the part of the Australian Government to prevent over precipitate action which might lead to virtual destruction of Indonesian forces. The Australian Government was rightly concerned about the aftermath of any destruction of the existing Indonesian society. It wanted to check the Indonesian Government but not destroy it for fear that chaos, and eventually the emergence of a communist regime might well follow any over-reaction to Indonesian provocations. Here, the Australian Government sought a long-term rather than a short-term solution. Writing in a more general context, Paul Hasluck gave emphatic expression to that view:

> It is basic to our thinking that Indonesia should maintain its integrity, and we should like to see it progressive and proserous. Any fragmentation of Indonesia would not come by our wish.[28]

Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that the Australian attitude of counselling caution in the use of British military power was influential during several periods when a combination of the British military buildup and the

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[27] T. B. Millar, "Australian Defense, 1945-1965," in G. Greenwood and N. Harper, eds., Australia in World Affairs 1961-1965 (London: Angus and Robertson, 1968), p. 288.

[28] Current Notes, XXXV (1964), p. 13.

Indonesian provocations generated great temptation on the part of the British to take the offensive and destroy Indonesian military power.[29]

Similarly, there was never any easy repudiation of the significance of Indonesia to Australia. The Australian Government's desire for long-term cooperation with Indonesia ran through all official policy on the Malaysian dispute. The Australian Government took every opportunity open to it to make abundantly clear that its opposition to Indonesia was not based on enmity, but represented a firm objection to a specific and unwarranted policy of pressure and aggression against a neighbor, a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, and a country that held great strategic importance for Australia. Australian support for Malaysia and Great Britain was expressed in unmistakable terms, with the reasons clearly given, but such declarations were always accompanied by equally clear statements that the policy of "confrontation" was the only obstacle to close accord with Indonesia. Even after small scale military encounters did in fact take place between Australian and Indonesian forces, those encounters were not played up and broad Australian policy continued to assume that "confrontation" should be regarded as a kind of abberation and that the long-term interests of both Indonesia and Australia required mutual

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[29]Gordon Greenwood, "Australian Foreign Policy in Action," in G. Greenwood and N. Harper, eds., Australia in World Affairs, 1961-1965 (London: Angus and Robertson, 1968), p. 111.

politics of friendly cooperation. Australian policy also continued to stress throughout the dispute that Indonesia would find Australia ready to extend a sympathetic hand as soon as the abberation passed. Meanwhile, the Australian Government continued to offer technical training in Australia, under the Colombo Plan to Indonesian students, rejecting the argument in some Australian quarters that it should be discontinued.

In what is perhaps the best published assessment of Australian policy during the Malaysian dispute, Gordon Greenwood has concluded that:

> The Malaysian dispute provided a test both for the principles upon which Australian foreign policy was based and for the resilience of Australian diplomacy. It was a test from which the Government and its representatives emerged with credit. The basic objective of policy was to secure a settlement of the dispute and a resumption of normal relations with both Malaysia and Indonesia. In this search for peace the Government was attempting to apply the principle of reasonableness, based upon the long-term common interests of all the states concerned, to a situation in which reason was not highly valued. While the opportunity was still open to it the Government attempted its own iniatives on behalf of conciliation and negotiation, and even after its full commitment to Malaysia it supported, so far as it was able, the attempts made by those less committed to secure a settlement by mediation and negotiation. But, while the search for a peaceful settlement was continuous, the Government's policy was not one of peace at any price.[30]

Lacking in the account of Professor Greenwood's (or any other public record of Australian policy on the Malaysian dispute), however, was an adequate appreciation

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[30] Ibid., p. 108.

of the British rationale for the creation of the Federation of Malaysia. The student of Australian foreign policy searches in vain for a rigorous Australian commentary which attempts to relate Australian policy on the Malaysia dispute to those British policies which led to the creation of the Federation. In general, all official and private analyses of Australian policy on Malaysia take as a point of departure the British conclusion that Malaysia was the best solution to the problem of decolonization in the area, the best possible arrangement for the future of the Borneo territories, and would contribute to the stability of the region. If, however, the Australian commitment to the defense of Malaysia was, as Mr. Menzies had suggested, to be interpreted as a _quid pro quo_ for the continued maintenance of British power in the Far East, then the public Australian debate on Malaysia should have been carried on within the context of a thorough-going analysis of British foreign policy and the inferences which logically could be drawn from that policy for Australian foreign policy.

A broader Australian analysis of the Malaysian dispute which focused on the relationship between British and Australian foreign policies might have raised the question of whether the creation of the Federation actually was in Australia's best interests. It has been suggested, for example, that a major British consideration in establishing the Federation was to provide a workable security

framework for their giant naval base at Singapore. From that conclusion, it has been further suggested that such an effort on the part of the British was futile since the act of creating the Federation led to a situation in which British forces were kept busy by the military problems arising from the creation of the very federation which was intended to protect those forces.[31] When approached from that perspective it then could be concluded that the creation of the Federation of Malaysia might not have been in Australia's best interests since it may have led to a situation which consumed more security than it generated. While one may agree or disagree with this line of analysis, it was the kind of question which should have been, but was not, raised during the public Australian debate on Malaysia.

Similarly, such an analysis also might have raised important questions concerning the relationship between the British decision to defend the Federation of Malaysia and the broader issue of Anglo-American relations. More specifically, it might have revealed that British policy in the Far East in part was influenced by the belief on the part of British officials that their ability to actively contribute to the security of the South and Southeast Asian region served to perpetuate the fading Anglo-American

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[31]Michael Howard, "Britain's Strategic Problem East of Suez," International Affairs (London), XLII (1963), no. 2, p. 181.

"special relationship." Such a revalation might have suggested to the Australian Government that if and when "confrontation" against Malaysia ended, an important rationale for the maintenance of a British "presence East of Suez" would have been removed. Unfortunately, that issue seemingly did not enter the Australian debate over Malaysia. The 1969 British decision to withdraw from east of Suez suggests, however, that this was a serious error of ommission on the part of Australia.

Whether one agrees or disagrees with the above lines of analyses is a mute issue. They are presented merely as examples of the kind of issues which Australia, either by inadvertance or deliberate choice, avoided debate over. They are presented in an attempt to suggest that during the 1960's Australia committed the same error in foreign policy formulation for which it had criticized its "great and powerful" friends during the early 1950's: namely, Australian foreign policy tended to take as a point of departure an excessively narrow, regional perspective which failed to adequately relate developments in a single region to broader global political developments.

THE VIETNAM WAR

On April 29, 1965, Prime Minister Menzies announced the Australian Government's decision to commit a battalion of Australian troops to South Vietnam as "the most useful additional contribution which we can make to the defense of the region at this time."[32] That decision was not suddenly arrived at but was, from the Government's point of view, the logical outcome of a long-standing effort to fashion a close working relationship between Australian and American security planning for the Southeast Asian region. That effort had involved initiatives designed to put "teeth" into "SEATO, attempts to standardize Australian-American military hardware, the dispatch of a Royal Australian Air Force squadron to Thailand during the 1962 Laos crisis, Australian agreement to the establishment of an important United States naval communications station in Western Australia, and the provision to the Government of South Vietnam by Australia of small amounts of military assistance and larger amounts of economic assistance.

Even before Mr. Menzies' announcement, when the immediate problems of Indonesian "confrontation" of Malaysia had forced the developing crisis in Vietnam into the background, the Australian Government had fully supported both the American interpretation and American action in

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[32]Current Notes, XXXVI (1965), p. 179.

Vietnam. Beyond this, there was an Australian belief, in keeping with the Forward Defense Strategy, that the outcome of the Vietnamese struggle could prove vital to the stability of Southeast Asia and therefore to Australia. As Sir Garfield Barwick observed in August 1963, "Our security depends on turning back the Communist thrust in South Vietnam."[33] To the Australian Government, South Vietnam was fighting "a grim war of survival" against "Communist aggression, organized, directed, supplied and supported by the Communist regime in North Vietnam."[34] According to the Australian Government then, American assistance to South Vietnam was the *only* obstacle to the success of North Vietnam's aggression.

The Australian decision to send troops to Vietnam was, in many important respects, consistent with the entire pattern of the Liberal-Country Party's attitudes toward foreign affairs, and in that sense was a logical outcome of those attitudes. At least four issue areas can be pointed to in explaining the decision. First, was the Government's highly legalistic view that in a revolutionary international environment, the preservation of accepted standards of conduct was crucial to the maintenance of international order and control over the direction of

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[33]C.P.D. (1963), XXXIX, p. 429.

[34]C.P.D. (1964), XLII, p. 1266

changing patterns in world politics. As Paul Hasluck would argue in defense of his Government's Vietnam policy, "to condone aggression in one place is to encourage it in other place"; therefore, it was the duty of Australia to do what it could to assist in the defense of South Vietnam "by a combination of military operations, political support and economic assistance."[35] The second issue was the conclusion drawn from long adherence to the "domino theory" of communist subversion that it an effective stand were not made against communist subversion in Vietnam, the entire Southeast Asian region would be threatened, and the security of Australia, if not imperilled, at least would be diminished. Third, there was the belief that Australian security rested on support for the United States and that alliances involved a division of responsibility among allies.

> "It is," said Menzies, "in the continuing interest of this country to put it on no higher ground than that--to be regarded and to remain as a valued ally of the United States, which is, in this part of the world, our own most powerful ally."[36]

Finally, it was believed that through active military participation alongside American forces, the United States Government would be both emotionally and practically more willing to commit its resources to Australian defense.

The order of importance assigned by the Australian Government to each of these four considerations is suggested

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[35]C.P.D. (1965), XLVII, p. 190.

[36]C.P.D. (1965), XLVI, p. 110.

by the timing of its decision to send forces to South Vietnam. In April 1965, Indonesian confrontation against Malaysia was at its height (the first Australian casualties had occurred in Borneo only one month earlier), there was a real possibility that the situation might worsen and the Australian Government could hardly predict the events in Jakarta of October 31-September 1. It was that set of circumstances which led T. B. Millar to comment that:

> The fact remains the sending of troops to Vietnam was, militarily speaking, a regrettable division of a small ground force. It was made possible by our long reluctance to give more substantial military assistance to Britain in Malaysia. It was a political decision, justifiable only if we thereby insured a greater likelihood, or degree, or American military assistance to Australia in time of need.[37]

Professor Millar's conclusion is supported by at least two other considerations. First, in April 1965, the Australian Government was in a strong position to argue that the existing division between the Western allies of responsibility for security in Southeast Asia was a rational division, with the United States focusing its effort to the north in Vietname, and Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand operating to the south in Malaysia. It was a strong argument which was not only persuasive in terms of logic but also one whose strength had been operationally demonstrated by the American acceptance of its use by the

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[37]T. B. Millar, "Problems of Australian Foreign Policy, January-June 1965," Australian Journal of Politics and History XI (1965), p. 274.

British. Furthermore, there is no available evidence that the United States Government either exerted any direct pressure on Australian Government to send forces to Vietnam or even requested Australian assistance in Vietnam. Therefore, one must conclude that while the Australian decision was independently arrived at as the result of an independent analysis of the Asian situation in terms of motivation the decision was made because of traditional Australian fear of abandonment and was intended to capitalize on an opportunity for Australia to ingratiate itself with an American Government which was beginning to search for international support of its Vietnam policy.

The decision to send military forces to Vietnam precipitated a domestic Australian political debate which struck at the vitals of Australian soceity in a way that few, if any, issues had done in the post-Wrodl War II period. It aroused emotions and divided the Australian community in a manner reminiscent of the conscription issue during World War I. In general, the debate parallelled the debate over Vietnam policy which took place in the United States; that is, it focused on the issues of conscription, the character of the Vietnam war, the nature of the communist challenge, and the interests of the United States and its allies in Southeast Asia.

In one very important respect, however, debate in Australia over Vietnam policy differred from the debate

carried on in the United States. That difference was in the timing of the domestic debate over Australia's Vietnam policy. Throughout the Vietnam episode, something of a time lag persisted between the debate in Australia and that carried on in the United States. That time lag can be explained by a consideration of several Australian foreign policy attitudes.

To begin with, the Government's Vietnam policy touched a sensitive political nerve which runs deep within the Australian tradition: a fear of the international environment and an almost atavistic concern at being a white and Western nation whose cloest neighbors are Asian and therefore alien. Thus, while Mr. Menzies' assertion that the Vietnam war represented "a thrust by Communist China between the Indian and Pacific Oceans"[38] may have been open to question, it corresponded with a picture of the world and Australia's situation in that world which was already held by many, if not most Australians.

Reinforcing the more traditional Australian concern over the international environment was the fact that the cold war view of the world seems to have reached its peak in Australia at a time when it was beginning to subside elsewhere. The movement of centers of international conflict closer to Australia's shores during the late 1950's and early 1960's tended to support the Government's strong anti-

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[38]C.P.D. (1965), XLV, p. 1060.

communist strictures and perpetuate the political effectiveness of anti-communist dogma in Australia long after it was losing its appeal elsewhere. Therefore, the Government's avowedly anti-communist rationale for its decision to intervene in Vietnam met with surprisingly widespread acceptance on the part of the Australian public.

To those Australian's who took an active interest in world affairs, there also were important strategic reasons for supporting the Government's Vietnam policy. To begin with, the events in Malaysia and Vietnam tended to validate not only the need for and importance of the Forward Defense Strategy but also suggested that it could and would work. At that time, the British were deeply involved in the security of Malaysia and the Americans were rapidly intensifying their involvement in Vietnam. In other words, both of Australia's "great and powerful" friends were making investments both in terms of material aid and lives which seemingly would keep them involved in Southeast Asia for many years to come. Thus, it was the Government's interest to do whatever it could to insure that those investments paid handsome dividends to Australian security.

In addition to strategic considerations which followed from the Forward Defense Strategy, there was the belated Australian awareness during 1965 that the British were seriously considering withdrawing "East of Suez" as soon as the security situation in Malaysia stabilized. Because

Australia has always felt the need for reliance on a great power, when Great Britain's availability for that role came into question, the United States increasingly came to be perceived as performing that role. Therefore, while Australia was involved in both Malaysia and Vietnam, a combination of greater American concern over events in Vietnam than developments in Malaysia and an Australia perception of ultimate dependence on United States military power for protection led Vietnam to absorb an increasing amount of Australian political attention and military effort. Subsequently, parallel efforts by the British to enlist greater Australian participation in the containment of Indonesia were not afforded Australian-support equivalent to that given American policy in Vietnam.[39] What evidence that is available suggests that since most Australians saw their country as ultimately dependent on the United States for protection, they:

> . . . saw the situation in Southeast Asia as directly relevant to Australia's security in a potentially hostile environment; realized that Australia must pay its insurance fees, must help produce security if it wished to consume it.[40]

Indicative of this Australian sense of dependence upon the United States was the fact that during the Australian federal elections of 1966, the Liberal-Country

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[39]T. B. Millar, "Australian Defense, 1945-1965," op. cit., p. 280.

[40]Ibid., p. 299.

Party chose to attack Labour as being anti-American. There are, of course, few democratic countries where one party can win an election by calling their opponents anti-American, and the handsome victory won by the Liberal-Country Party in 1966 is a measure of the success it enjoyed in equating anti-Americanism with being anti-Australian. Indeed, by the late 1960's, the ambiguity which had characterized pre-World War II Australian policy as a result of a tendency on the part of the Australian conservatives to confuse loyalty to Great Britain and loyalty to Australia, now seemed to be creeping into official Australian references to the United States.[41]

In the years following the dispatch of Australian forces to Vietnam, a relationship of deepening reciprocal support developed between the Australian and American Governments. In their subsequent efforts to discredit increasing domestic and international criticism of their Vietnam policies, both Governments increasingly pointed to the support of the other as proof of the wisdom of its actions. The more visible manifestations of that relationship included a visit by President Johnson to Australia just prior to the 1966 federal elections (the first visit to Australia by an American President), a visit to Washington

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[41]Dennis Altman, "Australia and Vietnam: Some Preliminary Speculations," Australian Quarterly, XLII (1970), no. 2, p. 61.

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[41] Dennis Altman, "Australia and Vietnam: Some Preliminary Speculations," Australian Quarterly, XLII (1970), no. 2, p. 51.

by Mr. Harold Holt (who had succeeded Sir Robert Menzies as Prime Minister in January, 1966), and still another visit to Australia in December 1967, by President Johnson to attend memorial services in honor of Mr. Holt and engage in a conference of the Vietnam allies. That relationship became so intense that by early 1968, many Australians were beginning to seriously question whether the Government had sacrificied too much independence in foreign policy and Australia was in danger of becoming a client state of the United States. Fortunately, the relationship was moderated by President Johnson's surprise announcement of April 1, 1968, to halt the bombing of North Vietnam and not stand for re-election. The fact that Mr. Hasluck only a few days earlier had strongly reaffirmed his Government's support for the bombing policy suggests that President Johnson's announcement caught the Australian Government by surprise and dramatized for it the perils inherent in becoming overly dependent on a great power as a means of protecting Australian interests. Subsequently, a new degree of pragmatism and independence emerged in the Australian approach to the United States.

THE COLLAPSE OF THE FORWARD DEFENSE STRATEGY

Australian participation in the Malaysian and Vietnamese conflicts was, of course, entirely in keeping with the logic of the Forward Defense Strategy. Indeed, Australian participation in those conflicts was undertaken with a view to fulfilling the operational role assigned to Australia by that strategy.

To recapitulate, the Forward Defense Strategy was the most comprehensive single expression of post-war Liberal-Country Party attitudes toward foreign affairs. It followed from a deep foreboding over Australia's international setting and envisioned the establishment and maintenance of an Anglo-American based strategic barrier between Australia and Asia. It further envisioned that the task of creating that barrier could be accomplished through the forging of a _quid pro quo_ security arrangement between Australia on the one hand and Great Britain and the United States on the other hand.

The Forward Defense Strategy not only postulated a vital Australian vested interest in the continued exercise of strong Anglo-American influence in the Southeast Asian region but also assumed that Great Britain and the United States possessed important interests in that region which they were both able and willing to protect. Furthermore, it assigned Australia a catalytic role based on the

assumption that Australia possessed the ability to influence British and American willingness to protect their interests--and hence Australia's interests--by deeply involving themselves in the security affairs of Southeast Asia. Moreover, Australia's ability to influence the British and Americans in that direction was perceived as being largely a function of its own willingness to support and participate in British and American security efforts in that region.

Therefore, refusal on the part of Australia to bear a proportion of the direct military burden in Malaysia and Vietnam would have been inconsistent with the entire thrust of the strategic doctrine which had served as the cornerstone of Australian foreign policy since at least 1949. Refusal could have been interpreted by Great Britain and the United States as meaning either that Australia was content for British and American rather than Australian lives to be lost in support of interests more immediate to Australia (than to Great Britain and the United States), or, that the Australian Government contemplated with complacency and indifference British and American withrawal from the northern approaches to Australia.

Implicit, therefore, in the logic which underpinned the Forward Defense Strategy was a political or strategic relationship involving what were essentially an independent and a dependent variable. Within that relationship the independent variable involved a perception on the part of

the British and the American Governments to the effect that they possessed important interests in Southeast Asia which required protection. That variable was independent to the extent that no matter what action any other nation might take, as long as the British and the Americans held to the above perception they would, within the limits of their own capability, continue to exert strong influence in the Southeast Asian region. Similarly, Australia's ability to influence the British and Americans in the direction of continuing to exert strong influence in that region was in the final analysis dependent upon or a function of the strategic perception held by the British and the Americans. In short, that perception was something which Australia could influence but not control.

Until 1965, the Forward Defense Strategy seemingly had worked quite well. The British had continued to maintain substantial military forces in the Malayan area, the United States had formally committed itself to the defense of Australia and much of Southeast Asia, and by the mid-1960's both Great Britain and the United States were making major military contributions to the security of the Southeast Asian region; contributions which theoretically would insure their strong interest in that region for the indefinite future. Whether those British and American commitments and contributions to the security of the region followed from the above described independent variable or the dependent variable,

or a combination of the two, was, according to the public record, a mute question as far as the Australian Government was concerned. What was important in terms of the principal objective of the Forward Defense Strategy was the fact that both the British and the Americans were exerting strong influence to the north of Australia and thereby contributing to the maintenance of a strategic barrier between Australia and Asia.

In reality, however, several of the key assumptions upon which the Forward Defense Strategy was based had come under serious question as early as 1961 when the Malayan "Emergency" was officially ended and the British sponsored proposal for the creation of the Federation of Malaysia began to gain momentum. What was important about the Malayasian idea in terms of the Forward Defense Strategy was that it was not only indicative of an erosion of British ability to contribute to the security of Southeast Asia but also its success would erode British willingness to contribute to the security of that region. On the one hand, the Malaysian idea was indicative of a diminished British ability to contribute to the security of the region inasmuch as that idea was envisioned as a practical resolution of a colonial problem which would pave the way for eventual withdrawal of the financially pressed British from Southeast Asia. On the other hand, any proposal which involved the transition of a British territory from colonial status to

independence was bound to diminish British willingness to insure the security of that territory since, irrespective of a metropolitan power's commitments to the future security of a region, both national prestige and the requirement of protecting colonial administrators made its commitment to the security of a colonial possession far stronger and more automatic than any security commitment to a former colony.

Unfortunately, the impact of the Malaysian idea on the assumptions which underpinned the Forward Defense Strategy was not publicly debated in Australia. Rather, the public Australian debate on the matter tended to focus only on its impact on the operational effectiveness of Forward Defense, which in turn seems to have led to broad-based Australian support for Mr. Menzies' November 17, 1961, statement that the Malaysian idea was an:

> . . . imaginative and far-sighted concept . . . (which) if it proved practicable could contribute significantly to stability and progress in an area in whose development and progress Australia was deeply interested.[42]

Viewed in retrospect, Mr. Menzies' criterion of practibility concerning the Malaysian idea should have received much closer Australian scrutiny in terms of the Forward Defense Strategy. What followed was that by precipitating the second Indonesian "confrontation," which in turn placed an enormous strain on an already hard pressed

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[42]C.P.D. (1963), XXXVIII, p. 196.

British treasury, the Malaysian idea ironically hastened the retreat of British influence from the Southeast Asian region.

This is not to suggest that the Australian Government could have either headed off the Indonesian "confrontation" or have foreseen that the economic pressures generated by a British military buildup in the Malayan area would quicken the pace of British withdrawal from that area. Rather, it is to suggest that Australian support for the Malaysian idea should have been much more measured and offered only after exhaustive analysis of its impact on the Forward Defense Strategy. Much more careful consideration of Indonesia's xenophobia, conflicting claims to the North Borneo territories and Great Britain's recurrent financial problems might have led the Australian Government to draw quite different conclusions about the practicality of the Malaysian idea. To have foregone a thorough analysis of those considerations within the context of their probable impact upon Great Britain's continuing ability to exert strong influence in the Southeast Asia region was inconsistent with the Forward Defense Strategy. Indeed, the magnitude of that inconsistency or error of omission was evident when, after giving almost automatic support for British sponsorship of Malaysia, the Australian Government found itself a participant in a security action which proved to be counter productive in terms of the requirements of Forward

Defense to the extent that the creation of the Federation of Malaysia consumed more security than it generated.

Not until 1965, when a British Government under severe economic pressure from a recurrent balance of payments problem began to speculate about its strategic position "East of Suez" in the post-"confrontation" period, did serious consideration of a drastically reduced British ability to exert influence in Southeast Asia enter the public Australian discourse on world affairs. Australian debate over that issue subsequently was intensified by the official termination of "confrontation" and the subsequent British decision to withdraw from "East of Suez." That decision was announced in a series of White Papers on Defense issued during 1967 and 1968.

The first official notification of a British decision to reduce their security role in the Southeast Asian region was presented in the July 1967 Supplementary White Paper on Defense which looked toward British "withdrawal from Malaysia and Singapore by the mid-1970's."[43] That announcement was received in Australia by expressions of both concern and compassionate understanding. On one hand there were expressions of dismay from those Australians who seriously underestimated the extent and depth of the British reappraisal of the Commonwealth of Nations and who tended to cling to the illusion that dissatisfaction with many post-

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[43]Keesing's Contemporary Archives, September 16-23, 1963, p. 22256.

war Commonwealth developments was a prerogative of their own. On the other hand, there were expressions of understanding from those Australians who were grateful for Great Britain's past contributions to Australian security and who had carefully followed the post-war decline in British power.

The latter of these expressions--the official view expressed by the Australian Government--followed from a recognition that Great Britain had ceased to be a great power long before July 1967. Moreover, the holders of that view could reasonably argue that the impact of the British decision on the Forward Defense Strategy could be made marginal or compensated for in the sense that operation of the Forward Defense Strategy required only that Great Britain continue to exercise strong influence in the Southeast Asian region. While the exercise of that influence would be enhanced and made more automatic by the continued presence of large numbers of British forces in the region, it could be reasoned that a strategic situation analogous to that which had been attempted in the North Atlantic region might now emerge in the area to the north of Australia; namely, a strategic situation in which British diplomatic wisdom supported by American power would be supreme. Moreover, the mid-1970's were some distance off and there was still plenty of time during which the British might be persuaded to change their minds or supplementary arrangements might be worked out to fill the security gap

which would be created by the British withdrawal.

Any consideration of persuading the British to reverse their decision to withdrawal was dashed on January 16, 1968, when the British Prime Minister Harold Wilson announced that in the face of a particularly severe balance of payments crisis his Government had engaged in a defense policy review and had concluded that Great Britain's "security lies fundamentally in Europe and must be based on the North Atlantic Alliance." In keeping with that conclusion, Mr. Wilson announced further that his Government had:

> . . . accordingly decided to accelerate the withdrawal of (British) forces from their stations in the Far East . . . and to withdraw them by the end of 1971.[44]

The British decision to greatly accelerate the pace of their withdrawal from "East of Suez" had a profound impact on the Forward Defense Strategy. Most importantly, it signalled that the British Government either no longer perceived important British interests in the Malayan area or it no longer possessed the ability to protect those interests, which meant that thereafter the success of the Forward Defense Strategy became almost wholly dependent on the continued maintenance of a strong American presence in Southeast Asia. In effect, then, the British announcement of January 16, 1968, marked the culmination of a long

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[44] Keesing's Contemporary Archives, January 27-February 3, 1968, p. 22490.

process which had begun in early 1941 with Mr. Menzies' first realization that the survival of Australia during World War II would be largely dependent on the exercise of American power in behalf of Australian interests.

Furthermore, the British decision to accelerate their withdrawal from Southeast Asia forced the issue of the future status of the Australian contribution to the Commonwealth Strategic Reserve: namely, those Australian forces stationed in Malaysia. That issue precipitated a thorough Australian defense policy review which led to the Australian Government's announcement of February 25, 1969, to maintain Australian land, air and sea forces in the Singapore/Malaysian region after the British withdrawal. According to that announcement, the Australian Government intended to maintain two Royal Australian Air Force Mirage fighter squadrons at Butterworth (Penang), a 12,000 man Australian Army contingent at Singapore as part of a joint Australia-New Zealand force, and one Royal Australian Navy vessel in the Malaysian waters.[45] What was particularly significant about this Australian decision was that it represented the first time in Australian history in which Australian forces would be committed to an overseas station without the parallel or concurrent commitment to that same station of the military forces of one of Australia's "great and powerful friends."

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[45]Keesing's Contemporary Archives, March 8-15, 1969, p. 23233.

It is still too early to determine accurately what considerations led to the Australian decision to maintain forces in the Malaysian/Singapore region after the British withdrawal. Since the size of the force involved suggests that the Australian (and New Zealand) Government suffered from no delusions about its ability to fill the British security role in the region, the decision most likely was undertaken with the expectation of either slowing the pace of British withdrawal or taking the lead in the formation of new regional security arrangements which could supplement the American security role in Southeast Asia. On the one hand it could be argued that a strong demonstration of Australian willingness to play a larger security role in the region might encourage the continued maintenance of at least a small contingent of British forces in Southeast Asia and thereby preserve an automatic British response to any development which might threaten the security of the area. On the other hand, it could also be argued that any action which led to the formation of new regional security groupings would ease the security burden being carried by the United States and possibly head off any Vietnam induced precipitate American withdrawal from the Asian mainland.

If the above considerations were indeed those which led to the Australian decision to maintain forces in the Malayan area after the British withdrawal, that decision

was at least partially successful in terms of the first consideration (the new Conservative British Government subsequently announced that it would continue to station a small British force in the Malayan area for the indefinite future) but largely a failure in terms of the second consideration (no new regional security arrangements followed from the Australian announcement and the United States Government subsequently announced that in the future it would play a much more restricted security role in Southeast Asia).

The American decision to henceforth restrict their security role in Asia was announced during July 1969, in what was to come to be known as either the Guam or Nixon Doctrine.[46] The major thrust of that doctrine is that in the future the United States will play a supporting but not a principal role in the defense of its Asian allies. As the subsequent conduct of the Vietnam conflict has demonstrated, the Guam Doctrine operationally means that for the indefinite future Asian wars will have to be fought principally by Asian ground forces with the American role being limited to the provision of air, material, and logistical support.

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[46]Although the Guam or Nixon Doctrine was first announced in "off the record" comments by President Nixon to the American press, an excellent "on the record" statement of that doctrine can be found in "Message from President Nixon to the Congress," Department of State Bulletin, XLIII, pp. 685-88.

Announcement of the Guam Doctrine raised extremely important questions about the present and future efficacy of the Forward Defense Strategy. To begin with, the Guam Doctrine raised important questions about Australia's support for America's Vietnam policy similar to those which previously were raised with regard to Australian support for British sponsorship of the Federation of Malaysia. Specifically, it raised the question of whether Australian support for America's Vietnam policy had not once again ironically encouraged a security effort which on this occasion clearly consumed more security than ever could be generated by that effort. Furthermore, since the Guam Doctrine followed from a clear expression of the American electorate's insistance upon "no more Vietnams," announcement of the doctrine raised the difficult question of whether the catalytic role Australia had sought to play in Vietnam was not counter-productive in terms of the Forward Defense Strategy in the sense that it contributed to a situation which for the foreseeable future will severely limit the American security role in Asia.

What was most important about the Guam Doctrine, however, was that it signalled that within the context of America's world-wide strategic interests and responsibilities, the United States Government no longer perceived that it possessed interests in Southeast Asia commensurate with that portion of American influence necessary to protect those

interests. Since a strong American presence in Southeast Asia which followed from an American perception of important interests in that region which they were in turn both willing and able to protect had always been by far the most crucial operational requirement of the Forward Defense Strategy, the United States' Government's decision to place strict limits on its security commitments to its Asian allies meant the virtual collapse of that strategy. In other words, the announcement of the Guam Doctrine had the same impact on the Forward Defense Strategy as the fall of Singapore had on pre-World War II Australian defense policy.

The collapse of the Forward Defense Strategy greatly confused and bewildered the Australian Government and bred much of the uncertainty which is the principal source of the current instability which characterizes Australian politics. For example, the three changes in the External Affairs portfolio since 1968 and the recent replacement of John Gorton as Prime Minister by William McMahon are largely attributable to the collapse of the Forward Defense Strategy.

Where the Australian Government had gone wrong, of course, was not at the operational level of implementing the Forward Defense Strategy, but at the conceptual level of assumptions which served as the foundation for that strategy. What had happened was that those political assumptions had been eroded and eventually invalidated by the dominant thrust of post-World War II world politics. Indeed, the Forward

Defense Strategy was doomed to eventual collapse from the very beginning since it ultimately rested on the assumption that Australia somehow could halt or arrest the retreat of Western influence from a region whose people have demonstrated a singular and persistent determination to throw off what they consider to be Western domination of their societies.

Chapter 12

CONCLUSION

During the decade of the 1960's, Australian foreign policy was much more diverse and wide-ranging than has been suggested by this survey. Nothing has been mentioned, for instance, about extremely important developments associated with Japan's emergence as Australia's most important trade partner, the vitally important changes that took place in Australian-administered New Guinea, or the liberalization of restrictions on non-Caucasian immigration to Australia. Similarly, only the briefest mention was made of the expanding Australian effort to serve as an impartial but sympathetic liaison between the economic concerns of the industrialized and developing nations; an effort which included Australian membership in ECAFE, a high rate of Australian contributions to the Asian Development Bank, the continuation of the Colombo Plan, maintenance of the large Australian contribution to the East New Guinea economy, and the imaginative experiment in introducing a selective system of tariff preferences for manufactured and semi-manufactured products from the developing nations. Instead, because strategic considerations have prevailed over economic considerations in the formulation of Australian foreign policy during the past two decades, attention in this survey has concentrated on those

central principles of policy and policy relationships which were developed within the framework of the Australian search for security.

The principal criticism of Australian foreign policy at the close of the preceding decade was the decline in Australian initiative and an observable tendency toward policy rigidity which had left Australia in a highly uncomfortable and seriously isolated diplomatic position. In the 1960's, many of the sources of that criticism were coreected. From 1963 onward, there was an observable movement in Australian foreign policy away from a tendency to cling over-long to previously expressed attitudes and policies toward endeavors to develop the potentialities implicit in the rapidly changing patterns of world politics. In large measure, that change in Australian policy was dictated by the fact that in the 1960's the course of world politics brought centers of international conflict closer to Australia and transformed Australia from a genuinely interested and committed bystander into an active participant in politics of the Southeast Asian region.

The high moment of the decade was the firming up of the relationships that under-pinned the Forward Defense Strategy through Australian participation in the Malaysian and Vietnamese conflicts. In mid-decade the Forward Defense Strategy seemingly had become an operational reality and the security of Australia in any predictable period appeared insured. Although that accomplishment

was a major achievement by any measure, it was not a problem-free accomplishment. In particular, it produced its own problems, especially those of sustaining a genuinely independent Australian point of view within a relationship of close association with great powers.[1]

By the close of the decade, however, much of what seemingly had been accomplished by mid-decade was brought into question by the British decision to withdraw "East of Suez" and the American announcement of the "Guam Doctrine." Those developments seriously compromised the Forward Defense Strategy and suggested that in its eagerness to promote the maintenance of a security barrier between itself and Asia, Australia inadvertently or unconsciously had supported and participated in a series of security actions which proved counter-productive inasmuch as those actions probably absorbed more security than they generated. Therefore, the most important question confronting the Australian Government at the close of the decade was whether the entire concept of Forward Defense had become counter-productive as an approach to insuring Australian security. While the answer to that question belongs to the future, by the end of the decade it was clear that the key problem for future Australian foreign policy lay in a careful and thoughtful reassessment of the Australian-American alliance as well

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[1]For an excellent example of this problem see N. O. Wisebrod, "Australian Decision to Buy the F-111C," Australian Quarterly XLI (1969), pp. 7-27.

as a re-examination of the character of the Australian association with Asian communities.

When viewed in its totality, the dominant theme in the course of Australian foreign policy is that of a continuous struggle between the emotional or cultural allegience of the Australian people and realities of the Australian geographic setting. In general, that struggle has been characterized by a tendency on the part of Australian foreign policy attitudes to become polarized around two conflicting images of Australia's position and role in world affairs. At one pole in that struggle there has been the conception of Australia's position in the world which stresses the social or cultural determinants of national policy and takes as a point of departure the premise that Australia is a Western nation which through an accident of geography is located in a near Asian and culturally alien setting. At the other pole of the struggle there has been a conception of the Australian setting which focuses on the geographic determinants of national policy and holds that Australia is an Asian nation which through an accident of history is strongly Western in cultural and socio-political orientation. Throughout Australian history, the former of these two images has tended to serve as the principal inspiration for the Australian approach to world politics. Whereas the Australians always have viewed their cultural heritage as a distinct asset which must be preserved at all costs, during

most of the twentieth century they have looked upon their geographic setting as a distinct liability which somehow must be overcome.

Having conceived of the preservation of their cultural heritage as their paramount national purpose, geography bred a deep and pervasive sense of isolation within the Australian people which led them to be acutely sensitive about their security in a remote and culturally alien geographic setting. In turn, the sense of isolation encouraged the Australian people to turn to the source of their cultural heritage for assistance in fulfilling their national purpose within that setting. In other words, Australian security was envisioned as being essentially a by-product of the success of Western world policy.

In the process of turning to the source of their cultural heritage for comfort and protection, the Australian people came to perceive of themselves as participants in a series of quid pro quo security arrangements with the principal centers of Western strength and influence in world politics. They perceived of themselves as lending strength and protection to the sources of their cultural heritage through the manning of the outer ramparts of a Western centered international political system. In return, the principal centers of Western civilization, in particular British civilization, were expected to come to Australia's assistance whenever non-Western pressures threatened to make

the position of the outer ramparts untenable. Through that perception the Australians conceptually linked the fulfillment of their paramount national purpose with the preservation of the Western centered international political system. Subsequently, the expression of the Australian national purpose within the international arena has involved a continuous effort to retard or arrest the contraction and eventual collapse of the classical or Western-centered international political system.

Prior to World War I, the Australians were unquestionably successful in fulfilling their paramount national purpose. Although concern over their geographic setting produced generalized expressions of fear about the "Yellow Peril," the Australians enjoyed the luxury of being able to pursue their national purpose in a situation of near absolute security which did not require them to think very often or deeply about foreign affairs. That situation was due largely to a fortunate combination of circumstances rather than to the possession of strength or the exercise of wisdom. Throughout that period Australian security rested on geographic isolation, a favorable situation in Asia resulting from the universalization of the Western political system, and the undeniable strength of Great Britain.

During World War I and the inter-war period the circumstances which previously had contributed so much to Australian security underwent a process of change which

transformed Australia's international situation and gravely complicated the problem of insuring Australian security. Technological innovations diminished Australia's geographic isolation to the point where it no longer offered immunity from participation in world politics. In Asia, Japan acquired the character of a modern power and a philosophy of military expansion. Western influence and Western rule, both of which had acted as a buttress to Australian security, were challenged with increasing frequency and success by Asian nationalists. Furthermore, those developments occurred at a time when the relative power of Great Britain was declining. British strength, which had for over a century brought comfort to Australians, no longer provided the same confident reassurance.

The Australian response to those outward signs of the inter-war contraction of Western power was that of an increasingly endangered yet confident outpost of Western civilization which could still rely upon Western assistance when and if the need arose, providing it continued to demonstrate a willingness to serve the sources of that external assistance. In short, the Australian response to those developments was characterized by an effort to intensify the *quid pro quo* security arrangement which was envisioned as existing between themselves and the source of their cultural heritage; that is, increased Australian dependence was matched by increased Australian willingness to serve.

Since it was feared that independent Australian action in world affairs might be interpreted by the British as Australian reluctance to serve, Australia did not fashion an independent foreign policy. Rather, Australian participation in world politics closely followed British Imperial Defense planning.

The Australian people entered World War II without enthusiasm but without protest and with little comprehension of the substantial changes which the war was to bring about in the strategic requirements, ethnic composition, economic interests, and accepted traditions of the Australia community. When the challenge to Australian security finally came from Japan it tended to confirm not only the Australian people's worst fears about the "Yellow Peril" but also their apprehensions about becoming an abandoned outpost left to face that threat unassisted. After the fall of Singapore not even the strongest ties of sentiment could obscure the fact that Great Britain lacked the military power to protect Australia from the uncertainties of its geographic setting. In the end, it was primarily the growth of American strength and the readiness of American leaders to answer Australian appeals which prevented the invasion of Australia and enabled the Australian people to resume the pursuit of their national purpose at the end of hostilities. From that experience many Australians subsequently were all too prone to assume that the United States had replaced Great

Britain and their security was once more assured providing Australia now demonstrated a willingness to serve the United States. A new quid pro quo security arrangement was envisioned as having been established between Australia and the United States.

Much of post-World War II Australian participation in world politics has centered about the ardent search for a new basis of security in a world radically different from that in which the Australian community had grown to nationhood. In the immediate post-war years that search took the unique form of Dr. Evatt's quest for peace and justice through international organization. Under his leadership, Australia took full measure of the collapse of European influence in Asia and sought to solve Australia's security problem through an escape into internationalism.

With the general elections of 1949, Australia returned to strong reliance upon a modified version of the pre-World War II quid pro quo approach to insuring Australian security. That approach was given formal expression in the Forward Defense Strategy: a strategy which sought to establish a Western based security barrier between Australia and Asia. Since the establishment of that barrier required the maintenance of strong Western influence in a region rampant with non-Western nationalism, implementation of the Forward Defense Strategy was not without its serious problems.

During the past decade there were Australian efforts to overcome those problems through the implementation of a policy which takes its inspiration from the notion that Australia was uniquely situated to play the role of a liaison nation between the major centers of Western strength and the developing nations of Asia. Unfortunately, that notion has been largely confined to the realm of Australia's economic relations and to date reliance upon military power remains the dominant theme of the Australian approach to insuring their security.

At the present time Australian foreign policy stands at a turning point. The recent collapse of the strategic doctrine which has inspired that policy for the past two decades requires that the Australian Government thoroughly re-examine Australia's security requirements. Foremost among the questions which must be asked during that re-examination is, first, how serious are the potential threats to Australian security and, second, how much security can Australia reasonably expect to achieve in the contemporary world?

To date, post-World War II Australian foreign policy appears to have been unduly pessimistic about the potential threats to Australia's security and to have sought to realize unduly large or excessive increments of security. This conclusion is derived from a consideration of the most fundamental strategic characteristic of Australian geography:

namely, that only a strong naval power can pose an immediate threat to Australian security. Since Australia's "great and powerful friends" have enjoyed a virtual monopoly of naval power throughout the post-World War II years, one must question whether it was appropriate for the Australians to make large sacrifices in manpower and material resources as well as goodwill with their Asian neighbors in order to insure themselves against relatively remote threats to their security.

Once those basic questions about the nature of Australian security are satisfactorily answered, the Australian people must recognize that the long process of retreat of Western influence and power from Asia is now virtually complete, thereby requiring a thorough analysis of the foreign policy options or alternatives available. There are at least five options from which Australia reasonably can be expected to choose as it sets about relating itself to an Asia now largely free from Western influence and power.

First, Australia can attempt to continue doing what it has been doing since at least 1949. The thrust of that Australian policy followed from the perception of a hostile international environment and sought the assurance of Australian security through heavy reliance upon a strong anti-communist military strategy. It assumed that the alliance with the United States should be regarded as so

fundamental to Australian security that no Australian Government would ever equivocate about either the alliance or the obligations which flow therefrom.

During the past two decades, then, strategic considerations and military planning have dominated official Australian thinking about foreign affairs. In keeping with that strong strategic orientation, the crude but central core of post-1949 Australian foreign policy has been to keep the United States engaged in Asia, especially Southeast Asia, at all costs, even if that meant military engagement. Indeed, the more ardent Australian supporters of the alliance with the United States have argued that operations in hand are better alternatives than promises for the future, and therefore Australia should do everything practical to keep the United States actually engaged in Southeast Asia. One of the more recent expressions of that policy was Prime Minister John Gorton's statement during April 1969 while in Ottawa that he:

> . . . like most people who live in (the Southeast Asian) area, as distinct from people who live in other areas don't dismiss the domino theory as being sheer nonsense. Neither do I.[2]

For Australia to continue in the face of new American policies to maintain the stanchly anti-communist line implicit in Gorton's statement would not only be extremely difficult

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[2]Current Notes, LX (1969), p. 138.

but also potentially harmful to Australian interests. In fact, the Australian decision to maintain military forces indefinitely in the Malaysia/Singapore area after the British withdrawal was at least a partial recognition of difficulties inherent in Australian maintenance of a policy toward Asia which stresses anti-communism and military planning. In part, that decision represented a practical Australian assessment of Southeast Asia "after Vietnam": that is, it represented not only a response to the imminent loss of the British presence in Southeast Asia--which had been anticipated--but also uncertainty over the outcome in Vietnam and the American reaction to that outcome. In other words, the Vietnam conflict made an increasing number of Australians aware that in trying to keep the United States militarily involved in Southeast Asia, they may contribute to the opposite result. The Vietnam conflict bred a general suspicion that, just as the traditional policy covering relations with Great Britain had run out, so had the policy covering relations with the United States.

This is not to suggest that Australia should either renounce ANZUS or completely abandon its role as a catalyst for involving the United States in the Southeast Asian region, for Australia and the United States continue to share concurrent and complimentary interests in the Southeast Asian region whose protection require the exercise of American power. Rather, it is to suggest that in the future

Australia must be far more judicious in its performance of the catalytic security role and search for new approaches to the issue of relating itself to Asia. Specifically, Australia should attempt to perform the catalytic role far less often than has been past practice and it must once again rediscover that foreign policy formulation primarily is a matter of involving changing national interests and not loyalty.

Second, Australia can return to an older tradition in Australian history: namely, isolationism. Pursuit of a policy of isolationism from Southeast Asia would require Australian abandonment of the Forward Defense Strategy and withdrawal of Australian military forces to the Australian mainland as well as either an intensification of the Australian-American alliance or Australian acquisition of nuclear weapons. Such a policy of limited isolationism has been recommended for Australia on numerous occasions. A recent recommendation to that effect was offered by Walter Lippmann. In one of his final articles, Mr. Lippmann chose to address himself to the issue of the Vietnam war and argue that an American army cannot determine and control the course of events on the Asian mainland. Having thus re-echoed Douglas MacArthur's dictum against the United States becoming involved in wars on the Asian mainland, Mr. Lippmann concluded that:

> The true frontier . . . between the Asian continent and the Western world . . . is the blue water of the Pacific and the bases of American power are not on the Asian

> mainland or on the off-shore islands, but on the further islands of the Pacific. Of these the most natural base for American air and sea power in the South Pacific is Australia.[3]

What is wrong with the policy suggested by Mr. Lippmann is that it would turn Australia into a vast American base and hence a client state of the United States, thereby rendering it politically impotent in Asia. If Australia is to function as a nation and not as an Anglo-American dependency, it must be better prepared to stand on its own feet in Southeast Asia, for unlike the British and the Americans, the Australians really have no choice between remaining in the region or withdrawing.

The crux of the current Australian foreign policy dilemma in large measure flows from past overdependence on American power. What is now required is for Australia to become less dependent rather than more dependent on American power. For Australia to maintain its recent level of dependence on the United States or to increase that level of dependence is fraught with danger. If recent developments in American policy have not heightened Australian awareness of those dangers, they have only to recall the events of early 1942 in order to realize what can happen to a small or middle power which becomes overly dependent on a great power.

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[3]Walter Lippmann, "The Crux in Vietnam," Newsweek, vol. 73, no. 23, (December 2, 1968), p. 27.

The third alternative is for Australia to seek to perform the role of a catalyst in the creation of a new equilibrium of power in Asia. Such an effort would require no abandonment of the policy which has been the political centerpiece of Australian foreign policy--namely, containment of China--but only a change in the means employed to achieve that end. Specifically, it would require that Australia accept a neutral Southeast Asia plus the exercise of Soviet power in South and Southeast Asia. In other words, Australia could seek diplomatically and politically to balance Chinese influence in South and Southeast Asia through the substitute of Soviet power for British and American power in the regiop In fact, it was this notion which the Australian Government had in mind when replying to a June 1969 Soviet suggestion that a new collective security system be created for Asia. In responding to the Soviet suggestion on August 14, 1969, the then Minister for External Affairs, Gordon Feeth, stated that:

> Australia has to be watchful, but need not panic whenever a Russian appears. It has to avoid both facile gullibility and automatic rejection of opportunities for co-operation . . . . In principle, it is natural that a world power such as the Soviet Union should seek to promote a presence and a national influence in important regions of the world such as the Indian Ocean area.[4]

Even if the present Liberal-Country Party Government should conclude that it would benefit Australian interests

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[4]Current Notes, vol. 40 (1969), p. 414.

to follow up Mr. Feeth's suggestion with a policy which deliberately sought to employ Soviet power as a counter to Chinese influence in South and Southeast Asia, it is unlikely that it could initiate such a drastic departure in policy. The severe embarrassment suffered by the Government as a result of vigorous criticism of Mr. Feeth's speech suggests that the Liberal-Country Party has made too deep an investment in anti-communism to permit it to work with the Soviets in creating a new Asian power equilibrium. Anti-communism has been a consistent election winner in Australia and despite its fading appeal it is hard to discard. Only in the event the Labour Party should win office in the near future is it likely that the potentialities in this approach will be fully explored.

Fourth, Australia can pursue a policy of actively promoting the growth of truly Asian regionalism as an approach to collective security. This is an issue over which the Government and Labour have expressed strong disagreement. On the one hand, Labour sees regionalism as a release from excessive dependence on the United States. On the other hand, the Government was and remains cautious and even skeptical about the ability of the Asian nations to achieve collective security of the nature envisioned by current American policy.

The current state of Southeast Asian regionalism is seen by the Government as involving a profusion of bi-lateral

and multi-lateral arrangements which are encouraging constructive and creative thinking about self-reliance but should not be forced to take on the burden of collective defense or try to replace American power. In the Government's view, Asia simply is not near enough to a comprehensive and coherent regional security system nor have any of the largest non-communist Asian nations shown a readiness to assume regional security commitments on a sufficient scale.

Although the Government's decision to keep Australian forces in the Malaysia/Singapore region might serve as the nucleus of a regional security arrangement and carries regional political responsibilities, it was seen from Canberra as only a very partial answer to the Southeast Asian security problem. It was a practical response to circumstances brought about by the British decision to step up their withdrawal and was hardly an intellectual conversion to regionalism.

There is, of course, much evidence which can be drawn upon to support the Government's view of regional collective security as an answer to the Asian security problem. Most importantly, it is difficult to avoid the fact that the three Asian nations which either separately or collectively would have to bear principal responsibility for the success or failure of this approach--namely, Japan, Indonesia and India--have shown scant interest in serving as a principal in a new Asian power equilibrium.

It also must be recognized, however, that the American decision to limit their future security role in Asia has dramatically increased the necessity for, and therefore the likelihood for, success of a regional collective security approach to the Asian security problem. In fact, the Guam Doctrine looks forward to the emergence of such an approach and promises strong American support for it.

In the final analysis, then, the issue of regionalism as an approach to security is really a matter beyond Australia's control. While Australia could play a catalytic role in the formation of a regional security approach and contribute to those efforts, the success or failure of any Asian regional effort will ultimately be determined in Tokyo, Djakarta, or New Delhi--if not Peking.

A final alternative is that the Australian people can follow the previously noted suggestion of Messrs. Barwick and Hasluck that their nearness to Asia may bring risks but also provide opportunities for the performance of a uniquely Australian role in world affairs--a role in which Australia would serve as a catalyst to harmonize the interests of the Western world and those of the developing nations of the South and Southeast Asia.

The fact that this suggestion to date has not spread beyond the essentially economic or commercial aspects of Australian foreign policy and has remained subordinate to the strong strategic emphasis in that policy, suggests that

what stands at the heart of the current Australian dilemma is Mr. Menzies' previously quoted dictum that "what Great Britain calls the Far East is to us the Near North."[5] What is significant about that brilliant and often repeated shorthand phrase is that it suggests apprehension and thereby indicates that the Australian approach to Asia has tended to be one-sided. As such, it is not a sufficient basis for harmonious and mutually beneficial relations between nations.

At present, it is questionable whether the apprehension implicit in Mr. Menzies' statement can be reasonably justified. With the important exception of the Vietnam war, there is little evidence which suggests that Australia presently should be apprehensive over the intentions of her nearest neighbors. Without exception, the leadership of Australia's nearest neighbors has passed to a group of men (and women) who in large measure are no longer preoccupied with the heady issue of gaining independence and then demonstrating that independence, but with the less dramatic and less xenophobic but often more difficult post-independence problem of socially unifying their people and setting their nations on the road to economic development.

Furthermore, since the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, the non-Western nations have experienced a considerable diminution in their ability to influence the course of world politics.

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[5] Sydney Morning Herald, April 27, 1939.

Prior to that time, the tendency on the part of both principal participants in the cold war to pursue the allegiance or favor of the non-Western nations had greatly enhanced the political power or influence of the latter and thereby often encouraged irresponsible behavior on their part. Following the Cuban Missile Crisis, however, the principal participants in the cold war seemingly recognized the danger inherent in the divorce between power and responsibility which their power struggle had facilitated and began correcting that situation by drastically reducing their competition for the allegiance of the non-Western nations.

Together, then, the changing concerns of non-Western governments and the changing parameters of world politics would suggest that Australia has far less to fear from its Asian neighbors that it did twenty or even ten years ago. Furthermore, the fact that the nature of these changes in the Australian international setting should have been apparent to all concerned, but seemingly were not, suggests that the long tenure of Menzies as Prime Minister acted as a kind of prolonged twilight of old attitudes. What is now needed is for the Australian people, led by an enlightened Government, to shift the focus of their world view away from the risks inherent in their international situation to the numerous opportunities which lie therein.

In which direction Australian foreign policy will now move is unclear. What is clear is that whether

Australia goes on seeing itself as a Western ally, and whether it is a strong ally or a weak ally, and whether it is allied with Great Britain or America, or for that matter with Japan, Indonesia or India, or whether it breaks policy and sees itself as a neutral or non-aligned either with or without nuclear weapons, it has to know more about Asia than it now does.

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