Australian Strategic Imaginaries

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I certify that the intellectual content of this thesis is the product of my own work and that all the assistance received in preparing this thesis and sources have been acknowledged.

Abstract

This thesis looks at the foreign and defence policies of the Australian Commonwealth from 1901 to 2020, with closest attention being paid to the period between 1942 and 1996. It argues that the thinking of Australian policymakers has been undergirded by a 'strategic imagination', a concept which provided a way of imagining Australia's place in the world and situated Australian national identity in regional and international geo-politics. Since federation, the strategic imagination has itself undergone changes that were largely in reaction to external events. The history of Australian foreign and defence policy can thus be broken up into three broad and overlapping periods corresponding to three distinctive and shifting ways in which policymakers have imagined the geo-strategic landscape in which the national community resides. The first period, from the late nineteenth century to 1967, was greatly influenced by conceptions of Australia as a proud custodian of the British racial ideal in a world dominated by European empires. The second, from the mid-1940s to the early 1990s, was marked by the waning of empire and a developing Australian familiarity with emerging post-colonial states in Asia. At the same time, Australia's strategic alignment with the United States in the overarching Cold War bi-polar rivalry with the Soviet Union strengthened conceptions of Australia as a 'western' country. The third period, commencing with the end of the Cold War, saw Australian policymakers rely on American strategic pre-eminence as a firm foundation for deep integration of the Australian and Asian economies.

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Introduction – A Strategic Imagination

On the 14th of October 1968, Australian Prime Minister John Gorton went beyond the usual remarks on the nation's foreign and defence policy expected from one of his office. It was just over a year since Britain had announced a drastic reduction in its military presence in Asia. Australia for the first time, barring perhaps a few frightful years after 1942, had to come to grips with the end of the military shield of the British Empire. Rather than lament the passing of what had been nothing less than a totemic presence in Australian strategic thinking, Gorton struck a more measured tone. It was time to confront strategic realities:

> 'we have come to a watershed in Australian affairs. No longer can we say, "we are Australian. We are protected by the British Navy. We do not need to protect ourselves… So that now, besides the efforts we ourselves can make, we are, for our own security, dependent more than ever before on the United States Government providing the protection understood to be provided under the ANZUS pact."'[1]

Whether or not this was in fact a watershed in Australian history, what is striking about Gorton's language is the connection that he made between national identity and national defence. This was not a common occurrence. Prime Ministers rarely peer under the bonnet of the nation's foreign and defence policy and lay bare where different components lie, where they are connected, and what assumptions they rest on. Even if they are not always explicitly spoken of, there always are linkages between what a nation thinks about itself and how it structures its foreign and defence policy. One of the central arguments of this thesis is that this can be identified in the history of the Commonwealth of Australia's foreign and defence policy, and can be expressed through the concept of a 'strategic imagination' or 'strategic imaginary'.

Two scholars can help in the sketching out of some sort of conceptual picture for the idea of a 'strategic imagination.'

The philosopher Charles Taylor provides the beginnings of a definition of an imagination, as opposed to other conceptual frameworks that provide the basis for action such as 'theory' or 'ideology'. In his magisterial, *A Secular Age,* Taylor considers the:

> 'ways in which [people] imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations which are

[1] John Gorton, 'Flinders Electorate Liberal Party Luncheon', 14 October 1968, http://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/release/transcript-1938. p. 2.

> normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images which underlie these expectations.'

In doing so, he puts forward the concept of a 'social imaginary', as:

> '(i) the way ordinary people "imagine" their social surroundings… often not expressed in theoretical terms… [but] carried in images, stories, legends, etc… (ii) that it is shared by large groups of people, if not the whole society… (iii) That common understanding which makes possible common practices, and a widely shared sense of legitimacy.'[2]

Shifting from the conceptual processes of an individual situating itself in a community, to that of a community situating itself amongst other communities, a strategic imagination refers to how a national community imagines itself in its geo-political surroundings. This can be expressed in many ways, from national mythologies to political rhetoric. It also delineates the contours of policy potential in proving an imaginative precursor to action. Gorton, for example, voiced how being Australian carried the necessary connotations of being defended by the Royal Navy, and implicitly commented on a defunct belief in the commonality of strategic interests between Britain and Australia.

Michael Hunt has used a similar concept in his thematic study of the American history of foreign and defence policy. Quoting the historian Geoffrey Eley, Hunt argues that American attempts to come to grips with their:

> 'place in the world, should be seen as a form of… "imaginative ideological labour" … clarifying the idea of the nation and giving it concrete expression by creating historical myths, propagating values, and constructing institutions.'

This would, in turn:

> '[determine] "the possible forms of political activity and belief."'[3]

The fact that Hunt groups these beliefs under the term 'ideology' and not as an 'imagination' is unimportant. His account is helpful in shedding light on how a national community can undergo the process of 'imagining' its place among other nations and people groups, and in doing so provide a basis for policy as action.

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[2] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007). pp. 171-172.
[3] Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009). p. 17.

At this point, Hunt's methodological choices on where to 'discover this ideology' can be instructive for the task of thinking about an Australian strategic imagination. He looks at the American 'foreign policy elite' and at their 'public rhetoric' as, 'to be effective' rhetoric must 'draw on values and concerns widely shared and easily understood by its audience.'[4] In the same way, the content of a strategic imagination may be derived from the public and private political rhetoric of an Australian foreign policy elite. While this would assumedly be made up of powerful figures in the making of foreign and defence policy, such as the cabinet ministers of various government departments and intelligence services, and their own public service heads, Peter Edwards argues that Prime Ministers have with few exceptions dominated Australian foreign policy making.[5] For this reason, much of the methodological focus of this thesis will be on the sources concerning this foreign policy elite with the Australian Prime Minister being their most important member.

This thesis grapples with the question: how has an Australian way of thinking about the world, its place in the world, and how to conduct foreign and defence policy been borne out in the history of the Commonwealth?

This raises a central question regarding the existing literature on the history of Australian foreign policy: is the identification of such a longstanding theme warranted? There are always some who, by structuring their approach as a catalogue of major events in history, do not apportion specific historical significance to any one or more particular themes in their chosen field. This may not be done intentionally to assert that all occurrences in any given history hold the same causative weight. Indeed, even these broader studies notice, if only in passing, the significance of particular events and trends in their survey. Their existence, as well as the fact that Alan Gyngell and Michael Wesley's more recent study does note the importance of the British connection in Australia's history of foreign affairs, should thus not impede an approach more focused on specific themes. There are others, T.B. Millar in his survey titled *Australia in Peace and War* for example, who while reluctant to make general claims about what specifically makes up Australian national character do suggest that Australian identity has had an influence on its foreign and defence policies. Finally, two distinct schools of historiography focus on the broader themes that have played in Australia's history of its foreign and defence policy. These involve at their core the tension between Australian national identity and its geographic position. Those who take a 'radical nationalist' view of history, for all its deficiencies, are one such example of this. Their assumption that Australian national

[4] Ibid. p. 15.
[5] Peter Edwards, *Prime Ministers and Diplomats: The Making of Australian Foreign Policy, 1901-1949* (Melbourne ; New York: Oxford University Press in association with the Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1983). pp. 190-191.

identity should be distinctive from the sentiment and symbols of the British Empire can be seen in their approach to questions of national character and national geography. Another is the 'Meaney school', generally characterised by its criticism of radical nationalist historiographies, and its interest in the importance of the psychological and material structures of empire to Australian history. A central tension in the scholarship, and another preliminary question tied to an Australian strategic imagination, is in its connection with Britain and its Empire. As this was the most important relationship to Australian colonial governments and to the newly minted Australian Commonwealth, an answer to this latter question will be helpful in beginning to chart how the strategic imagination was initially constituted and how it changed over the next century.

Of those that have not made the concerted effort to analyse the development of a central theme in Australian foreign affairs, one of the best examples is David Lee's *Australia and the World in the Twentieth Century*. Lee aimed to provide a 'synthesis of the literature on the history of Australia's foreign relations', a 'historical perspective on Australia's connections with the world' and to integrate political, economic and environmental issues in narrative form.[6] While he claimed in his introduction that the 'major theme' of the work was 'the development of Australia's international orientation', it is rarely, if ever, mentioned explicitly after this. Two themes step into this void by implication; the changing economic imperatives for continued Australian prosperity, and the connection with the British Empire. Shifts in both of these form the bases of the 'pivotal' chapter of the book.[7] The impact of the British turn to Europe in the 1960s amidst the decline of their empire in Asia and the Pacific on Australian identity, as well as the growing importance of mineral exports to Japan to the Australian economy are viewed as the two main causes of change here.[8] At one level, it is encouraging for this thesis that such a broad study of Australia's foreign relations has seen the British connection to have been important to changes in Australian identity.

Others have sought to make a more explicit and in depth attempt to analyse the interplay between Australian national character and foreign policy throughout its history. Alan Gyngell and Michael Wesley's *Making Australian Foreign* Policy, for example, seeks an analytical basis for Australian foreign policy decisions from an understanding of Australian identity. While they claim that this is a difficult undertaking, as an agreed upon list of Australian national values does not exist – thus making it difficult to observe a consistent transference of national values into foreign policy, they concede later that the corollary to this, unbridled pragmatism pursuant of 'the national

[6] David Lee, *Australia and the World in the Twentieth Century [International Relations since Federation]* (Beaconsfield, Victoria: Circa, 2006). p. 2
[7] Ibid. p. 122-123.
[8] Ibid. p. 148-149.

interest', is not a satisfactory basis for foreign policy either.[9] Whilst the hazy nature of 'Australian values' provides problems when looking at the relationship between those values and foreign policy, Gyngell and Wesley are in agreement that 'national images' are powerful shapers of a state's foreign policies.[10] Their explanation of the elements that make up the national image touch on familiar themes. Australia's British roots and its natural self-identification as a 'Western' nation are brought to the fore, as is the idea of Australia as a 'middle power.'[11] An 'awareness of Australia's geographic position' of isolation from other Western nations and geographical proximity to Asia is also expounded as a major factor in shaping the Australian conception of its place in the world.[12] Since the economic shift from a reliance on British to a reliance on Asian markets, these separate elements of foreign policy, the preservation of identity and the pursuit of prosperity have created tensions in the national discussion.[13]

In providing his broad historical survey of Australian foreign policy, T. B. Millar was something of an earlier echo of Gyngell and Wesley in noting that there are a multitude of ways in which Australians view the outside world. Millar rejects outright the presence of a clear 'common denominator or principle' in Australian foreign policy.[14] This rejection of a distillation of Australia's national outlook in history into a clear schematic leads him to jettison any thought of an 'Australian ideology' and a 'defined Australian image of the world.'[15] Some determinant factors of Australian foreign policy are, however, seen to influence the Australian population. As Millar concedes:

> 'A shared location and environment, shared institutions, shared myths, a single nationally elected central government (superimposed on six state governments) and a permanent administrative system lead to continuities in policy.'[16]

Glibly, he goes on to state that the main continuity in Australian foreign policy has been 'inertia and apathy'[17], later providing a more helpful account of the more important factors in Australia's history of foreign engagement. The first of these factors, war, is said to have played an important part in Australian history and in the development of foreign policy. Economic policy, understandably, has also played some part in directing Australian approach to the world,

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[9] Allan Gyngell and Michael Wesley, *Making Australian Foreign Policy* (Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2007). p. 275, 283.
[10] Ibid. p. 209.
[11] Ibid. pp. 209-217.
[12] Ibid. p. 217.
[13] Ibid. p. 223.
[14] T. B. Millar, *Australia in Peace and War: External Relations since 1788*, 2nd ed (Botany, N.S.W: Australian National University Press, 1991). p. 1.
[15] Ibid. p. 1.
[16] Ibid. p. 1.
[17] Ibid. p. 2.

particularly in matters of international trade. Finally, Millar touches on the dynamic between geography and culture in Australia. Australia was a 'plantation of European culture permanently located alongside Asia' and, 'remote from her traditional friends (except New Zealand) and major markets.[18] While providing perhaps the clearest denunciation of a specifically 'Australian' outlook, Millar is forced to note the importance of the British connection to the way in which Australians have viewed the world.

Turning now to scholarship that does acknowledge broad themes in Australian foreign policy, the 'radical nationalist' offers one such view. This central dynamic is found in what is depicted as the inevitable progress of the Australian nation state towards the fulfilment of its destiny of cultural and political independence. It claims that a strain of true independent Australian nationalism was present, but dormant, throughout Australian history, only to be 'thwarted' at key moments by British or Imperial sentiment.[19]

David Day's *The Great Betrayal*, displayed one of the most straightforward illustrations of the radical national urge as he documented the frustrating absence of a uniquely Australian national identity during World War Two at a time when the defence of the Australian continent seemed to demand it.[20] The British are depicted as 'beguiling' Australians into believing that her fate hung on that of Britain leading to a commitment of Australian resources to the fighting in Europe and away from Australia.[21] There are clear problems with this stance, however. For one, to a people that, as Day himself writes, 'looked at the world through British eyes[22]', the thought of having to be tricked into defending an empire of which they were proud contributors would have sounded ludicrous.

Neville Meaney has done much to critique the radical nationalist approach to Australian history. Of great importance to Meaney's efforts in this has been the work of Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner, Walker Connor and other scholars of nationalism. They, having 'rejected nationalism's own claims that it is an innate or given dynamic in human societies', provided Meaney with a

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[18] Ibid. p. 6.
[19] See, Neville Meaney, 'Britishness and Australian Identity: The Problem of Nationalism in Australian History and Historiography', *Australian Historical Studies* 32, no. 116 (2001): 76–90, https://doi.org/10.1080/10314610108596148., Neville Meaney, 'Britishness and Australia: Some Reflections', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 31, no. 2 (2003): 121–35, https://doi.org/10.1080/03086530310001705636., Stuart Ward, *Australia and the British Embrace: The Demise of the Imperial Ideal*, 1st ed. (Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Press, 2001). pp. 4-12., James Curran, *The Power of Speech: Australian Prime Ministers Defining the National Image* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 2004). pp. 12-13., Matthew Jordan, 'Pondering Australia's World: Neville Meaney on the Role of Culture, Ideology and Geopolitics in American and Australian Foreign Policy History', in *Australia and the World: A Festschrift for Neville Meaney*, ed. Joan Beaumont and Matthew Jordan, 2013. pp. 49-50.
[20] David Day, *The Great Betrayal: Britain, Australia & the Onset of the Pacific War, 1939-42* (North Ryde, NSW, Australia: Angus & Robertson Publishers, 1988). p. 353.
[21] Ibid. p. 344.
[22] Ibid. p. 7.

critique of a core radical nationalist sentiment, the claim that Australian history has been a struggle 'toward achieving self-realisation' by attaining independent nationhood.[23] He finds, rather, that for much of the 20th century, the myth that did sustain Australian nationalism was a sense of being part of the British Empire rather than being independent of it. Radical nationalists, on the other hand, argue at many points that the true construal of the Australian nation in history had been thwarted by an Anglophile Australian elite or by the British themselves. The 'thwarted nationalism' thesis holds that true Australian nationhood has had its destiny obstructed by either 'unfortunate circumstances, the need for British protection, cultural hegemonic practices or British manipulations.'[24] Meaney identified the aftermath of the Second World War as one period where radical nationalists employ this idea of a 'thwarted nationalism' in order to explain the nation's failure to grasp the nettle of independence.[25] In the words of Grant, 'one might have expected that as the nation grew…our dependence [on Britain] would diminish.' But as this did not eventuate, and in a classic articulation of the thwarted nationalism idea, Grant blames the Anglophile Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies, who dominated post-war Australian national politics as the one who 'prolonged Australia's adolescence.'[26] The radical nationalist conspiracy asserts that a fringe cultural movement, which had itself dwindled by 1901[27], were and continued to be the legitimate custodians of Australian national character.

Radical nationalist interpretations of Australia's history of international relations have had an enduring hold on those attempting to understand particular aspects of Australia's international behaviour. Among its more notable proponents were Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating and his Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Gareth Evans. When Grant joined Evans to write *Australia's Foreign Relations: In the World of the 1990s* they provided a brief historical overview to give context to Evans' policy agenda.[28] Evans' radical nationalist historiography provided the supportive joists on which to carry out his professed desire to depart from 'restrictive dependency' that Australia had 'suffered from' and build on the 'new freedom and new relevance' in foreign relations that the 1987 defence policy had provided a foundation for.[29] Returning to a Whitlamite

[23] Meaney, 'Britishness and Australian Identity: The Problem of Nationalism in Australian History and Historiography'. p. 78.
[24] Ibid. p. 77.
[25] Meaney, 'Britishness and Australia: Some Reflections'. pp. 125-126.
[26] Bruce Grant, *The Crisis of Loyalty: A Study of Australian Foreign Policy*, Rev. ed, Problems of Australian Foreign Policy 1 (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1973). p. 2.
[27] John Hirst, 'Empire, State, Nation', in *Australia's Empire*, ed. Stuart Ward and Deryck M. Schreuder, 1st ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 141–62., notes that when the radical nationalist paper, *The Bulletin*, wrote disparagingly about the royal patron who ceremonially opened Australia's first Commonwealth Parliament in Melbourne, it was with a 'lone and disreputable voice.' p. 155.
[28] Gareth J. Evans and Bruce Grant, *Australia's Foreign Relations: In the World of the 1990s*, 2nd ed (Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Press, 1995). p. xiv.
[29] Ibid. pp. 29-30.

emphasis on Australia as a 'middle power', Evans' goal was to provide 'a creative form of diplomacy in world affairs' on a more independent footing, with 'room to manoeuvre' in the relationship with the United States.[30]

Consistent with this is their depiction of British sentiment and cultural identification in the early Australian colonies as an obstacle to the realisation of undivided loyalty to an independent Australian nation. They do acknowledge in some way that Australians felt that they 'were British', but this is in the context of a 'thwarted nationalism.'[31] It appears to be no more than an attempt to imbue Evans' new independent approach with faux historical gravitas.

Many, according to Evans and Grant, had shown glimpses of a 'distinctively Australian foreign policy.' Hughes, Bruce, Curtin, Evatt, Spender, Casey, Hasluck and Gorton had all 'tried to strike a distinctive Australian note in their attitude to the outside world', but not to an adequate or enduring degree.[32] For them, it was the Whitlam government that properly inaugurated the great shift toward independence in Australian foreign policy. Australia in 1972 began to 'make its own assessment' of its interests, breaking with the 'obeisance' and 'attitudes of loyalty' felt towards the British Empire and the United States.[33] But Whitlam's brief time in office prevented him from making his approach a permanent fixture in the Australian outlook as he had not 'tackled the essential task of self-reliance in defence.'[34]

One observation on this view of the history of Australia's foreign and defence policy can be made on its emphasis on a narrowly defined conception of Australian self-sufficiency in defence. Day's radical nationalism was, after all, in reaction to a seeming failure of the Empire to come to Australia's defence when threatened by what was thought to be an imminent Japanese invasion. Evans and Grant follow in this tradition when they claim that Australian foreign policy was 'liberated' in 1987 by a 'new confidence' in Australian 'defence capability' following Defence Minister Kim Beazley's Defence White Paper, *The Defence of Australia*.'[35] None of Evans' predecessors, it seems, had been able to craft a truly independent Australian foreign policy. They did not, after all, have the same doctrine of deterrence and defence put forward in the 1987 White Paper. Never mind that this had only envisaged minor border incursions and regional aggression. Australia still had 'alliance obligations', and these would have to be relied on in the event of major war. The real legacy of *The Defence of Australia* was borne out three years after its tabling in

[30] Ibid. p. 344.
[31] Ibid. pp. 17-20.
[32] Ibid. p. 25.
[33] Ibid. p. 26.
[34] Ibid. p. 27.
[35] Ibid. pp. 29-30.

parliament during the Gulf Crisis, where Australia lived up to its alliance obligations by contributing a naval task force to what was at that stage a U.S. led Western coalition.

For all of the problems with radical nationalist historiographies in the field of Australian foreign and defence policy, they do provide the important reminder that Australian defence policy should do as its name suggests – see to the defence of continental Australia. They must concede, however, that Australia's defence had often been pursued through connections with the British Empire, as the example of Deakin has shown, and with the United States of America.

There are scholars that have been more comfortable in identifying longstanding themes in Australian foreign policy. Ten years after the publication of *Making Australian Foreign Policy,* Alan Gyngell provides a history of Australian foreign policy in his work *Fear of Abandonment.* Despite focussing on events post 1942,[36] Gyngell also partially surveyed some events before this time. In keeping with its title, Gyngell centred his analysis on an Australian 'fear of abandonment'[37], referring to a consciousness of geo-strategic vulnerability that was a product of Australian Britishness and the isolation of the Australian continent.[38] This longstanding fear in the Australian psyche found three different policy responses. They were firstly a desire to embed itself with its more powerful allies, secondly attempts to shape the region around it to create a more benign environment and finally efforts to influence the creation of a rules based international order.[39] Like others before him, Gyngell notes the tension between geographic concerns and Australian cultural affinities, and the foreign policy response that this elicits. Reflecting on the concerns of Australian foreign policy at the close of 2016, Gyngell remarks on the inherent tension in contemporary Australian regional security as it is played out in the relationship between China and the United States.[40] *Fear of Abandonment*, like all other works in this survey, tries to deal with the problem that Australian foreign policy makers have faced throughout its history.

Neville Meaney's introductory chapter to his documentary history *Australia and the World*, represents a more concerted attempt to give a thematic survey of whole history of the Commonwealth's posture in foreign affairs. He posits the existence of four distinct periods in Australian foreign policy. Starting with the period from the 1870s to 1905, he claims that this era was characterised by an Australian faith in the defensive capabilities of the British navy*,* despite pressing concerns regarding the colonial activity of other European powers and Asian migration.

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[36] Allan Gyngell, *Fear of Abandonment: Australia in the World since 1942* (Carlton, Vic: La Trobe University Press, 2017). p. 2.
[37] Ibid. p. 11.
[38] Ibid. p. 5.
[39] Ibid. p. 11.
[40] Ibid. p. 361.

These two fears combined in the following period, from 1905-1945, as Japan carved out its own empire in Asia. This was intensified by a pronounced British pre-occupation in European affairs and the potential that the might of the British navy would be concentrated against Germany in Europe and not against Japan in the Pacific.[41] Regional concerns merged with global concerns during the bi-polar Cold-War conflict that succeeded World War Two, leading up to 1969. From 1945 to 1969, Australia looked increasingly to America to be its great power protector as the borders of the British Empire receded.[42] American recalibration of their presence in Asia, heralded by President Richard Nixon's speech at Guam, catalysed the fourth period in Australian foreign policy. From 1969, Australian policy makers were more politically divided in their approach to the outside world. Some hankered for the lost glories of the old British Empire. Others attempted to re-engage American military power – particularly in Diego Garcia – or worried about American commitments to the ANZUS treaty as the foundation of Australian security. Others still worked on Australian relations with third-world nations, either in the interests of trade or security.[43] Meaney's 'four period' approach is unique, focussing particularly on the influence of national culture on policy direction, and the Australian tendency rely on a more powerful Western nation to guarantee her security.

Meaney's periods are structured around the persistent influence of two dominant factors. He identifies the tension between Australia's predominately ethnic and cultural Anglo-Saxon heritage and its geographic isolation from the motherland in the South Pacific.[44] Australia has attempted, in the first instance, to be 'at one' with Britain and the United States in 'facing the world' as a result of this cultural and ethnic heritage.[45] At the same time, the uniqueness of Australia's geographic position and its own appraisal of potential threats have often caused alarm and anxiety in Australian policy makers when their great power protectors seemed oblivious to or uninterested in their concerns.[46] From this, Meaney evinces four 'traditions' in Australian foreign policy. Two behavioural trends arise when considering Australia's relations to their great power protectors. Australian leaders have often taken the worldview of either Britain or the U.S., and have assumed that cultural similarities would be enough to attract the unwavering support of those greater powers.[47] Along with these relational traits, Australian foreign policy has long been concerned with its surrounding political-geography. There has always been an Australian sensitivity to foreign

[41]N. K. Meaney, ed., *Australia and the World: A Documentary History from the 1870s to the 1970s* (Melbourne, Australia: Longman Cheshire, 1985). p. 2.
[42] Ibid. p. 3.
[43] Ibid. p. 5.
[44] Ibid. p. 7.
[45] Ibid. p. 12.
[46] Ibid. p. 13.
[47] Ibid. pp. 14-17.

powers establishing footholds too close to the mainland, and thus, they have tried on many occasions to establish a guarantee like the American Monroe Doctrine in the South Pacific or conducted a program of 'forward defence.'[48] Most importantly, the fourth theme is the Australian capacity for independent action in the face of an 'urgent geo-political crisis that their great power protector would not or could not understand.'[49] It is along these traditions and principles that Meaney periodises Australian foreign policy.

Having developed his ideas on the tension between Australia's Anglo-Saxon culture and its geography, Meaney in 2001 published an article in Australian Historical Studies, *Britishness and Australian Identity* as an exploration of this dynamic and its influence in understanding Australia's relations with the world.[50] Reappraising what he had described in 1985 as 'sources of an Australian foreign policy tradition' Meaney brings to light the idea of a divergent 'community of interest' to the British 'community of culture.'[51] Whilst Australians thought of themselves as culturally British, the geographic isolation of the Australian settlement led to an understandable divergence from London in regards to security concerns.[52]

Stuart Ward builds on this conception, finding a historical precedent for the term 'community of interest' in the writings of New South Wales Governor William Denison, referring to the importance of the defence of Australia to the Mother Country.[53] Ward argues that this term would remain a 'core assumption' of Australian defence thinking from 1856 for more than a century, but 'would always be understood in terms of the particular needs of '"Australia's Empire."'[54] Denison's words, and the fort in Sydney Harbour that bears his name, thus serve as a reminder of 'Australia's instinctive identification with an imperial cause, but also as a remnant of settler-colonial anxieties about the promise of imperial defence.'[55] Following a survey of this dynamic since 1901, Ward concludes that:

> 'in order to allay the security anxieties of a vulnerable people [Australians], the Empire acquired the status of a stable, timeless, and above all, permanent fixture in the Australian strategic imagination.'[56]

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[48] Ibid. p. 16.
[49] Ibid. pp. 19-25.
[50] Meaney, 'Britishness and Australian Identity: The Problem of Nationalism in Australian History and Historiography'. p. 76
[51] Ibid. pp. 84-84.
[52] Ibid. p. 85.
[53] Stuart Ward, 'Security: Defending Australia's Empire', in *Australia's Empire*, ed. Stuart Ward and Deryck M. Schreuder, 1st ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 232–58.
[54] Ibid. p. 235.
[55] Ibid. p. 235.
[56] Ibid. p. 257.

Ward's use of the term 'strategic imagination' is of note. Here, it is a byword for an Australian conceptual posture that sustained unfounded and 'complacent reliance' on Imperial protection well into the twentieth century, despite the realities of Australia's regional problems undermining the Imperial ideal.[57] It can be seen as a creative tension that sustained the possibility that the 'community of interest' did in fact exist regardless of its conceptual fragility. Paradoxically, it also harboured the doubt that challenged the ideal of empire defence.

'Strategic imagination' is used in a slightly different way by political scientist Anthony Burke in his work, *Fear of Security*.[58] Burke does not explicitly mention Meaney's categories of a 'community of Interest' and a 'community of culture' in the same way that Ward does. He does, however, draw on factors that bear resemblance to those of Meaney. In his attempts to look at how security as a 'political technology' has influenced an Australian subjectivity in history,[59] Burke argues that the uniquely Australian 'strategic imagination' has been instrumental in shifting the domain of security concerns from relationships between individuals to relationships between nations. Burke's framing of the strategic imagination is as a collective conception of the national body that gives base to the perception of threats to the group. This imagination is 'primarily spatial', or 'geopolitical', and is linked with ideals of political homogeneity, racial (Anglo-Saxon) superiority, culture and economic prosperity.[60] Henry Parkes, for example, articulated a desire for ethnic sameness, that he 'preserve the type of the British nation', in his justification of laws to prevent Chinese immigration. China was depicted as a possible future strategic threat.[61] Whilst they are articulated in different ways, Burke's and Ward's idea of an Australian strategic imagination agree on the importance of geography and cultural homogeneity in its formulation. Where they differ is in their approach to their source material. Burke seeks to construct the present Australian subjectivity and its resistance to 'progressive and rational change' by looking at history.[62] He uses this to critique the contemporary Australian subjectivity, challenge the political power of fear in mobilising sentiment against 'the other' and offer an alternative in which responsibility for 'the other' is the primary concern of discourses of security.[63] In contrast, the Meaney school uses the term 'strategic imagination' as an analytic in explaining the past conceptions of Australia's world, and not to conjure a contemporary political critique.

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[57] Ibid. p. 257.
[58] Anthony Burke, *Fear of Security: Australia's Invasion Anxiety* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
[59] Ibid. p. 11.
[60] Ibid. p. 17.
[61] Ibid. p. 27.
[62] Ibid. p. 12.
[63] Ibid. p. 244.

While initially cautious of overly simplifying or generalising Australia's history of foreign engagement, scholars such as Millar, Gyngell and Wesley seem to notice the repeated expression of a strategic tension in policymaking. Furthermore, the scholarship that does attempt to provide analysis on the breadth of Australia's history of foreign policy identifies the continuities in these tensions, but also thinks of them as a reflection of Australian national identity and its geographical dilemma. I suggest that the way that policy makers have grappled with these problems are central to the concept of a strategic imagination – the way in which a nation thinks about itself in its region and the world.

Chapter one examines the history of Australian strategic fears from the mid-19th century down to the first decade of the Commonwealth. It considers the interaction between Australia's British national identity, its geographic location, and the strategic presence of European empires in Asia. This can provide a starting point from which to track changes to the Australian strategic imagination in the 20th century.

Chapter two looks at the development of Australian defence policy in the aftermath of World War Two, Australia's strategic view of Asia and its conceptions of the role of its allies there up to the late 1960s. Of interest is the importance that was afforded to the presence of 'white faces' – either British or American – in Asia, in contrast with the British withdrawal to 'east of Suez', and an apparent American retreat to 'west of Hawaii'.

Chapter three scrutinises the stagnancy in Australian strategic thinking during the late 1960s and early 1970s. The continuing adherence to a defence policy that was tooled for a colonised Asia now almost solely relied on sustaining American interest in the region after Britain's turn to Europe. As strategic reality drifted further and further away from how it was imagined by policymakers, conceptual divisions emerged in Prime Minister John Gorton's government between himself and the Defence Minister, Malcolm Fraser.

Chapter four marks Prime Minister Gough Whitlam's attempts to exorcise the imperial taint from the Australian image abroad, and his efforts to develop closer ties with its geo-political neighbours in Asia that were free from the legacy of empire. This occurred alongside a fresh articulation of Australia's geo-strategic situation that lay the foundations for a truly post-imperial Strategic Imagination.

Chapter five interrogates the heavy emphasis on Australia's identification with the 'West' during Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser's time in office and his attempt to come to terms with the effects of decolonisation in Asia on Australia's Cold War strategic concerns. Australia's geographic

location in the south-Pacific, however, sat in tension with its cultural and geo-political alignment with the 'West'.

Chapter six deals with Prime Minister Bob Hawke's efforts to increase Australian access to Asian economies and his response to tensions within the Western alliance due to American and European agricultural subsidies. In contrast to Fraser, there was little friction between Hawke's commitment to the Western alliance and the implication of a greater sense of belonging in the region through 'engagement' with Asia.

Chapter seven inquires into the efforts of Prime Minister Paul Keating and his Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Gareth Evans to provide new ways of deepening cultural and economic ties in Asia after the Cold War. Despite many assertions to the contrary, this was not also a repudiation of Australia's Western credentials, but involved a heavy reliance on the United States' newfound strategic pre-eminence.

By charting the development of a strategic imagination since the mid-19th century, this thesis will provide insight into how Australian strategic thinking has changed in response to external phenomena. What will be revealed is the way the imaginary has adapted to re-alignments of global military, economic and political power, the shifting priorities allies, the emergence of new friends, and the rise of new adversaries.

1

Eggleston's 'Two Ocean Dilemma'[1]

Race and Australian National Identity

> 'The day will come, and perhaps is not for distant, when the European observer will look round to see the globe girdled with a continuous zone of the black and yellow races, no longer too weak for aggression or under tutelage, but independent, or practically so in government, monopolizing the trade of their own regions, and circumscribing the industry of the Europeans.'[2]

So read Edmund Barton, the first Prime Minister of Australia to the House of Representatives at one of its first items of business. The book he quoted from was entitled *National Life and Character: A Forecast*, written by Charles Henry Pearson and published in 1893. Pearson was Minister for Education in Victoria, guiding significant reforms there, and a political mentor to Victorian liberal and future Prime Minister Alfred Deakin.[3] Pearson's book appeared at a time when Australian leaders were starting to fear for their own survival as a European outpost in a threatening Asia. His warning to the 'European observer' had clearly disturbed Barton. China, whose people were considered to be more biologically suited to both the tropical and arid conditions in Australia's north, were thought to have been able to 'swamp' Australia 'with a single year's surplus of population.'[4] This was not considered to be inevitable, but Barton sounded the warning nonetheless when debating the passing of the *Immigration Restriction Act*, legislation that would prevent non-European migration to Australia.

The act and its notorious 'dictation test' would allow Australia to pursue an immigration policy that could bar migrants from Asia, all other non-Anglo Saxons, and prevent the current white Australian population from being supplanted. Officials in London were concerned that this openly

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[1] Frederic Eggleston, 'A Plea for a National Policy', *Round Table 2*, no. 8 (1912). Cited in, Warren G. Osmond, *Frederic Eggleston: An Intellectual in Australian Politics* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1985). pp. 60-61. The journal was published by *The Round Table* Movement, a group founded in Britain in the early 20th century hoping to 'create a scheme of government that cold implement greater imperial unity.' James Stuart Olson and Robert Shadle, eds., *Historical Dictionary of the British Empire* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1996). pp. 958-959.

[2] 1. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 7 August 1901. p. 3503.

[3] John Tregenza, *Professor of Democracy: The Life of Charles Henry Pearson, 1830-1894, Oxford Don and Australian Radical* (Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Press, 1968).

[4] Ibid. p. 5303.

discriminatory immigration law would cause friction for the multi-racial British Empire and its dealings with foreign governments. The British foreign office had already received Japanese protests against colonial immigration bills that treated their race as similar to the Chinese, or 'other less advanced populations of Asia.'[5] Barton thought that a blanket ban on specific racial migration would be the most effective measure, but he also did not want to complicate the foreign relations of the British Empire of which Australia was a part, and so the dictation test was inserted as the mechanism by which to decide who could enter the country.[6] Membership in the Empire was a source of great pride for Australia's white population, as was their Anglo-Saxon heritage, the British roots of the Australian system of government, and its constitution and monarchical symbols.[7] From the birth of the nation in 1901, Australian nationalism was inextricably tied to an identity of Britishness. The *Immigration Restriction Act* constituted the founders' key legislative pillar in an attempt to ensure that this powerful idea of identity and belonging would continue for much of the twentieth century. Barton's speech to the House of Representatives, with one section warning against Asian invasion and the other stressing imperial unity, clearly encapsulates the tensions between Australia's membership in the British Empire as a predominantly Anglo-Saxon community and its geographic proximity to Asia.

This chapter attempts to locate the beginnings of the Australian strategic imagination in the early years of the federated Commonwealth. Australia's British national identity was often in friction with its geographic location, surrounded as it was by European empires and their non-European subjects. Some initial observations of the strategic imagination can be made during the period of decade following from federation.

Nationalism was by the beginning of the 20th century the predominant mode of collective identity in industrialised nations, emerging as a way for individuals to deal with the cataclysmic social changes of modernisation.[8] Towards the end of the 19th century, Australian colonists wholeheartedly took up the mantle of this new form of collective identity in response to rapid

[5] N. K. Meaney, *A History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy, 1901-23*, vol. 1 (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1976). pp. 107-119.
[6] 1. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 7 August 1901. p. 3503.
[7] See, Douglas Cole, '"The Crimson Thread of Kinship": Ethnic Ideas in Australia, 1870–1914', *Historical Studies* 14, no. 56 (1 April 1971): 511–25, https://doi.org/10.1080/10314617108595440., Meaney, 'Britishness and Australian Identity: The Problem of Nationalism in Australian History and Historiography'., and Russell McGregor, 'The Necessity of Britishness: Ethno-Cultural Roots of Australian Nationalism*', *Nations and Nationalism* 12, no. 3 (1 July 2006): 493–511, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8129.2006.00250.x.
[8] Neville Meaney, 'The Problem of Nationalism and Transnationalism in Australian History: A Reply to Marilyn Lake and Christopher Waters', *History Australia* 12, no. 2 (1 January 2015): 209–31, https://doi.org/10.1080/14490854.2015.11668577. p. 211.

industrialisation, urbanisation, and a modern form of democracy.[9] Older patterns of community were eroded and new ideas of social cohesion formed.[10] The highpoint of mass modern nationalism in Australia was in the decade of the 1890s, with New South Wales Premier Henry Parkes being one of its more articulate and authoritative adherents.[11] Australian nationalism comprised of both a sense of racial fraternity with Anglo-Saxons around the globe and a civic sense of being included in a culture and society with British foundations. In his speech at the centenary of the arrival of the First Fleet, Parkes announced that he hoped 'the red line of kinship, would unite the colonies to Britain for generations to come.'[12] Charles Pearson observed that of all the nations to experience modernisation in this period, the colonies in Australia were at the vanguard of this movement toward a collective national identity.[13]

The *Immigration Restriction Act* bears witness to the other side of this feeling of racial and civic commonality with British people and their settler-colonial outposts scattered around the world. This community needed to be defended. Before the era of mass modern nationalism, colonists had worried themselves with how they would maintain their hold on Australia against external threats. Stuart Ward has shown that from the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1854, the prospect that Australia would be vulnerable to attack from Russia in its hostilities with the British Empire arose.[14] From the late 1880s, civic allegiance to the British monarch and pride in the British race prompted a feeling of an Australian responsibility to contribute to the defence of the global British Empire. New South Wales had sent a contingent to the war in the Sudan in 1885. Imperial fervour again catapulted the Australian colonies into the Boer War in the late 1890s. Three hundred thousand people turned out in Sydney to farewell the second New South Wales contingent on their way to fight the Boer militias, a war that would result in the entire annexation of the two independent Boer republics under the auspices of the British Empire.[15] The historian Barbara Penny has remarked on how support for an imperial war became associated with a sense of national accomplishment, where a previously articulated 'vigorous strand of utopian nationalism' had previously celebrated 'Australia's peaceful progress' to nationhood.[16] Since then, Craig Wilcox

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[9] Meaney, 'Britishness and Australian Identity: The Problem of Nationalism in Australian History and Historiography'. p. 81.
[10] James Curran and Stuart Ward, *The Unknown Nation: Australia after Empire* (Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Publishing, 2010). p. 9.
[11] Neville Meaney, '"In History's Page": Identity and Myth', in *Australia's Empire*, ed. Stuart Ward and Deryck M. Schreuder, 1st ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 363–87. pp. 368-372.
[12] Henry Parkes, in, Ibid. p. 369.
[13] Ibid. p. 367.
[14] Stuart Ward, 'Security: Defending Australia's Empire', in *Australia's Empire*, ed. Stuart Ward and Deryck M. Schreuder, 1st ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 232–58. p. 235.
[15] Meaney, *A History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy, 1901-23*. p. 36.
[16] Barbara Penny, 'The Australian Debate on the Boer War', *Historical Studies* 14, no. 56 (1 April 1971): 526–45, https://doi.org/10.1080/10314617108595441. p. 544.

has similarly drawn attention to the compatibility between colonial nationalism and imperial loyalty, specifically expressed in martial preparedness and action during this period.[17] By the turn of the century, a sense of imperial allegiance and membership founded on ideas of civic and racial Britishness completely dominated the political and popular cultural landscape in Australia. At the time of federation, Australian defence and military expedition were deeply rooted in sentiments of imperial pride.

As Australians looked with watchful eye to the threats around them, British race patriotism became both a more exclusive and defensive doctrine.[18] Pearson's *National Life and Character* had, in the words of Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, shaped 'the discursive and psychic frameworks in which much subsequent discussion of changing world forces would take place.'[19] In predicting that the rise of non-Western nations would invariably challenge the European colonial powers, Pearson had set the terms for how cross cultural interactions would be undertaken in Australia. Lake and Reynolds are right to emphasise the transnational aspect of Pearson's work and its wide-ranging influence over debates in the United States of America, but his work also had particular implications for Australian nationalism. [20] Literature that blurred the line between fiction and prediction, buttressed by studies from the likes of Pearson, aroused increasing concern about a future racial conflict at the time of Australia's coming to formal nationhood.[21] Pearson himself thought of Australia as the last remaining part of the globe that was available for non-Asian occupation, with a climate in its south that was tenable for European colonisation and an indigenous population that would not offer troubling resistance.[22] Because he did not have the same triumphalist tone as other British race patriots, his work justified a Gold-Rush era fear of Chinese immigration and brought a particular respectability to dystopian narratives of a forthcoming Asian invasion. Invasion scare novels had risen to prominence in Europe in the 1870s. In Australia, they depicted racial confrontation between Anglo-Saxon colonists and Chinese or Japanese migrants, and a need for white Australia to expel those migrants from the country.[23] In such narratives, race became a byword for nation, colour for culture, and vice versa. Social

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[17] Craig Wilcox, *Australia's Boer War: The War in South Africa, 1899-1902* (South Melbourne, Vic. ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002). p. 18.
[18] Curran and Ward, *The Unknown Nation*. p. 11.
[19] Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the Question of Racial Equality* (Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Publishing, 2008). p. 92.
[20] Ibid. p. 87.
[21] David Walker, *Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia, 1850-1939*, UQP Australian Studies (St. Lucia, Qld: University of Queensland Press, 1999). pp. 4-5.
[22] Ibid. p. 46.
[23] Neville Meaney, '"The Yellow Peril": Invasion Scare Novels and Australian Political Culture', in *The 1890s: Australian Literature and Literary Culture*, ed. Ken Stewart, UQP Studies in Australian Literature (St. Lucia, Qld.: University of Queensland Press, 1996). pp. 228-263.

Darwinism lent a 'pseudo-scientific authority' to a view of international politics that saw a future conflict fought over racial survival.[24] This way of viewing the world would have great implications for the fears and anxieties underpinning Australian nationalism. Australians viewed their Asian neighbours with a suspicion that was exacerbated beyond comparable European or American invasion fears, due to their geographical proximity to the 'east'.

Development of a Commonwealth Defence Policy

Racial attitudes and the nascent forms of Australian national identity pre-federation had long influenced Australian debates on defence, it was during the decades either side of the year 1901 that the basic tenants of Australia's geopolitical dilemma could be said to be ingrained in the Australian strategic imagination. Once Australians received independent nationhood, political leaders and public commentators underwent an imaginative process, started in earnest by their colonial predecessors, to determine how the new national community would relate to the world. These early Australian national leaders regarded the defence of Australia with the proper sense of importance befitting any sovereign government. But their pride in the empire of the global British race, and suspicions of specific challengers to the dominance of the continent, who from the late 19th century were increasingly depicted as Asian, had a particular influence in establishing the contours of their mental maps. The Australian strategic imagination, the cognitive picture of Australia's international position, was largely shaped by these factors.

It began in the movement for Australian Federation. This process picked up considerable momentum following Sir Henry Parkes' 1889 invitation to his Victorian counterpart, Premier Duncan Gillies, to join a 'Parliamentary Convention of Australasia' which would be followed by the drafting of a federal constitution.[25] After Parkes' famous speech in Tenterfield, Gillies, who had preferred to work through the previously established but so far ineffective 'Federal Council', agreed. In that speech, Parkes had argued that 'the whole of their [Australian colonies'] forces should be amalgamated into one great federal army' as this was 'essential to preserve the security and integrity' of the colonies.[26] Invitations to these new federal meetings were sent to all the

[24] Ibid. p. 229.
[25] J. A. La Nauze, *The Making of the Australian Constitution*, Studies in Australian Federation (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1972). pp. 6-7.
[26] 'Sir Henry Parkes at Tenterfield', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 October 1889. p. 8.

Australian colonies, to New Zealand and to Fiji.[27] J. A. La Nauze, Australia's 'great'[28] constitutional historian, considered it very likely that Henry Parkes made use of the colonies' defensive concerns and the possibility of a 'federation of the forces' to gather support for his federative agenda.[29] That is not to say that defensive considerations were merely a façade to lure colonial governments to the negotiating table. La Nauze notes that the liveliest debate in these discussions centred on the retention of state rights, and less ardently, on the compatibility of state fiscal policies. Defensive concerns were, however, a central, if inconspicuous aspect in the early drafting of the constitution.[30]

Neville Meaney argues similarly that the 'chief stimulus' to federal union was the goal of a federal defence policy, and that the other issues were debated so passionately because of the diversity of views held on them.[31] This view is largely echoed by the two men tasked with originally framing the constitution, J. Quick and R. Garran.[32] That Edmund Barton gave little explanation to the 'self-evident' federal control of Australia's defence suggests that the establishment of a defence policy provided a common goal in an otherwise tempestuous debate.[33] Opposing this interpretation, T. B. Millar takes the record of the federal debates at face value, arguing that the lack of debate on defence policy was a sign of its relative unimportance when compared to domestic topics.[34] David Dutton is in agreement on this point, claiming that the success of federation can be attributed to the desire of the commercial, professional and middle classes to remove trade barriers that lay between the states.[35] He offers little evidence in support of this however, whilst Millar's judgement is at best a passing one. Clearly, there were economic and other considerations in the drafting of the Australian constitution, but the overarching need to respond to the perception of external dangers gave these discussions an extra layer of importance.[36]

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27 La Nauze, *The Making of the Australian Constitution*. p. 10.
28 Helen Irving, 'A Nation Built on Words: The Constitution and National Identity in America and Australia', *Journal of Australian Studies* 33, no. 2 (1 June 2009): 211–25, https://doi.org/10.1080/14443050902883421. p. 214.
29 La Nauze, *The Making of the Australian Constitution*. p. 9.
30 Ibid. pp. 39-40.
31 Meaney, *A History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy, 1901-23*. p. 34.
32 J. Quick and R. R. Garran, *The Annotated Constitution of the Australian Commonwealth,* Sydney: 1901, p. 503. Cited in, Luke Trainor, 'British Imperial Defence Policy and the Australian Colonies, 1892-95', *Historical Studies* 14, no. 54 (1 April 1970): 204–18, https://doi.org/10.1080/10314617008595419. p. 209.
33 Meaney, *A History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy, 1901-23*. p. 34.
34 Millar, *Australia in Peace and War*. p. 17.
35 David Dutton, 'A British Outpost in the Pacific', in *Facing North: A Century of Australian Engagement with Asia*, ed. David Goldsworthy ([Canberra] : Carlton South, Vic: Dept. of Foreign Affairs and Trade ; Melbourne University Press, 2001). p. 25.
36 Charles S. Blackton, 'Australian Nationality and Nationalism, 1850–1900', *Historical Studies: Australia and New Zealand* 9, no. 36 (1 May 1961): 351–67, https://doi.org/10.1080/10314616108595188. p. 356.

Federation of the colonies in 1901 satisfied Australian national aspirations, and no demands for a formal independence from Britain were made.[37] For the most part, Australian defensive planners were prepared to engage with the broader structures of empire defence, to contribute treasure to the maintenance of British naval squadrons in the Pacific and to agree to come to Britain's assistance in time of war. They were, however, loath to sign up to lofty ambitions for an Imperial Federation where they felt that their distinctive Pacific interests might be subsumed or ignored by the more powerful and influential voices in London.[38] This was a tension that was felt very keenly by many Australian politicians. They were part of the global British Empire and very much relied on British sea power for their safety, but at the same time did not trust the Admiralty to put Australian security on the same level as the British Isles.

Before Federation, the different governmental offices in London tasked with colonial defensive and foreign policy had been in favour of a single Australian defence force. Colonial troops from New South Wales had come to the aid of the empire in 1885, and there was a push from the Colonial Office to formalise this kind of action under the command of Imperial officers.[39] Luke Trainor has shown that there were also the difficult questions of control and mobilisation. The Australian Naval Squadron, while subsidised to some degree by the Australian colonies, lay under the control of the Admiralty. It was clear that the squadron would be used for British purposes with no guarantee that cruisers based in Sydney would ever defend Port Jackson if a more pressing need presented itself elsewhere. This reality disturbed colonial Premiers greatly, but did not cause them to withdraw their support for the agreement.[40]

Land defence had offered similar problems. Would Australian troops be sent to fight overseas in defence of the Empire, or would the protection of the continent take priority? The way in which the federalists dealt with this question is instructive on their aims for an Australian defence policy. Proposals put forward by New South Wales' British commandant, Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Hutton, to begin the federalisation of Australia's defences were rejected by all colonial Premiers at the 1896 Federal conference in Hobart.[41] Their reasoning, Hutton reported, was that his proposals would 'minimise the importance of the larger federation in the eyes of the Australian public' and 'eliminate one of the strongest arguments in its favour.'[42] It seemed that the defence of Australia

[37] John Hirst, 'Empire, State, Naiton', in *Australia's Empire*, ed. Stuart Ward and Deryck M. Schreuder, 1st ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). p. 158.
[38] Meaney, *A History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy, 1901-23*. p. 35.
[39] Trainor, 'British Imperial Defence Policy and the Australian Colonies 1892-95'. p. 205.
[40] Ibid. p. 205.
[41] Or New South Wales' rank of Major-General, Meaney, *A History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy, 1901-23*. p. 29., Trainor, 'British Imperial Defence Policy and the Australian Colonies 1892-95'. p. 213.
[42] Trainor, 'British Imperial Defence Policy and the Australian Colonies 1892-95'. p. 213.

would require an Australian solution, namely, federation. Unfortunately, there was no clear way forward on issues of defence policy for the new Australian federal parliament. Questions of defence remained inextricably linked to a reliance on the military resources of the Empire and accompanied by doubts that those resources would be adequately mobilised when Australia was in need.

Federation also raised the possibility of what a national foreign policy would be, or if it would even have one at all. There were no constitutional grounds until 1942 for Australia to make its own foreign policy per se, but there were powers for the federal government to manage 'external affairs.'[43] Reflecting the general legal and political consensus on this conundrum, Barton, as the first Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs, declared that Australia could have no foreign policy of its own.[44] Australian policy was an Imperial affair, and was decided by the Committee of Imperial Defence in London. This was not to say that there was not a uniquely Australian way in how it perceived the world around it, or even that Australia did not have the capacity to promote a certain policy within Imperial channels, but to stress that the British Empire spoke with one voice when dealing with international issues. At the very least this was the hope, that the Empire ought to act as one for the benefit of all members of the Empire. Scholars have rightly questioned whether Australia traditionally had what could be called a foreign policy until the ratification of the Statute of Westminster in 1942, the legislation that formalised the independence of the white 'dominions' of the Crown such as Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. T. B. Millar and Peter Edwards argue that in these early years of Australian government, 'foreign relations generally were a matter for Westminster and Whitehall', but give proper emphasis to the political dominance and proactivity of Prime Minister Sir Alfred Deakin in pursuing Australia's international interests.[45] David Dutton has echoed this argument. The portfolio of 'external affairs was understood as the authority to conduct relations within the British Empire.'[46] He departs from Millar and Edwards when he argues that the Commonwealth was reluctant to show initiative on issues of foreign policy, regardless of their constitutional constraints.

Still, others have argued that while Australia had no constitutional powers to promote foreign policy there were clear, distinctive goals that its earliest Prime Ministers worked towards in terms of articulating a set of Pacific centred priorities. Deakin is the figure that is often cited here, as he conducted diplomacy with a clear idea of Australian interests, worked within the constraints of the

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[43] Joan Beaumont, *The Evolution of Australian Foreign Policy, 1901-1945*, Occasional Paper, no. 1 (East Melbourne, Vic: Australian Institute of International Affairs, Victorian Branch, 1989). pp. 1-2.
[44] Meaney, *A History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy, 1901-23*. p. 91.
[45] Ibid. pp. 23-25. Edwards, *Prime Ministers and Diplomats*., Is in agreement. p. 28.
[46] Dutton, 'A British Outpost in the Pacific'. p. 27.

Imperial relationship, and most importantly, leveraged the relationship in pursuit of those interests. Peter Edwards, for example, argues that Australia developed 'what might be called a proto-policy' in its attempts to reform 'imperial machinery' so that it would better serve Australian interests.[47] Similarly, Joan Beaumont claims that Australians since the 1870s had held a 'grandiose vision of their manifest destiny in the region', and that they desired to act on behalf of Britain in keeping the Pacific free from foreign powers.[48]

The work of Neville Meaney, the scholar who has done the most work on Australia's foreign relations and defence policy in this period, has documented this most closely. Parts of his analysis question the relevance of the conclusions wrought by the legalistic approach of the commentators above that have seen Australia's constitutional capacity to make foreign policy as an overriding interpretive constraint. Meaney instead emphasises the advocacy of Prime Minister Alfred Deakin, who while never seeking to break the relationship with Britain, certainly used Imperial channels in an attempt to manipulate London to adopt a preferable position to his perception of Australian security needs. Meaney's arguments in this regard are revealing of the way in which Australian political leaders crafted responses to external events in continuity with an independent Australian perspective, showing the maturation of a policy that drew on an imaginatively constructed strategic picture of Australia's place in the world.

The Defence Act of 1904, for example, stated that Australian troops could not be used overseas and was an attempt to limit the way in which the Australian government could respond to future British demands for manpower.[49] Naval Policy followed along similar lines. There were concerns about the Admiralty's doctrine of naval concentration, that forces set aside for local Australian defence would be enveloped in broader Imperial plans in a time of war and out of position when Australia herself were threatened.[50] Deakin's faith in the British government's stores of sympathy for Australian desires in the Pacific was often challenged. By resolving, for example, a longstanding Anglo-Franco struggle over the occupation of the New Hebrides islands to Australia's north east, London had ignored Australian anxieties of there being a foreign power with influence so close to home by entering into a joint agreement with the French. Downing Street, in Deakin's words, had shown a 'wilful indifference' to 'Australian external affairs.'[51]

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[47] Peter Edwards, *Prime Ministers and Diplomats: The Making of Australian Foreign Policy, 1901-1949* (Melbourne; New York: Oxford University Press in association with the Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1983). pp. 3-4.
[48] Beaumont, *The Evolution of Australian Foreign Policy, 1901-1945*. p. 4.
[49] Meaney, *A History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy, 1901-23*. pp. 68-74.
[50] Ibid. pp. 75-90.
[51] Ibid. p. 104.

It was not until 1905, however, that a genuine fear of invasion stimulated Australian Imperial diplomacy into developing a uniquely Australian posture in foreign affairs. When the Japanese Imperial Navy defeated Russia at the 1905 battle of the Tsushima straits, the prospect of an Asian invasion became considerably real and inspired a new wave of invasion literature. Australian leaders now feared not only a migratory invasion from the north but a military one too. Deakin gave voice to Australia's strategic predicament, 'Japan at her headquarters is, so to speak, next door, while the Mother Country is many streets away, and connected by long lines of communications.'[52] Worse still, when it came to the 1907 Imperial conference, London had watered down Deakin's suggestions for an improved Imperial structure in which self-governing colonies would have more say over the Empire's foreign policy, and later rebuffed his wishes that Australia have control over a new flotilla of naval vessels for their own defence.[53] The British saw no problem with Japanese militarism in the Pacific, as they had negotiated an alliance with the Japanese that allowed them to focus more closely on the tensions in Europe and the Mediterranean. Perturbed with Britain's 'neglect' of the Pacific, Deakin used the U. S. Navy's proposed world cruise to show his dissatisfaction with official Imperial policy, requesting through the Colonial Office that an official invitation to stop over in Australia be forwarded to President Roosevelt in Washington. He then circumvented the official channels and made contact with the United States Consul-General in Melbourne personally, a manoeuvre that forced London's hand in extending the invitation, and caused more than a little irritation at his indiscretions.[54] When Deakin invited the Royal Navy to conduct a similar tour in the wake of Roosevelt's Great White Fleet, hoping that this would spur them to play a more active role in the Pacific, the British refused. The Admiralty were worried about how such a visit may have been construed as a 'counterblast' to the American visit, and that they did not have the ships to spare to pose a comparable show of force. Public refusal, on the other hand, would have been a humiliating confession that Imperial military resources were indeed so stretched.[55] In accepting the subsequent private refusal, Deakin showed that he did not want to publically humiliate London, nor want them to necessarily break the Anglo-Japanese alliance. The precariousness of the alliance, however, was his main concern, and he sought to show that it was not an adequate protection for Imperial interests in the Pacific.[56]

Deakin's diplomacy in this instance provides a good picture of the developing Australian impulse in foreign affairs. The British relationship, undergirded by pride in the 'British race', a

[52] Ibid. p. 122.
[53] Ibid. pp. 141-150.
[54] Ibid. pp. 163-165.
[55] Ibid. p. 172.
[56] Ibid. p. 172.

sense of being contemporary custodians of British civic values, and the nature of Australia's constitutional and military reliance on the political structure of the Empire was a central article of faith for the Australian nation and how it looked abroad. A corollary to their self-identification was a deeply held suspicion of the non-British and non-European peoples to Australia's north, expressed in works of fiction but also in 1905 like *National Life and Character*. Suspicion turned into genuine fear when Japan exacted a resounding military defeat of a European power, Russia, to become the dominant power in East Asia. In combination, these two psychological factors drew Australian attention to estimations on Britain's dwindling capacity to play a dominant role in Pacific security. Deakin confronted this problem by seeking to privately shame the British, though not to bring public humiliation on the Empire, into positioning a greater concentration of ships in the Pacific. Britain, however, was unable to do so due to rising tensions in Europe and in meeting other demands of its global Empire.

Fredrick Eggleston was perhaps the most articulate theorist to voice the Australian perspective of this problem in these early years of the Commonwealth. Writing in 1912, in 'A Plea for a National Policy' he wrote:

> 'Hitherto Australians have relied upon England alone for the conduct of policy, and willingly; for they conceived the interests of both parts of the Empire to be the same. Now that we find that the defence of Australia depends upon an entirely different set of problems from those which face England the Australian point of view is inclined to change. Can any nation depend for its defence upon a foreign policy conducted by statesmen responsible to another nation?'[57]

Eggleston was no Anglophobe; he was on the contrary of the belief that Australian independence in matters of foreign and defence policy would allow it to participate more fully in the ideal of a multi-polar British Empire.[58] Being a proponent, however, of a 'Pacific-centred' rather than 'Eurocentric' perception of the world, Eggleston astutely drew attention to the current tension in the Australian strategic situation that Deakin had previously encountered.[59] Eggleston argued that the Admiralty's 'Blue Water' doctrine of concentration would be of no use in defending the peripheries of the Empire. A central notion of the doctrine was that naval resources would not be weakened through their division in a time of conflict, and that European threats would be engaged by this concentrated force as a matter of priority. Labelling this the 'Two Ocean Dilemma', Eggleston had given Deakin's strategic fears a sophisticated explanation. He affirmed

[57] Eggleston, 'A Plea for a National Policy', pp. 717–24. Cited in, Osmond, *Frederic Eggleston*. pp. 60-61.
[58] Osmond, *Frederic Eggleston*. p. 62.
[59] Ibid. pp. 61-64.

the very real possibility that when it came to it, the defence of the British Isles would be ensured before London would deploy the Royal Navy in defence of Australia.

The Two Ocean dilemma thus spoke to the heart of Australia's strategic situation as perceived by early leaders of the Commonwealth. It reflected conceptions of Australia's imagined place in the world, being a loyal and proud member of the British Empire that was vulnerable to the geo-political movements north of the continent. This could stem from the machinations of European colonial powers, or more worryingly, from the people of Asia either through unencumbered migration or developing regional militarism. The movement toward federation was motivated in part by the need to develop a co-ordinated Australian response to such fears. Such a response had to deal with the reality that being militarily dependent on the Empire meant that the defence of the mother country would be prioritised over the defence of the Australian continent. Deakin, above all other early Prime Ministers, pursued a legislative policy and imperial diplomatic activism in order to compensate for this weakness in Australia's strategic situation, while trusting in Immigration law passed by his predecessor to retain an ideal of Anglo-Saxon ethnic purity at home.

Three particular qualities of the Australian strategic imagination can be seen at this stage. Firstly, this was the imagination of a British people who had made their home on the Australian continent, looking to imperial protection and English speaking friends in order to assuage their geo-strategic anxieties in an alien and threatening corner of the world. Secondly, Australian responses to these perceived threats included both independent and collective approaches. This was seen in the move toward establishing independent Australian land and naval defences, and the attempt to more comprehensively engage the centres of imperial power with the Australian geo-strategic perspective. Finally, Australia's geographic location placed it precariously closer to these potential enemies than it did to its natural friends and kinsmen. The corollary to this was that although Barton, Deakin and Eggleston, felt themselves to be just as British as those living in motherland, the defence of their southern home would always be a second priority within the global imperial structure.

2

Shocks to the Imperial Imaginary, 1942-1970

'I speak to you tonight under the shadow of a heavy and far reaching military defeat', announced the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, 'Singapore has fallen, and the Malaya Peninsula has been overrun.' For those listening in Australia, it was a heavy defeat and grievous psychological shock. Despite the nagging doubts that had plagued the strategic imagination since the time of Deakin, Australian defence planning had been based on the military capacity of the British Empire to come to Australia's aid in its hour of need and more specifically on the impregnability of Singapore. When that great bastion of British Imperial might in South East Asia fell to Japanese invasion, the strategic imagination was shaken as never before. The worst fears of those like Eggleston, and others, had been realised.

The variety of reactions to the surrender of Imperial troops in Singapore shows that this was parsed by Australian observers in a complex way. Despite the cataclysmic failure of Imperial planning, *The Telegraph* touted Churchill's promise 'to Australia and New Zealand that every effort would be made to preserve their safety.'[1] While the myth that the Empire could provide total defence for the Australian continent had been shattered, British claims to have not completely abandoned Australia seemed to provide some comfort, so much so that these reassurances headlined *The Telegraph* along with the breaking of the news itself.

In contrast to this, the Australian Prime Minister's rousing call to arms for the 'defence of Australia' came in further down the front page. This speech from John Curtin presented a similar picture. 'No longer may we allow any stultification of our own efforts by dependence external forces and external support' he warned. External support was coming, but promises such as these had just been proved to be untrustworthy. As Curtin now believed Australia to be under threat of imminent invasion, Australia could not afford to wait. Everything was to 'now be mobilised.'

The failure of Imperial defences that had left Australia open to attack was clear to Curtin, yet his choice of metaphor to communicate this suggests that he still saw the world through British eyes. The fall of Singapore was 'Australia's Dunkirk.' Just as the 'fall of Dunkirk had initiated the Battle of Britain', the 'fall of Singapore opens the Battle for Australia' and now Australia and the

[1] 'Churchill Announces Fall of Singapore Says: "Far Reaching Military Defeat"', *The Telegraph*, 16 February 1942. p. 1.

United States of America were responsible, in large part, for the 'fate of the British speaking world.'[2] These were strained comparisons, but an editorial in *The Sydney Morning Herald* understood the essence of the comparison:

> 'He called Singapore "our Dunkirk", which it is, in that the Imperial forces have withdrawn from the last foot of the neighbouring continent, and that in consequence the enemy is now able to turn in strength upon this last base of the British Empire in the Pacific.'[3]

The British people of the North-East Atlantic and the South Pacific, separated by geography, were now facing similar tests of survival. Just as the people of the British Isles had defended their shores, now it was Australia's responsibility to defend theirs for the Empire.

It became clear after 1942 and with the onset of the Cold War that Australia could not wholly rely on the Empire for its defence. Yet British sentiment and the importance of the Imperial, alongside Australian and other allied military forces would continue to occupy an important place in the Australian strategic imagination for a considerable period during the Cold War. The latter would even endure beyond the British bid for entry into the Europe Economic Community and the resultant diminishing of British sentiment in Australia. To Australian policy makers, the significance of the British military to its strategic goals would not flag until 25 years later, when the British government announced that it would withdraw from Singapore, and everywhere 'East of Suez', for good. The newspaper headlines that day did not contain the reassurances of a British Prime Minister, only ominous phrases such as 'Waken to our peril', 'Australia in Danger', and 'Far East Death Warrant'.[4]

This chapter looks at the intervening years, and in particular at how the one final blow to this form of the Australian Strategic imagination struck in 1969. In 1942, the myth that British power was enough to ensure Australia's defence was put to rest once and for all by the fall of Singapore. As the Cold War between the West and the Soviet Union began in earnest, Australia looked more and more to America to be its main defensive guarantor. This reached a high point in the rhetoric of Prime Minister Harold Holt in 1966. Australian identity as part of the British Empire, and the desire to defend the wider Empire had not diminished, however, nor had British interest in the further reaches of its Empire. While it became clear that British and American commitments to Asia would not explicitly guarantee Australian security in all contingencies, they became integral

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[2] 'Battle for Aust. Has Opened', *The Telegraph*, 16 February 1942. p. 1. See James Curran, *Curtin's Empire*, Australian Encounters (Port Melbourne, Vic: Cambridge University Press, 2011). p. 84-86., for similar rhetoric from the Prime Minister invoking the unity of British people in facing the challenges of war.
[3] 'Singapore Our Dunkirk', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 February 1942. p. 4.
[4] Jeppe Kristensen, '"In Essence Still a British Country": Britain's Withdrawal from East of Suez', *Australian Journal of Politics & History* 51, no. 1 (1 March 2005), https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8497.2005.00359.x. p. 46.

parts of Australia's forward defence strategy. The best way to describe this defensive posture is that it was based on whiteness and represented a de-facto imperial presence in Asia from the Australian perspective. Holt harboured a general distrust of native Asian governments in their competency to undergo economic development, to adequately manage threats of communist subversion in their midst, or to maintain geo-strategic stability without the help of Britain or the United States of America. This was alongside a growing concern that 'white faces' remain in Asia, in direct references to both the British and the American presences there. This would not last. Within two years of Holt becoming Prime Minister, both the British and the United States of America announced their intentions to either withdraw or dramatically scale down their presence in Asia.

Australia's Cold War Posture

The end of the Second World War offered Australia a new formulation of old strategic problems. As seen above, decades of British assurances about the verities of Singapore's impregnability were proven to be devastatingly unfounded in 1942 when it fell to Japan's southern advance. In defence of the British strategic minds that had made promises about Singapore, Malcolm Murfett has shown that they had not considered that France would capitulate so quickly to the German blitzkrieg and change the strategic situation so dramatically in Europe.[5] Contrarily to 'radical nationalist' claims, this shocking failure of British power in Singapore did not provoke a reappraisal of Australian Britishness. Australia remained very much part of the British world, and wartime Prime Minister John Curtin sought to restrengthening of the Empire's defensive structure and consultative machinery.[6] British capacity to project power across the globe was, however, diminished, and along with the emergence of the Cold War eventually drove Australian policy makers to attempt to engage the United States as the primary benefactor of Australia's defence.

Since the early 1950s, Australia had looked beyond the structures of the British Empire to a broader network of alliances based primarily on the United States to secure its regional strategic interests.[7] American interest in the South Pacific waned, however, as their focus was directed

[5]Malcolm Murfett, 'The Singapore Strategy', in *Between Empire and Nation: Australia's External Relations from Federation to the Second World War*, ed. Carl Bridge and Bernard Attard, (North Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing Pty, Limited, 2000). p. 237.
[6] Curran, *Curtin's Empire*. p. 101.
[7] David Goldsworthy, 'Australian External Policy and the End of Britain's Empire', *Australian Journal of Politics & History* 51, no. 1 (1 March 2005). p. 17.

toward the Soviet threat in Northern Europe. Australian insistence that the United States should have to cover the cost of their military presence at Manus island scuttled any residual American interest in a Pacific security pact.[8] With the U.S. and the U.K. focussing on Soviet activity in Europe between 1945 and 1949, the substantive problem of Eggleston's 'two ocean dilemma' appeared to be visiting itself upon Australia's strategic situation once again. In a moment of anxious hysteria, it seemed to some in Australia that 'every government' in South East Asia could be 'prevailed upon to adopt a policy hostile to us', should Britain and the United States be engaged in a war in Northern Europe.[9] There was also confusion about Australia's strategic priorities. The Department of Defence claimed that Australia's greatest strategic responsibilities lay with the West, and that in any future war, they would have to 'beat Russia first'. They argued in favour of enfolding Australia into the Eurocentric grand strategy of Britain, and were mentally prepared to deploy the bulk of Australian forces to the Middle East if war should eventuate.[10] In the immediate aftermath of World War Two, Australia's strategic perception was dominated by its identity as a British nation involved in Western opposition to the Soviet Union, and fears specific to its geographic location in the Pacific. These regional fears fixated on the uncertainty of how the impulse of decolonisation would affect Australia's geo-political surroundings if Britain and America became pre-occupied elsewhere.

Ben Chifley's post war Labor government put forward two responses to this position, and both highlight Australia's traditional sensitivities to concerns regarding involuntary isolation in the Pacific. Labor's professed 'liberal internationalism', its advocacy of an international organisation and a rules based international order, provided little comfort from regional threats. Liberal internationalism had been pursued originally as an attempt to curb the influence of the greater powers in the post war peace settlement.[11] Its great advocate, Minister for External Affairs H.V. Evatt, acknowledged that the United Nations offered 'no absolute guarantees against armed conflict and aggression.'[12] In light of this, it has been recognised by James Curran, David McLean and Neville Meaney that Labor pursued a 'realist policy based on power politics' in the immediate post-war period.[13] It was Evatt's successor as Minister for External Affairs, John Burton, who

[8] Neville Meaney, 'Australia, the Great Powers and the Coming of the Cold War', *Australian Journal of Politics & History* 38, no. 3 (1992). pp. 324-325.
[9] Ibid. p. 326.
[10] Peter Edwards, *Crises and Commitments: The Politics and Diplomacy of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts, 1948-1965*, The Official History of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts, 1948-1975 (North Sydney: Allen & Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial, 1992). p. 55.
[11] Meaney, 'Australia, the Great Powers and the Coming of the Cold War'. pp. 318-322.
[12] Ibid. p. 323.
[13] James Curran, *Unholy Fury: Whitlam and Nixon at War* (Carlton, Victoria, Australia: Melbourne University Press, 2015). p. 31., David McLean, 'Australia in the Cold War: A Historiographical Review', *The International History Review* 23, no. 2 (2001). p. 307., And, Meaney, 'Australia, the Great Powers and the Coming of the Cold War'. p. 323.

offered a way to combat increasing uncertainty in the Pacific in 1948. This policy that would form the basis of Australian external policy for the next 25 years was also unmistakably similar to the pattern of Deakin's actions in the early years of the Commonwealth. Australia would encourage American support and presence in the region in an attempt to mitigate the threats posed primarily, at this stage, by the rise of communist China.[14]

With the Australian Labor party losing office in the 1949 election, the burden of Australia's strategic problem fell to Percy Spender, the new minster for External Affairs. Spender shared Burton's view that Australia should primarily look to the United States as a great power protector, as he thought that Britain was geographically pre-disposed to offer a Eurocentric perspective of strategic problems and was not a 'natural' Pacific power.[15] Mercifully – for Spender – the United States turned its attention to back Asia following the rise of communism in China and its increasing influence in the region. The American internationalist bent and strategy of 'containment' that had been displayed in the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation would then also temporarily converge with Australia's (and New Zealand's) concerns about its own region, culminating in the establishment of the 'ANZUS' treaty.[16] David McLean has argued convincingly that ANZUS was seen as an instrument to protect Australia from regional instability rather than from the specific threats that were perceived to be emanating from Communist China, and to allay fears regarding the 'soft' allied peace with Japan following World War Two and Indonesian independence.[17] David Lowe has similarly suggested that ANZUS amounted to a bolting of the 'back door', making preparations for events that could occur regionally, but that this also allowed Australia to respond to British requests for a commitment of troops to the Middle East should the tensions with the USSR run hot.[18] Lowe provides ample evidence in support of this claim, and persuasively establishes the significance of this 'global dimension' in the negotiation of the treaty.[19] While Australia was primarily concerned about the Asia-Pacific, the Middle East offered access to essential resources such as oil, the Suez Canal, and housed Royal Air Force bases from which bombers could attack the USSR in a time of war.

Lowe's disassociating of ANZUS with the history of Australian attempts to draw the United States into a security arrangement is, however, far less persuasive. The only support for this argument he gives is his assertion that viewing ANZUS in the context of previous Australian

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[14] Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*. p. 55.
[15] David McLean, 'Anzus Origins: A Reassessment', *Australian Historical Studies* 24, no. 94 (1 April 1990). p. 75.
[16] Ibid. p. 82.
[17] David McLean, 'Anzus Origins: A Reassessment', *Australian Historical Studies* 24, no. 94 (1 April 1990): 64–82, https://doi.org/10.1080/10314619008595832. pp. 77-78.
[18] David Lowe, 'Percy Spender's Quest.', *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 55, no. 2 (July 2001). p. 193.
[19] Ibid. p. 192.

attempts to acquire defensive pact with the United States, does not 'take sufficient account of the Cold War context in which ANZUS was drafted.'[20] But viewing ANZUS in this way, in line with Deakin's attempts in 1909 for example[21], need not diminish the importance of the Cold War in its formation. Such a perspective may even strengthen its importance, as success in acquiring an American pact only came under the geo-political conditions of the Cold War and not before them. Furthermore, the degree to which ANZUS allowed Australia to focus on a potential theatre of war in the Middle East should not be overstated. Australian promises to provide troops outside of South East Asia were wound back following economic hardship and military budget overextension in 1951 and 1952.[22] While ANZUS may have only been a 'bolt on the back door' when it was negotiated, policy makers would attempt to make it the keystone of Australia's Cold War strategy.

ANZUS probably did more to temporarily strain the relationship with Britain than it did to provide Australia with a guarantee needed to promise its own troops to potential theatres on the other side of the world. Britain did not want to be excluded from ANZUS and thought that the treaty would end up diminishing its own global influence.[23] Despite the fact that ANZUS was recognition that Britain could no longer act as Australia's primary defensive guarantor, the years after 1951 marked a highpoint in the history of Anglo-Australian defensive co-operation particularly in South East Asia.[24] Whilst America would be relied on to shoulder the burden of Australia's regional security in the final instance, 'Britain had not become obsolete in Australian defence considerations.'[25] British, Australian and New Zealand forces co-occupied the yet to be independent Malaya from the early 1950s under the ANZAM agreement (1948), with the Army and RAAF providing a counter insurgency role even after Malaya gained independence in 1957.[26] The 'Commonwealth Strategic Reserve' was set up in 1955 as a means of co-ordinating Anglo-Australian-New-Zealand forces on the Malayan peninsula.[27] The reserve was deployed as a stabilising agent against communist subversion.[28] British and Australian forces played a similar role

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[20] Ibid. p. 192.
[21] Curran, *Unholy Fury*. p. 29.
[22] E. M. Andrews, *The Department of Defence*, The Australian Centenary History of Defence, v. 5 (South Melbourne, Australia; New York: Oxford University Press, 2001). p. 139.
[23] Lowe, 'Percy Spender's Quest.' p. 191. And, McLean, 'Anzus Origins: A Reassessment'. p. 68.
[24] Stuart Ward, 'Security: Defending Australia's Empire', in *Australia's Empire*, ed. Stuart Ward and Deryck M. Schreuder, 1st ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). p. 250.
[25] Ward, *Australia and the British Embrace: The Demise of the Imperial Ideal*. p. 23.
[26] Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*. p. 188.
[27] David Goldsworthy, *Losing the Blanket: Australia and the End of Britain's Empire* (Carlton South, Vic: Melbourne University Press, 2002). p. 26.
[28] Goldsworthy, 'Australian External Policy and the End of Britain's Empire1'. p. 19.

during 'konfrontasi', bolstering the federation of Malaya with territories in northern Borneo against Indonesia's aggressive attempts to annex the territory itself in 1963.[29]

The expression of Britain's global power through its overseas territories was perceived, according to David Goldsworthy, by Australian leaders through their own sense of Britishness and provided a psychological comfort in the midst of a changing post war world order.[30] Until the late 1950s, Britain was still a world power, controlling a quarter of world trade through the sterling area, possessing nuclear armaments and able to maintain garrison forces from Gibraltar to Hong-Kong.[31] The British garrison forces in Singapore and Malaysia provided Australia with the means of creating a strategic defence policy that was similar to the Singapore Strategy. The Australian strategy of 'forward defence' was based on the assumption that threats to Australian security would come from the north, and thus sought to co-operate with its 'great and powerful friends' to form a defensive bulwark in Asia. It was, also, a psychological defence, indicative of a preference to continue to engage within the familiar framework of the British Commonwealth in foreign affairs. This is perhaps most clearly seen in the fact that Australian troops operated for two years, 1957-1959, under the Anglo-Malaysian Defence Agreement (AMDA), an agreement that had not formally included Australia. This was an anachronistic reminder of an age when Australia's external and defensive policy was negotiated by the British government on behalf of Australian desires, or perhaps more often, in the interests of the wider British Empire. [32] Such an arrangement revealed that Australia's strategic preference, even at this stage, could not be considered to be post-imperial. This sense of British Race patriotism was at the heart of Prime Minister Robert Menzies automatic backing of the U.K in their failed military response to the Egyptian nationalisation of the Suez Canal 1956. In what would mark a significant decline in Australian estimations of British power, Australia voted with Britain and against the United States when the United Nations intervened in the Suez crisis, sharing in British humiliation when President Eisenhower used economic levers to force a British withdrawal.[33] But even after this realisation of the state of Britain's decline on the world stage, and nagging questions about the future of British forces in South East Asia, the doctrine of 'forward defence' remained intertwined with Australian Britishness.[34]

For Australian policy makers and for the Australian public, the American alliance could not match the instinctive and familial ties that were thought to bind Australia with Britain. The

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[29] Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*. pp. 255-257.
[30] Goldsworthy, *Losing the Blanket*. p. 174.
[31] Ibid. p. 26.
[32] Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*. p. 188.
[33] Ward, *Australia and the British Embrace: The Demise of the Imperial Ideal*. pp. 30-31.
[34] Goldsworthy, *Losing the Blanket*. pp. 159-160.

American alliance did, however, occupy a significant psychological dimension in the Australian national psyche, one appreciative of the services rendered to Australia's defence during World War Two. Joan Beaumont has, for example, charted the rituals of commemorating the Battle of the Coral Sea, showing that the Menzies government used the anniversary to encourage the public support for the alliance.[35] Interpretations of American power, both during World War Two and during the Cold War, were attuned to resonate with Australia's primary relationship with Britain. An editorial in *The Age* made this clear, interpreting symbolic significance into Queen Elizabeth II's opening of a monument in Canberra to the 'vital help given by the United States of America during the War in the Pacific 1941-45.'[36] The royal participation was:

> 'the most eloquent of answers to any suggestion that a weakening of Australia's ties with Britain resulted from our wartime dependence upon and collaboration with the U.S… it is hoped that the strengthening of Australian ties with the United States will be of service to the whole British Commonwealth, and will buttress the position of all freedom loving, peace-seeking countries in this part of the world.'[37]

The Coral Sea anniversary cultivated memories of an Australia indebted to American protection, and became a ritualised expression of Australia's enduring American embrace.[38]

But warm feelings were no substitute for iron clad confidence. When Spender first negotiated the treaty, he had hoped that it would provide him access to the inner sanctum of American policy making. The treaty did allow for consultation between foreign ministers and their deputies, a provision that Spender thought Australia could use to make sure that its interests were not overborne by grand strategy.[39] It became clear, however, that the U.S. was not prepared to provide the depth of consultation that Spender had first imagined.[40] There was also a problem in the wording of the treaty. Its signatories were not obliged to give the same degree of automatic support as the signatories of NATO were to their members.[41] However much leaders like Menzies would affirm the closeness between Australia and the United States, he, alongside the majority of Australian policy makers, 'lived in a state of chronic unease' about the extent of the U.S. commitment to Australian security.[42] During Indonesian 'konfrontasi', for example, Canberra

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[35] Joan Beaumont, 'Australian Memory and the US Wartime Alliance: The Australian–American Memorial and the Battle of the Coral Sea', *War & Society* 22, no. 1 (May 2004). p. 81.
[36] Ibid. p. 79.
[37] 'Editorial', *The Age*, 16 February 1954., cited in, Beaumont, 'Australian Memory and the US Wartime Alliance'. p. 82.
[38] Curran, *Unholy Fury*. p. 28.
[39] McLean, 'Anzus Origins: A Reassessment'. p. 80.
[40] Curran, *Unholy Fury*. p. 34.
[41] Ibid. p. 34.
[42] McLean, 'Australia in the Cold War: A Historiographical Review'. p. 320.

could not be sure whether its troops in Malaysia or its regional interests would be protected under ANZUS. President John F Kennedy went so far as to provide the Australian ambassador with a memo containing such strong qualifications on what kind of aggression would trigger U.S. protection under the treaty in 1963. This was an abrupt reality check to Ambassador Howard Beale, who had prompted this need to align the nations' expectations on the alliance by assuming that ANZUS would be 'automatically' invoked even in the case of the most minor skirmish with insurgents.[43] The United States was reluctant to take action that would drive Indonesia closer to the communist powers.[44] By 1964, the best Menzies could say about ANZUS was, 'that it was a contract based on the utmost goodwill, the utmost good faith and unqualified friendship,' but as Curran argues, it was no more than sweet rhetoric.[45]

During the first two decades of the Cold War, 'Forward Defence' amounted to a degree of Australian strategic bliss. It seemed that Australia's main strategic anxieties as articulated by Eggleston half a century ago were at their lowest point with the development of alliance structures and military commitments during the Cold War. The British Empire – now as the British Commonwealth of Nations– was directing a great deal of its attention to regional stability in Asia, something to which Australian governments were all too happy to contribute. The United States, which had surpassed the Empire as the primary guarantor of Australia's defence, would become similarly involved, although on a much larger scale than the British. This is not to say that Australian policy makers were not worried about political instability in Asia caused by the rise of global communism and global decolonisation. That would continue to be a major Australian concern. British and American interest in the region, however, was seen as a more than adequate bulwark on this front. For all the unease that surrounded ANZUS and the reluctant recognition that Britain was diminishing in its influence on the world stage, Australian policy makers could see, for the moment, two nations similar in race and culture committed militarily to a part of the world that had been such a historical source of worry.

[43] Matthew Jordan, '"Mr Necessity": Sir Howard Beale, 1958-64', in *Australia Goes to Washington : 75 Years of Australian Representation in the United States, 1940–2015*, ed. David Lowe, David Lee, and Carl Bridge (Canberra: ANU Press, 2016), http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/usyd/detail.action?docID=4801380. pp. 99-100.
[44] Goldsworthy, *Losing the Blanket*. p. 150.
[45] Curran, *Unholy Fury*. p. 45.

Forward Defence in Asia

Australian policy into the 1960s continued to be predicated on maintaining British and American interest and presence in South East Asia.[46] The British, it seemed, would be the first to upset this goal. In July, 1961, British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan bid for entry into the European Economic Community, setting in motion a process that would result in the collapse of the myth of Britishness in Australia, and the end of significant economic and political ties.[47] There was also recognition that the U.K. would no longer be as interested in Asia and the Pacific as it had been in the past.[48] It was only as recently as 1959 that the legal presence of Australian troops in Malaysia had been seen to by the Australian government. Before this, they had been in Malaysia under AMDA, a British agreement.[49] With the British turn to Europe, defensive arrangements that had relied on the assumptions of a shared community of interest were no longer tenable.

Yet Menzies and his successor Harold Holt did not want to see any change to the strategy of 'forward defence'. The British under-Secretary of State noted, for example, that Menzies did not want the British to 'get out of step with the Americans' in South East Asia.[50] Amid such changes in the intense sentimentality of the Anglo-Australian relationship, the British presence in Malaysia remained important to Australia because of the strategic role that it played with the United States. The decline in the Anglo-Australian relationship threw Australian sluggishness in adapting to an increasingly post-colonial region into sharp relief. What David Goldsworthy, David Dutton, Peter Gifford and Roderick Pitty describe as the 'nascent discourse on Asian engagement', characterised by its rejection of attitudes premised on 'the need to retain strong Western influence, even dominance, in the region', the descriptor, 'nascent' risks an overstatement at least in the realm of strategic policy.[51] Reliance on the greater powers and a suspicion of political developments in Asia would continue to characterise the strategic imagination well into the late 1960s.

The Department of Defence had, by this time, identified China as the main threat to Australian security. Indonesian 'confrontation' of Malaysia was also of some concern in its potential to destabilise the region and create openings for communist subversion.[52] When contemplating the

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[46] Ibid. p. 56.
[47] Ward, *Australia and the British Embrace: The Demise of the Imperial Ideal*. p. 261.
[48] Ibid. p. 77.
[49] Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*. p. 188.
[50] Dominion Office, 'Report on British Relations with Australia', 21 June 1961, DO 161/ 161, The National Archives. p. 1.
[51] David Goldsworthy et al., 'Reorientation', in *Facing North: A Century of Australian Engagement with Asia*, ed. David Goldsworthy ([Canberra]: Carlton South, Vic: Dept. of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Melbourne University Press, 2001). p. 370.
[52] Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*. pp. 255-260.

prospect of allowing Australian troops to act in defence of Malaysia against Indonesian trained insurgents – something that was not part of the original agreement to counter communist insurgency – a 1963 report to the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee outlined the state of Australian strategic assessments. Provided South East Asia 'was held in friendly hands', Australia was, 'provided with defence in depth against Chinese Communist expansion – the main threat to our strategic interests.'[53] Furthermore, Malaysia's independence meant the retention of 'well developed and strategically well placed' bases and facilities available for Commonwealth forces, without which, the United Kingdom would be expected to substantially reduce its troop commitments east of Suez.[54] With the addition of the *Eagle* in 1965, the third British Aircraft Carrier to be stationed in the Straits of Malacca by this time, British military strength in South East Asia was at its highest since the Korean War.[55] For Cabinet, the Commonwealth Strategic Reserve was seen to act as a deterrent against Indonesian aggression against Malaysia, but would also check potential aggression against Australian territories in Papua New Guinea, providing an area of 'forward defence.'[56] Treasurer Harold Holt would affirm this notion, claiming that 'defence aid spent on Malaysia was money spent on our own Australian defences.'[57] The perceived importance of the British contribution to Malaysia's defences, and the forward defence strategy, continued despite the difficult period in Anglo-Australian relations.

By the end of 1964, developments in South Vietnam seemed as if they would threaten to upset the delicate political balance in the region. An intelligence report had not put much confidence in the newly elected South Vietnamese government, and was concerned about the continuation of apparent co-operation between the North Vietnamese and Communist China.[58] By the end of the year, Australia's ambassador to Washington, Keith Waller, would express his 'grave concern' at the future of American operations in Vietnam and about their seeming inability to 'control the political situation in Saigon.'[59] Waller's report was enough to evince its own 'grave concerns' from the Minister for External Affairs Paul Hasluck. On the 7th of January 1965, he could have not put it more strongly to the secretary of his department to take:

[53] 'Submissions to Cabinet - Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence [5cms]' 1971-1963, A1838, TS661/2/2/1 PART 1, National Archives of Australia.
[54] Ibid.
[55] 'Carrier Arrives', *Canberra Times*, 13 January 1965. p. 1.
[56] 'Submissions to Cabinet - Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence [5cms]'.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid.

> 'whatever steps we can to advance Australia's vital interest in securing success in South Vietnam and not merely hanging on until the eventually steady erosion brings disaster.'[60]

His immediate suggestion was that Cabinet consider how they would influence American policy on the matter. Hasluck was greatly disturbed by the situation in South Vietnam, but realised that Australia was virtually powerless to influence it alone. He asked Patrick Shaw, at this point was the Acting Secretary of his Department, to re-direct his message to Acting Prime Minster Jack McEwen and to Treasurer Holt immediately. Hasluck had considered the situation further by the following day, suggesting that the ambassador in Saigon be requested to give his view of the present situation, to enlighten Cabinet on the optimal timing for 'any attempt to influence United States Policy', and to consider what further military support Australia could offer to South Vietnam.[61] Cabinet decided on the 18th of January that Defence Minister Shane Paltridge would be sent to 'assess' the situation in South Vietnam, as well as Malaysia, and to visit the United States.[62] Apart from Paltridge's expedition, all that seemed to have come from Hasluck's flurry was a statement from McEwen expressing thanks to the United States Government for their assistance to the South Vietnamese, and a public reminder to the President that Congress had resolved that internal peace and security in South East Asia was in the American national interest.[63] While the Australians were unsure about how the United States would attempt to support the ailing South Vietnamese Government, McEwen offered the Americans a polite reminder of their previous policy, stating publically that all three governments were in negotiations regarding further military assistance.

Anxieties about how this could potentially affect the future efficacy of Australia's strategic posture in the region would only be temporary. President Johnson appeared to have broken through the indecision in Washington and committed U.S. combat troops to South Vietnam on the 8th of March. Canberra looked on with bated breath, waiting to see if this renewed effort would change the situation. Two Marine Battalions were committed to protect South Vietnamese military airfields on their northern border. Australia's Joint Intelligence Committee reported that effects of this increased U.S. presence were not yet clear, but that they had at least 'improved the morale' of South Vietnamese Government forces.[64] While insurgent activity in the south would temporarily decline after this renewed American effort, the Joint Intelligence Committee was unsure if this was

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[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid., And, 'Defence Minister to Visit Asian Trouble Spots', *Canberra Times*, 13 January 1965.
[63] 'Submissions to Cabinet - Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence [5cms]'.
[64] Ibid.

due to the Marine battalions and airstrikes, or if the Viet Cong were merely consolidating their position in preparation for another offensive.[65] The lucidity of this observation, one that went against assumptions about the ability of the United States to manage the domestic upheaval in South Vietnam, highlighted the degree of wishful thinking on behalf of External Affairs, Defence and Cabinet.

The apparent success of Malaysia's resistance to Communist insurgency was thought in Australia to be proof that the U.S.'s approach in Vietnam would be effective. There was a wide attempt within the government and in External Affairs to promote strategic interpretations that likened the situation in Vietnam to the one in Malaysia. When External Affairs drafted a speech for the Minister for Labor and National Service, William McMahon, they emphasised the similarities between the two 'free and independent' states, 'newly emergent and with a sound economic base… subject to wilful external pressure from an envious neighbouring state.'[66] It also highlighted the positive effect that the Commonwealth Strategic Reserve was having in Malaysia. In doing so, External Affairs was suggesting that problems in Vietnam could be solved the same way as they were in Malaysia; provide the fledgling government with hard military power to buy them more time to develop their own defences.[67]

While McMahon never delivered this speech in parliament, Hasluck touched on similar points in his ministerial statement delivered to the House of Representatives on the 23rd of March 1965. Hasluck's speech extolled the promises of Asian nationalism to Australia's strategic position, but this did not progress to be anything more than a rhetorical theme. This signal that the Australian government had understood the changing structure of world politics as Asia underwent de-colonisation was undercut by dominant preferences in Australian policy and attitudes. Hasluck outlined the main threat to Australian security as China's perceived southward expansion through the spread of Communism in Asia. He re-couched the tenets of 'forward defence', recognising that South East Asia was often thought of as a 'frontier where a potential enemy of our own could [sic] be held', but that there was also a 'wider and more far reaching interest in the region' that went beyond regarding them as mere 'buffer states.'[68] A 'free and prosperous Asia' would provide the necessary conditions for Australia to live in 'friendship and peace' with its neighbours.[69] But Hasluck also feared that the problem of communist influence and destabilisation would move to

[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid.
[68] 25. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 23 March 1965. pp. 234-238.
[69] Ibid. p. 234.

Thailand and then to Malaysia if South Vietnam were 'abandoned' by the United States.[70] Despite Hasluck's recognition that co-operation with indigenous Asian governments were a necessity in a post-colonial world, this amounted to scant change in Australia's strategic outlook and no modification to the cultural and racial preference of its defensive benefactors.

To keep both the United States and Great Britain involved in the region had become a strategic orthodoxy, and in 1965, Australia entered into the American war in Indochina in addition to its existing military commitments in Malaysia. This willingness to increase its troop presence alongside the United States in the region is unsurprising, as historian Peter Edwards argues, the direction of Australian policy for the previous 15 years had been to deepen ties and nurture the American commitment to Australia's regional defence.[71] Menzies had, only a few years earlier, made a parliamentary spectacle out of the installation of a very low frequency (VLF) naval communications station in North West Cape, Western Australia. Most Australians were in favour of hosting this listening post that would allow the United States to communicate with their Nuclear Submarines on patrol in the Indian Ocean.[72] On this issue, and on the issue of entry into the Vietnam War, government policy and public opinion in 1965 were united in a commitment to actively encourage an American military presence in their region as a defensive and stabilising influence.

Holt and Asia

With Menzies' retirement in January 1966 and Holt's elevation to party leader, the new Prime Minister made similar gestures towards a vision of co-operation with Asian nations in defence: they mirrored those that Hasluck had laid out in his 1965 ministerial statement that had little bearing on strategic considerations. Within his first two months in office, Holt had softened the White Australia policy and in doing so marked the obsolescence of racial Britishness as a defining national characteristic, removing a potential embarrassment to Australia in its regional relationships.[73] He claimed that the '"White Australia" cry' of an earlier time would be left to 'drop away into the mists.'[74] Mads Clausen, providing his own contribution to this argument previously made by Curran, has noted that for all of Holt's assertions of engagement with Asia, his speeches

[70] Ibid. p. 233.
[71] Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*. p. 384.
[72] Curran, *Unholy Fury*. p. 39.
[73] Curran, *The Power of Speech*. p. 41.
[74] Harold Holt, 'Alfred Deakin - His Life and Our Times: The Liberal Tradition in Australia', 31 July 1967. p. 7.

usually focussed on warnings about the dangers of Chinese communism and what Australia was doing to prevent it.[75] Clausen records Holt's recognition that Australia was Asian by geography, and that it was in this setting that his nation's "greatest dangers" and "highest hopes"' lay.[76] This perception can be seen articulated during Holt's earliest visits to the region. In a speech at the Government House Dinner, Thailand, Holt emphasised the importance and potential of Asian industrial development and co-operation, linking it with the common struggle, 'now being waged to ensure the freedom and independence of the region.'[77] But like Hasluck, Holt was not prepared to voice co-operation without invoking the role played in Asia by Australia's Western allies. In a press conference in Singapore, Holt observed that industrialisation of South East Asia may have been, 'one of the historic moments in the history of mankind.' But it was to the maintenance of the British base that Australia attached 'considerable importance' precisely because of its contribution to the 'stability' and 'security' of the region.[78] The budding governmental and industrial capabilities of Asia may have been an important rhetorical theme for Holt, but he did not see them to be an adequate basis for Australian security.

Despite Britain directing its attention to Europe, there was to be no immediate withdrawal of their forces from Malaysia or Singapore. Her Majesty's Government had released a White Paper in February of 1966 that heralded a recalibration of its commitments east of the Suez Canal, however the base in Singapore was to be retained, and the commitment in Malaysia was to remain indefinitely.[79] The economic pressures of Britain's considerable overseas commitments had forced them in this direction. 50 000 British servicemen remained in Malaysia, supported by aging aircraft carriers that needed to be replaced.[80] Yet there were other concerns that went right to the heart of their Strategic Policy. British defence planners did not see containment as an effective strategy to prevent Chinese hegemony of the region. From a British point of view, such a strategy worked against the potent source of communist resistance that was Asian nationalism and the developing the strength of indigenous Asian government. In the 'post-colonial atmosphere of contemporary

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[75] Mads Clausen, 'The Vortex Is Here: Asia and Australian Post-Imperial Nationhood' (PhD, Copenhagen, University of Copenhagen, 2009). pp. 172-174.
[76] Ibid. p. 171.
[77] Harold Holt, 'Speech by the Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Holt at Government House Dinner in Bangkok, Thailand.', 26 April 1966, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00001303.pdf. p. 2.
[78] Harold Holt, 'Press Conference given by the Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Holt at Singapore Airport.', 30 April 1966, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00001310.pdf. p. 1.
[79] John Darwin, 'Britain's Withdrawal from East of Suez', in *Munich to Vietnam: Australia's Relations with Britain and the United States since the 1930s*, ed. Carl Bridge (Carlton, Vic.: Portland, Or: Melbourne University Press; U.S.A. and Canada, International Specialized Book Services [distributor]. p. 152. For a full overview from the British perspective, see Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire: The Road to Decolonisation, 1918-1968* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006). pp. 386-397., and, Saki Dockrill, *Britain's Retreat from East of Suez: The Choice between Europe and the World?*, Cold War History Series (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York, N.Y: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).
[80] Darwin, 'Britain's Withdrawal from East of Suez'. p. 151.

Asia', using SEATO as a vehicle for the West to artificially improve the region's resistance from Chinese influence was considered 'politically out of the question.'[81] Furthermore, the presence of Western forces in Asia were thought to hinder political development, 'driving local nationalists into an unnatural alliance with local communists', leading British strategic minds to conclude that 'Western interests' were not best served 'by the forward deployment of Western troops.'[82] With this advice on hand, British Prime Minister Harold Wilson faced a divided cabinet, but remained committed to the plan set out in the February White Paper.

Knowing that such a position was anathema to the Australians, Wilson sent the Foreign Secretary, Michael Stewart, and Permanent Under-Secretary of State, Sir Paul Gore-Booth, to Australia in June 1966 as part of a larger Foreign Office delegation to dispel fears about Britain's future role.[83] Gore-Booth's record of events offers candid empathy with the Australian position. Many in Australia responded positively to his explanation of British defence policy, as it was a more optimistic view of Anglo-Asian defence co-operation than had been articulated by British defence planners. His visit can also reveal the nuance at the centre of the Australian strategic imagination by way of comparison. 'The most vivid impression' of his visit was that of 'the totally different aspect of the Vietnam war when you look at it from this end.' He found it hard to disagree with the matter of 'simple prudence' to 'assist the Americans in containing, by force since this was necessary, what might become a direct menace to Australia itself.'[84] While the sincere articulation of Australian strategic anxieties was a rarity, Gore-Booth's formulation was in the language of Cold-War alliances and containment. The Australian unease about the future of Western power in Asia, however, went deeper than pure defensive strategy. The strategic imagination at the time required that defences had a particular cultural and ethnic make-up.

For Holt, the two issues were closely intertwined, and he would continue to attempt to coax the British into increasing their presence in South East Asia. The Commonwealth Relations Office duly noted that Holt had publically expressed his understanding of the new East of Suez policy, but also his 'disappointment' that Australia and New Zealand were fighting without the British in Vietnam, and that there was a public impression that 'Britain was losing its interest in the Far

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[81] The Official Committee of Cabinet Defence and Overseas Policy Committee, 'Document 56, "Indo-Pacific Policy", 10 May 1966.', in *Documents on Australian Foreign Policy: Australia and the United Kingdom 1960 - 1975*, ed. S. R. Ashton, Carl Bridge, and Stuart Ward (Barton: Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2010).
[82] Ibid.
[83] Jeppe Kristensen, '"In Essence Still a British Country": Britain's Withdrawal from East of Suez', *Australian Journal of Politics & History* 51, no. 1 (1 March 2005), https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8497.2005.00359.x. p. 44.
[84] Sir Paul Gore-Booth, 'Attachment "A"', Notes of Impressions and Records of Two Conversations by Sir Paul Gore-Booth, 28 June 1966 in, Letter from Charles Johnston to Sir Paul Gore-Booth.', 8 September 1966, FO 371/ 185912, The National Archives. p. 3.

East.'[85] And he further stressed that plans for the British departure from the region, even if a long-term goal, upset Australia's Cold War strategy of having both the U.K. and the U.S. contribute militarily to containment of Communist China. Thankfully, the central pillar of this strategy, the 'overwhelming presence' of The United States, remained intact.[86]

President Johnson's visit in October of 1966 marked a new intensity and closeness in the Australian-American relationship at a low point in the Anglo-Australian one. Although privately, Holt would later say that he felt closer to Wilson than he did to Johnson he also noted that at this stage, Australia's relationship with the United States was more important than the one with Britain.[87] Others noticed the extent of this shift in the relationships. An editorial in *The Round Table*, drew attention to the fact that on the day of Johnson's arrival, 20th October, the British Defence Minister announced the first withdrawals from Malaysia.[88] The President's visit and Holt's landslide election win in November indicated, 'quite dramatically the beginning of a new era for Australia.'[89] The promise of Asian industrial development was front and centre in Johnson's speeches in Australia, but there are compelling reasons to question whether this was truly the departure point from the old pattern of how Australia had viewed the world. In his visit to Canberra, Johnson would remark on Australia's future in Asia, saying that it was 'only right that Australia become a strong partner in the new Asia.'[90] Holt would reply with a speech that focused instead on the ties between Australia and the United States – 'we have a common language' and emphasise the importance of ANZUS, wherein lay Australia's 'greatest security.'[91] In his speech, Johnson said the word 'Asia' twenty-two times. Holt would only mention it twice, cursorily adding that there was a part for Australia to play in Asia, but only alongside America's great 'strength and power.'[92] Given an opportunity to reflect on Australia's future in Asia, as he had earlier that year in Singapore, Holt had given more weight to this relationship with the Anglophone world. An editorial in *The Sydney Morning Herald* reflected the extent of this feeling, remarking that 'some Australian politicians may have been taken aback by the way he [Johnson] took it for granted that Australia was a part of this new Asia and that it was up to us to help.'[93] One thing was clear;

[85] D. P. R. Mackilligan, 'Letter from D. P. R. Mackilligan to A. M. Pallister', 8 July 1966, PREM 13/ 729, The National Archives. p. 2.
[86] Curran, *Unholy Fury*. p. 62.
[87] Ibid. p. 70.
[88] 'On The Way With LBJ', *The Round Table* 57, no. 226 (1 April 1967). p. 220.
[89] Ibid. p. 220.
[90] Lyndon Baines Johnson, 'Remarks at the Parliamentary Luncheon, Canberra, Australia, 21 October 1966.', The American Presidency Project, accessed 18 July 2018, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=27951&st=&st1=.
[91] Harold Holt, 'Speech by the Prime Minister, at the Luncheon at Parliament House, Canberra.', 21 October 1966, http://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00001418.pdf.
[92] Ibid.
[93] 'Editorial, Pacific Era?', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 October 1966. p. 2.

President Johnson saw 'more clearly than either Mr Holt or Mr Calwell… that Australia's destiny is as an Asian power.'[94]

But nothing would change after Johnson's visit or during the federal election in November. In an election telecast, Holt would explain Australia's role in the conflict in Vietnam as 'buying time for a new and stronger Asia.'[95] Continuing to impress his strategic perception on the electorate, Holt argued, 'You only have to look at the map of this part of the world to see we have a vital interest in the effective presence and participation of the United States.'[96] Labor leader Arthur Calwell had challenged these simplistic appeals to cartographically self-evident threats time and time again, observing in 1965 that, 'the very map of Asia itself' was 'becoming a conspiracy of geography against Australia.'[97] The electorate, however, did not heed Calwell's warnings. Holt held the United States to be genuinely important for Australia's regional security, but his rhetoric on the American alliance had an added domestic dimension in depicting the Australian Labor Party as 'untrustworthy on matters of foreign policy and defence.'[98] Few disagreed with his strategic assessments on the importance of the war in Vietnam or on the American alliance, forming a central pillar of the Coalition's historic landslide victory at the end of the 1966.

For Holt, Australia's role in its strategic environment was to engage the interest and presence of Britain and the United States as deeply as it could. Buoyed by his election win, all the familiar hallmarks of Holt's rhetoric displayed themselves once again in a speech at Monash University, exposing this deeper root in the Australian strategic imagination. While Holt claimed that Australia did not 'carry any background of colonial power past', the contours of a colonial impulse were present in his speech. He recognised the development of indigenous governance and the establishment of nationhood that had swept through Asia over the past two decades.[99] Tutelage, however, fell to 'statesmen around the world', or more pointedly, to the 'present President of the United States', to supply the 'wealth, technical skill and cooperation' that would enable peaceful and stable growth. Holt held little faith in the unaided capabilities of South East Asian governments:

> 'We have to recognize the facts of life in Asia and appreciate that were it not for the firm determination of the United States in South Vietnam and the role Britain played in Malaysia

[94] Ibid. p. 2.
[95] Harold Holt, 'Election Telecast, Australia's Security', 16 November 1966.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Arthur Calwell, quoted in, Curran, *Unholy Fury*. p. 65.
[98] Ibid. pp. 70-71.
[99] Harold Holt, 'The Job Ahead of Us in Asia, Speech by the Prime Minsiter at the Opening of the MRA Conference, Monash University, Melbourne.', 6 January 1967, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00001461.pdf. p. 3.

and is continuing to play in the area, the shape of Asia would be very different from that which exists today and the promise of the future would be very different from that we look forward to today.'[100]

East of Suez

Dwindling British capacity to continue to play this role would present a significant challenge to Australia's strategic vision of the region. Defence policy had been the subject of an internal spat within the British Government. The Labour party passed a resolution calling for a speedier withdrawal than had been planned, and 69 abstained in a vote for the February 1967 White Paper.[101] Rising domestic spending and an end to the Indonesian threat to Malaysia resulted in another opportunity to reappraise British foreign policy from mid-1966 to early 1967, and proposals of a further reduction in commitments east of Suez. In April 1967, the British government announced that all troops would be withdrawn from east of Suez by the mid-1970s, with half of those to be gone by 1970-71.[102] When Holt first found out about the new schedule, he was, according to British sources, 'badly shaken and grey in the face.'[103] Holt's reaction has been interpreted by Jeppe Kristensen in terms of how the withdrawal would affect Australia's strategic posture and in regards to a lingering element of sentimental attachment to the British connection.[104] These were significant factors in Holt's surprise. Up until this point, communication from London strongly maintained that they would stand by the plan as articulated in February 1966.

Holt's shock can also be explained by the fact that he had found out about the change in British policy before Wilson communicated it to him personally. British Secretary of State George Brown had informed both Hasluck and U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk about the new British withdrawal timetable on the 19th April 1967. Hasluck's relaying of the information preceded Wilson's official telegram to Holt, the latter of which he received on the 20th April. As well as the issue of timing, the two messages differed on the reasons for the withdrawal. Wilson's telegram explained the reason for the change in purely economic terms, but reiterated a commitment to,

[100] Ibid. p. 8.
[101] Dockrill, *Britain's Retreat from East of Suez.* p. 179.
[102] Ward, *Australia and the British Embrace: The Demise of the Imperial Ideal.* p. 250.
[103] Charles Johnston, 'Document 62, "Telegram, Johnston to Commonwealth Office", 21st April 1967.', in *Documents on Australian Foreign Policy: Australia and the United Kingdom 1960 - 1975*, ed. S. R. Ashton, Carl Bridge, and Stuart Ward (Barton: Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2010). p. 183.
[104] Kristensen, '"In Essence Still a British Country"'. p. 46.

'stand by Australia as Australia has stood by us in two World Wars', in some attempt to soften the blow.[105] According to the British High Commissioner, Charles Johnston, as well as sending Holt 'grey in the face', Wilson's telegram left him 'particularly ruffled' as there were 'two points' of difference between Wilson's telegram and Hasluck's conversation with Brown. The first point was regarding whether Wilson's promise of consultation on the withdrawal would be genuine, or whether, as Brown had implied, only the date of the full withdrawal was negotiable. More incendiary, however, was the second point, the question of whether or not the British had been 'influenced by the "white faces" argument.'[106] In explaining the situation on the 19th of April to Rusk, Brown had said that economic factors underlay the revised timetable but that the policy also made good political sense; 'by the mid-1970s, white faces on the mainland would be increasingly a liability.'[107] That phrasing, wrote Johnston, was:

> 'a red rag to the Australian bull. Financial necessity they understand... what they do not accept is that we should withdraw because of some theoretical reason about relations between the West and South East Asia.'[108]

Gore-Booth and the Committee of Cabinet Defence and Overseas Policy thought that Australia's greatest fear was the spread of communism southwards, but did not see this as a problem that the British Military could solve for reasons of fiscal prudence and post-colonial politics. It was on the issue of decolonisation that Australian estimations of the region differed from British ones, and it was here that they would come to a head.

Holt's message to Wilson, sent before he received Wilson's telegram, noted the courage at which the British were facing their 'serious economic difficulties', but stressed the 'great importance of a continuing British presence in this area of the world.'[109] Acidly, Holt conceded, 'this may seem to run against the current of a lot of modern thinking', he implored the British Prime Minister to reconsider:

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105 Harold Wilson, 'Document 61, "Telegram, Commonwealth Office to British High Commission, Canberra", 20th April 1967.', in *Documents on Australian Foreign Policy: Australia and the United Kingdom 1960 - 1975*, ed. S. R. Ashton, Carl Bridge, and Stuart Ward (Barton: Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2010), 180–82. pp. 180-182.

106 Johnston, 'Document 62, "Telegram, Johnston to Commonwealth Office", 21st April 1967.' p. 183.

107 Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 'Document 60, "Record of Meeting Between Brown and Rusk at US State Depertment", 18th April 1967.', in *Documents on Australian Foreign Policy: Australia and the United Kingdom 1960 - 1975*, ed. S. R. Ashton, Carl Bridge, and Stuart Ward (Barton: Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2010). p. 178.

108 Johnston, 'Document 62, "Telegram, Johnston to Commonwealth Office", 21st April 1967.' p. 183.

109 Harold Holt, 'Document 64, "Letter, Downer to Wilson", 21st April 1967.' p. 186.

> 'I seriously believe you would be making an error which history would condemn if you were to plan, or even contemplate, complete withdrawal of your forces from Asia at this period of time.'[110]

As Australia had a commitment of 'small forces' to Vietnam, the British could surely make a similar contribution. 'A continuing British presence, even on a reduced scale', according to Holt, would 'mean much to the future of Asia.'[111] The general historical consensus on the issue is that, as Brown had himself argued, economic factors were the primary driver of the withdrawal, but as has been shown, there was also a degree of wanting to accord with post-colonial politics. Wilson's 'big announcement' in January 1968; a new and more rapid timetable of withdrawal whereby all troops would be evacuated from Malaysia and Singapore by 1971, was a final admission that Britain's world role could not be maintained on 'borrowed time' and more accurately, on 'borrowed money.'[112] Even at this stage, Australia defence planners held to the notion of forward defence, and sought a closer security arrangement with Singapore's British administrators of external affairs than they did with the new Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew.[113] Johnston's frustration at this diplomatic bungle did little to dampen his powers of perception. Britain's post-colonial political instincts had clearly disturbed Holt, so much so that Johnston would revisit the exchange in his own valedictory despatch almost four years later. It was clear, according to Johnston, that the 'white faces argument', had:

> 'Jangle[d] nerves very deep in the Australian character; after all, if you come to think of it, the Australians are "white faces" on their own mainland… To Australians the defence of South-East Asia was and is a matter of national survival. For us to tell them we were withdrawing out forces, and to offer them instead a piece of trendy left-wing ideology, was like seeing a swimmer in difficulties and throwing him a pair of waterwings by Mary Quant.'[114]

The British Empire and its South East Asian garrisons had been the conduit by which Australian governments had engaged with their region since before Federation, and for the entirety of the Commonwealth's history, Australia had, up to this point, looked to Britain to be a major partner in its defensive policy. Australian leaders would continue to face difficulties in imagining and engaging with an Asia without this familiar presence. This was another dimension to the crisis

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[110] Ibid. p. 187.
[111] Ibid. p. 187.
[112] Harold Wilson, in, Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire*. p. 394.
[113] Goldsworthy, 'Australian External Policy and the End of Britain's Empire1'. p. 20.
[114] Charles Johnston, 'Valedictory Despatch', 2 April 1971, FCO 24/1072, The National Archives. pp. 4-5.

of Australian national identity brought on by the end of Empire. According to Curran and Ward, this had:

> 'rendered obsolete the largely unspoken assumptions about Australia's affinities with the British world. Fundamental to the task of rediscovering Australia in a post-imperial guise was to find new ways of relating Australia to its new partners, networks and neighbours.'[115]

On the latter, Australian leaders, policy makers and strategic thinkers would make a slow start. They would continue to pay lip-service to notions of Asian industrial development, and that Australia's future lay in the relationships that it could cultivate with those indigenous governments. First Assistant Secretary in the Department of External Affairs, Gordon Jockel, proclaimed that 'we [Australia and Asia] are now bound together in common interests' and that 'hurdling the divisions of race, culture and background and so forth remain of great importance.'[116] Yet this would not occur for some time. The American alliance and war in Vietnam would allow patterns of strategic thinking, the verities of having 'white faces on the Asian mainland' to continue into this new post-imperial era. Holt travelled to London in June of 1967 to peddle the economic benefits in South East Asia to Wilson, hoping to coax the British into remaining in Singapore and Malaysia by appealing to their economic and military interests.[117] By August, however, the government had accepted that British forces would not remain in South East Asia in a significant way, prompting a re-appraisal of Australia's strategic posture of 'forward defence'.[118]

West of Hawaii

Cabinet's Foreign Affairs and Defence committee contemplated maintaining a military presence in Malaysia and Singapore, dependent in part on the British timelines as set out in April 1967, but more importantly on the continued presence of the United States in Vietnam.[119] The

[115] Curran and Ward, *The Unknown Nation*. pp. 130-131.
[116] Gordon Jockel, quoted in, David Goldsworthy et al., 'Reorientation', in *Facing North: A Century of Australian Engagement with Asia*, ed. David Goldsworthy ([Canberra]: Carlton South, Vic: Dept. of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Melbourne University Press, 2001). p.311
[117] Kristensen, '"In Essence Still a British Country"'. p. 46.
[118] Harold Holt, 'For Press, No. 85/1967, Review of Strategy in South-East Asia.', 25 August 1967, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00001644.pdf.
[119] The committee included: the Prime Minister, Harold Holt; the Deputy Prime Minister, Jack McEwen; the Minister for External Affairs, Paul Hasluck; the Minister for Immigration, Billy Sneddon; the Minister for Trade and Industry, Ian Sinclair; as well as the Minister for Army, Malcolm Fraser; and the Minister for Air, Peter Howson for this particular discussion. 'Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee - Cabinet Minute - Possible Increased Australian Military Contribution to Vietnam - SUBMISSION 441; Australian Defence Policy - Implications of British Withdrawal from Malaysia and Singapore - SUBMISSION 443; Continuation of Defence Aid for Malaysia and Singapore - SUBMISSION 408, 442', 25 August 1967, A5840, 656/FAD, National Archives of Australia.

committee represented the pinnacle of informed debate and power of decision making in the Government regarding its foreign affairs and defence policy, collecting all the relevant portfolio holders in the one room. They claimed that, in terms of forward defence, the United States' involvement in Asia was 'of overwhelming importance to Australia.'[120] Such a position would be expressed publically by Holt, who elevated the significance of the American Alliance to stratospheric heights. On the 16th of September, he, in the presence of distinguished guests from the U.S. and Australian militaries and governments, opened the North-West Cape naval communications station. This was a joint-installation in north-west Australia, its construction committed to by Menzies in 1962, and through which the United States could communicate with its nuclear submarines in the Indian Ocean by very low frequency radio transmission. In his address, Holt commented on the shared British political heritage between the two nations, their common experience in the Pacific war, and ranked the alliance as the 'greatest single contributing factor to the long-term security of this nation in the history of the Australian Federation.'[121]

Holt would perish three months later, and succeeded by the Minister for Education and Science John Gorton. As Holt's successor, Gorton's personal relationship with Johnson as well as his take on the American alliance lacked any semblance of closeness that Holt had cultivated. Gorton did, however, recognise the importance of the alliance to Australia's strategic considerations, especially considering the end of Britain as a world power, but his take on the American Alliance was an expression of tepid fealty compared with Holt's doctrinaire zeal. Australian security was, 'dependent more than ever before on the United States Government providing the protection understood to be provided under the ANZUS pact.'[122] While this was a recognition of sorts, it marked a return to Australian suspicions about the willingness of the United States be on the frontline of Australia's defence in Asia. Since Holt's death, this had been the major change in how Australia perceived the alliance. In May of 1968, a report on the potential for a future Australian military presence in Malaysia and Singapore noted that American Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, had rejected any possibility of a formal US assurance that Australian troops in Malaysia fell under the protection of the ANZUS treaty. The Australians were reminded of the qualifications that President Kennedy had provided in 1963.[123] Gorton's take on the alliance was more influenced by the gamut of doubts regarding ANZUS that had plagued earlier Australian perceptions of the

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120 Ibid.
121 Harold Holt, 'Speech at the Opening of the U.S. Naval Communication Station at North-West Cape, Western Australia.', 16 September 1967, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00001662_0.pdf.
122 Gorton, 'Flinders Electorate Liberal Party Luncheon'.
123 'Australian Military Presence in Malaysia/Singapore - Report by Defence Committee', 9 May 1968, A5868, 81, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=3067862. p. 8.

treaty – a far cry from the euphoria of co-operation in Vietnam and Johnson's presidential visit that Holt was associated with.

The 'white faces' issue and America's role in underwriting Australian security and both seen in the 1968 Report by the Department of Defence on the 'Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy.' This was the most recent of a number of periodic reports from the Department of Defence that had the purpose of prioritising 'possible and actual threats to Australia's vital interests' from which Australia's armed forces could then be appropriately structured.[124] It noted that Australia's policy of forward defence had, since the end of World War Two, been in response to the turbulence in Asia born out of the withdrawal of colonial powers.[125] An aversion to the increasing power of the Afro Asian bloc in the United Nations was also noted in the report, as 'Western initiatives and actions related particularly to security or to trust territories' were often 'seriously frustrated in the General Assembly.'[126] The sticking point was in the fact that the greatest threat to the stability and security of the region, and by extension to Australia, lay in the threat of insurgency and communist subversion. The dire situation in Vietnam had, by this stage, exemplified all too well the futility of military opposition to insurgency when local governments were, according to the report, 'politically weak, administratively incompetent and unable to attract loyalties by drawing the population into effective programmes for economic reform and growth.'[127] The fall of South East Asia to Communism could only be effectively prevented by indigenous Asian governments removing favourable conditions to insurgency, a realisation that the British had come to some years prior.[128] Even though the report acknowledged the pleasing improvement to the economic and political conditions in Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand, it concluded that in the future aftermath of the Vietnam war, it would fall to the United States to 'make good' any significant military withdrawal from the region by developing a 'major effort to promote and support effective counter-insurgency action', on the 'South-East Asian mainland.'[129] The strategic imagination could not conceive of stability in Asia without such a commitment.

This became very clear when President Richard Nixon announced a major re-calibration of American military presence in Asia on the 24th of July. From the bridge of the USS *Hornet*, Nixon observed the triumphant splashdown of the Apollo XI astronauts. A day later, he addressed a

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[124] Stephan Frühling and Australia. Department of Defence, *A History of Australian Strategic Policy since 1945* (Canberra: Australian Dept of Defence, 2009). p. 4.
[125] 'The Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy - 1968 - Report by Defence Committee', 19 August 1968, A5868, 306, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=3069320. p. 2.
[126] Ibid. p. 4.
[127] Ibid. p. 6.
[128] Ibid. pp. 32, 37.
[129] Ibid. p. 5, 37-38.

press conference on the Pacific island of Guam signalling the future of American involvement in Asia given the deteriorating situation in Vietnam.[130] His speech gestured toward a reduced American physical presence in the region and the need for American allies to provide more for their own self defence. He highlighted his reluctance to be bogged down in another land war and a new reliance on the independent actions of Asian nationalism to prevent the spread of communism.[131] Faced a year earlier with President Johnson's decision to scale down the war in Vietnam, Peter Howson, Minister for Air, had given emphatic expression to Australian fears of an American retreat:[132]

> 'From now on, and to a much greater extent, we shall be isolated and on our own… there'll be no white faces on the Asian mainland.'[133]

Nixon's speech, and the apparent change in American policy would elicit similar responses from Australian policymakers.

The 'Guam Doctrine', or 'Nixon Doctrine' as it became known, heralded a significant recalibration of American force in the region. The majority of U.S. combat troops would be evacuated from the region, and future support to their South East Asian allies would be constituted in armaments, cash or military advice. Jeffrey Kimball is one of the few scholars to have focussed solely on Nixon's speech at Guam and in doing so has questioned its status as a novelty in the American political discourse of the late 60s, and even its legitimacy as a doctrine.[134] His reservations are centred on common interpretations that rely too heavily on Nixon's own mythology. Where others have seen the speech as a significant turning point, Kimball reads Nixon's statements at Guam in the context of similar strategies outlined during the Johnson administration.[135] Furthermore, he questions its validity as a 'doctrine', suggesting that it was no more than a smokescreen to cover his attempts to bring about an aggressive end to the war.[136] Despite the persuasiveness of Kimball's argument, it is useful to treat Nixon's remarks at Guam as a doctrine because it was taken by foreign governments, Australia in particular, to signal a resolute shift in American policy. It provoked considerable anxiety in Australia, despite the awareness within the

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[130] Jeffrey Kimball, 'The Nixon Doctrine: A Saga of Misunderstanding', *Presidential Studies Quaterly* 36, no. 1 (March 2006): 59–64. pp. 59-62.
[131] Ibid. pp. 62-63.
[132] Neville Meaney, 'The End of "White Australia" and Australia's Changing Perceptions of Asia, 1945–1990', *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 49, no. 2 (1 November 1995): https://doi.org/10.1080/10357719508445155. pp. 181-182.
[133] Peter Howson and Don Aitkin, *The Howson Diaries: The Life of Politics* (Ringwood, Vic., Australia: New York, NY: Viking Press; Viking Penguin, 1984). p. 415.
[134] Kimball, 'The Nixon Doctrine: A Saga of Misunderstanding'. p. 59.
[135] Kimball, 'The Nixon Doctrine: A Saga of Misunderstanding'. p. 62.
[136] Ibid. p. 65.

upper levels of the Australian government that the doctrine was neither new, nor internally consistent. Gorton had, for example, mentioned his 'apprehension of an American "sell out" over Vietnam' to Wilson earlier that year.[137] There had been other indications of such change in the American posture in Asia.

Nixon had outlined similar views to the ones he spoke about at Guam in the magazine *Foreign Affairs* in 1967. Hinting at a diminished American presence in Asia, Nixon argued, 'the role of the United States as world policeman is likely to be limited in the future' and that 'a collective effort by the nations of the region to contain that threat [communist advancement]' needed to be developed.[138] The speech at Guam elaborated on similar themes. 'As far as our role is concerned', Nixon warned 'we must avoid the kind of policy that will make countries in Asia so dependent on us that we are dragged into conflicts, such as the one we have in Vietnam.'[139] Nixon made very clear that the United States would maintain its treaty commitments. This was not to apply, however, in the effect of a major conflict. He encouraged the Asian nations to handle all issues short of the threats from a 'major power involving nuclear weapons', themselves.[140]

This issue raised many questions. Henry A. Kissinger, Nixon's foreign policy advisor, attempted to provide some clarity in a background briefing in Bangkok four days after Nixon's address in Guam. The local press and the Presidential media entourage had remarked on the shift in policy, and showed a real desire to get into its finer details. Kissinger attempted to provide clarity, reaffirming that America was a 'Pacific power', and would continue to live up to its commitments in the area, but that 'internal subversion' should be combatted by each respective country in which it was present.[141] But Kissinger's reluctance to be 'absolutely categorical about every last case'[142] and the lack of an official transcript of Nixon's statement in Guam did not alleviate any residual ambiguity. By early August, the Thai government – as reported by the Australian ambassador – was still unsure about the 'grey area' between 'overt attack' and internal insurgency.[143] The war in Vietnam was, after all, a product of both internal and external threats, yet, Nixon had also ruled out conflicts such as Vietnam. Most, however, were receptive toward Nixon's movements towards

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[137] 'Record of a Conversation Between the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister of Australia at Luncheon at No. 10 Downing Street.', 7 January 1969, FCO 24/384/1, The National Archives. p. 6.
[138] Richard M. Nixon, 'Document 3' Louis J. Smith and Donald H. Herschler, eds., *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976*, vol. I, Foundations of Foreign Policy, 1969–1972 (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 2003). p. 11.
[139] Richard M. Nixon, 'Document 29' Ibid. p. 92.
[140] Ibid. p. 92.
[141] Henry A. Kissinger, 'Document 30', Ibid. p. 93.
[142] Ibid. p. 94.
[143] *Cablegram from Australian Embassy, Bankok, 7/8/1969*. '"The Guam Doctrine" [2.0cm] [6 of 183]', July 1969, A5882, CO818, National Archives of Australia, https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=3165068&S=6. p. 171.

allowing the future of Asia to be shaped by its inhabitants, and not developed 'based on prescriptions devised in Washington.'[144] This much was clear: the United States would soon be withdrawing from Vietnam, and not involving itself significantly in future military interventions in Asia. Asian nationalism and economic development, aided occasionally by American materiel, was intended to provide the new basis of stability in the region.

The Australian reaction was one of anxiety and concern. Australian journalist Bruce Grant perceptively diagnosed what had provoked such anxiety: 'the Australian Government tends to scepticism about the value of Asian regionalism as a defence measure.'[145] The reaction was not just constrained to the government, however. The Department of External Affairs had similar qualms. Diplomat John Ryan from the Australian embassy in Washington cabled Canberra the day of Kissinger's meeting with reporters in Bangkok. He noted that Nixon's overtures in Guam were not considerably different to those in *Foreign Affairs*, nor were they entirely different in tenor to President Eisenhower or Johnson's hopes of increased Asian self-reliance.[146] Despite expectation of this new direction, Ryan was plagued by the ambiguity of what was said at Guam and how the power structures in South East Asia would realign as a consequence of the diminished American presence. The 'off-shore' strategy may, he argued, disrupt the 'trend in Japanese and Indonesian thinking towards acceptance of some kind of mutual security obligations on the mainland of South-East Asia.'[147] Without G.I. bivouacs dotting the jungles of Indo-China, the foreign and defence policy elite were sceptical that Asian nations could be relied on to commit to upholding regional security. The Australian embassy in Washington echoed the concerns of Kissinger's assistant for Asian Affairs, John H. Holdridge, asking:

> 'Might not the general "off-shore" cast of the policy lead to an undermining of Western power in Asia and possibly a "slide" in the Western position on the Asian mainland?'[148]

Aware of Australian anxieties, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Marshall Green, attempted to give a clearer picture of the United States' policy in Asia, and delivered a Department of State paper that outlined the new American approach in East Asia to Ambassador Sir Keith Waller.[149] The paper had been circulated as the official stance of American

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[144] Kissinger, 'Document 30', Smith and Herschler, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976*. p. 93.
[145] Bruce Grant, 'Asia Policy Suprises Australians', *The Washington Post, Times Herald*, 28 July 1969. p. 8.
[146] John Edmund Ryan, *Cablegram from Australian Embassy, Washington, 29/7/1969*. '"The Guam Doctrine" [2.0cm] [6 of 183]'. p. 178.
[147] Ibid. p. 179.
[148] *Cablegram from Australian Embassy, Washington, 10/8/1969*. Ibid. p. 168.
[149] Sir Keith Waller, *Cablegram from Australian Embassy, Washington, 8/10/1969*. Ibid. p. 140.

policy to their heads of missions in Asia. It was an attempt to give the Australians a sense that they were being given access to the higher levels of the American foreign policy community, and to engender a unique sense of intimacy between the two nations. In committing to the charade, Green asked that the possession of the paper not be disclosed to other U.S. officials in Asia.[150] The paper provided a deeper explanation of American commitments to its alliances, the strength of Asian nationalism and economic development as a force to be harnessed, and expressed a desire to relieve the 'disproportionate share of the burden' that had been taken up by the United States in the region.[151] It recognised that Australia and New Zealand had been concerned about the region following the withdrawal of the British 'East of Suez',[152] particularly in their stationing of troops in Malaysia, but offered no concrete commitment to checking the local, non-nuclear, expansion of any smaller state. Consummate with their goal of not being drawn into military commitments, the paper restated Kissinger's sentiment on the 'great difficulty in putting forth general propositions which have universal applicability' in regards to defence promises to Asia.[153]

In this vacuum, uncertainty abounded, yet it would be remiss to attribute Australian anxieties, triggered by this disruption of their long-standing estimations and conceptions of the region, to mere uncertainty during the early days of the Nixon doctrine. Green's special treatment had perhaps reassured diplomats of American sympathy with Australian fears, but did not ease Australian reservations about the 'new approach.' Following Nixon's remarks at Guam and the following flurry of communication, diplomats seemed to be acquiring a better understanding of the ramifications of the new US direction by January 1970. Ambassador Waller's report on Nixon's first year in office contained a sober estimation of American reluctance to conduct land wars in Asia and their understandable limitations to make commitments that would draw them into such conflicts.[154] The United States was understood to be ready to intervene in specific circumstances, stability in Thailand was, for example, a clear imperative but with logistical rather than combat support.[155] Waller's grasp on the doctrine had little effect in easing his concerns. Anxieties still nagged. In sparse diplomatic prose, he lamented, 'The full import of the Guam doctrine is not yet clear.'[156] Treaty obligations would be interpreted more 'strictly' than before, but Waller could

[150] Waller, Ibid. p. 140.
[151] Waller, Ibid. p. 141.
[152] Waller, Ibid. p. 143.
[153] Waller, Ibid. pp. 145-146.
[154] Sir Keith Waller, *President Nixon – The First Year, Cablegram from Australian Embassy, Washington, 24/01/1970*. Ibid. p. 59.
[155] Waller, Ibid. p. 60.
[156] Waller, Ibid. p. 60.

evince no further program of action or say for certain how a new interpretation would affect Australia's interests in the region.[157]

Uncertainty spread outside the diplomatic corps too. In the lead up to Vice President Spiro Agnew's visit to Australia, the Cabinet Office requested that the cables relevant to the Guam doctrine be compiled for discussion at a Cabinet meeting on the 13th of January.[158] The letter of explanation that accompanied the file to the Cabinet secretary P.H. Bailey had more than a few worrying observations. Bailey had concerns about the fledgling nation of Malaysia and the Australian military presence there. 'On a strict reading of the Guam Doctrine, we could probably find our troops [stationed in Malaysia] under heavy pressure without any chance of aid from the United States.'[159]Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gordon Freeth, had recently outlined the Australian perspective on Malaysia in an address to the American-Australian Association in September 1969.[160] He could not 'entirely rule out the possibility that we may in the future have to give military help and our [Australian] commitment to maintain forces in Malaysia and Singapore demonstrates this.'[161] The shift of American power eastward and at the thought of being the sole Western nation maintaining stability in the region was not a prospect that Australia was comfortable with. Freeth desperately grasped for some kind of leverage with which to re-engage American interest. He needled, 'Australia does not envisage bearing the whole burden of the security of Malaysia and Singapore or even the major burden.'[162]

The future relevance of ANZUS in its new interpretation as merely a 'shield in the event of a threat by a nuclear power', was another topic of contention for the Cabinet Secretary. In such a case, New Guinea 'might well be excluded from protection from say Indonesia because Indonesia is not a nuclear power.'[163] The Nixon doctrine had seriously rattled Australian security assumptions in the region, and thrown strategic concerns into disarray. The need for bureaucrats and diplomats to spell out the implications of the doctrine in such plain terms implied a sense of denial in interpreting what was a radical departure from accepted orthodoxy.

In early 1970, Vice President Agnew conducted a tour of Asia to placate South East Asian concerns in the wake of the Nixon doctrine and to provide reassurance that the United States

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[157] Ibid. p. 60.
[158] P. H. Bailey, *The Guam Doctrine, Letter from the Cabinet Office, 6/1/1970*. Ibid. p. 8.
[159] P. H. Bailey, *The Guam Doctrine, Letter to the Cabinet Secretary, 12/1/1970*. Ibid. p. 5.
[160] Gordon Freeth, 'Document 381', Gordon Freeth, 'Document 381 - "In Asia and the Pacific Old Patterns Are Breaking up." Address given to the American-Australian Association in New York, 18th September 1969.', in *Australia and the World: A Documentary History from the 1870s to the 1970s*, ed. N. K. Meaney (Melbourne, Australia: Longman Cheshire, 1985). p. 708.
[161] Freeth, Ibid. p. 710.
[162] Freeth, Ibid. p. 713.
[163] Bailey, '"The Guam Doctrine" [2.0cm] [6 of 183]'. p. 5.

would continue to play a role in the region. He was a good choice for the job, as Cabinet leaks suggested that he professed a belief in the domino theory and took a harder public line on bombing Vietnam than Nixon had.[164] Agnew would continue to attract considerable criticism at home for this.[165] Yet his hawkish credentials may have been out of tune with the general thrust on the Nixon doctrine, and some asked whether the vociferous Vice-President had 'gone beyond his brief.'[166] Voicing long held Australian hopes, *The Age* posited that Agnew had hinted 'that the US might pick up some of the burden dropped from Britain's weary shoulders.'[167] *The Melbourne Herald* more realistically noted 'the extent to which Australia's government leaders look[ed] to Washington for political guidance and inspiration', but that 'Australia must one day decide how much it has to rely on its own endeavours and initiatives in the fields of foreign policy and defence.'[168] All agreed that there were unmistakable strategic shifts occurring in the region, yet the language of 'burdens' spoke to the stagnancy of Australian strategic thinking.

Gradually, diplomats began to realise that Australia would not enjoy the active American presence that it had come to psychologically depend on. This was not without considerable regret or anxiety. One of the final reports to come from Sir Keith Waller in his capacity as Ambassador to the US was on the future of United States foreign policy. The newsletter, *Inside Canberra*, characterised it as a pessimistic report causing 'grave concern at the highest political and official levels.'[169] Waller, the new head of the External Affairs department, had apparently come to grips with the extent of the Unites States' shift from Asia. According to *Inside Canberra*, Waller had implied that the British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, had 'scored a major diplomatic coup' in successfully reorienting American attention away from the Pacific and in favour of the United Kingdom, Europe, and the Middle East.[170] The most telling phrase, however, was that the United States would effect a 'withdrawal from the whole area west of Hawaii.'[171] 'West of Hawaii' was clearly meant to evoke 'east of Suez', and bring home the picture of Australian isolation from distant Western centres of power in its region of the globe. From now on, it would be far more difficult, nigh impossible, to engage one of Australia's 'great and powerful friends' in the region as a guarantor of her security.

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[164] Mungo MacCallum, *Extract from The Australian. 16/1/1970*, Ibid. p. 68.
[165] *Extract from The Hobart Mercury, 15/1/1970,* Ibid. p. 67.
[166] *Extract from the Melbourne Age, 16/1/1970,* Ibid. p. 68.
[167] Ibid. p. 68.
[168] Vincent Matthews, E*xtract from the Melbourne Herald, 17/1/1970,* Ibid. pp. 68-69.
[169] *Inside Canberra*, 'Document 382', Freeth, 'Document 381 - "In Asia and the Pacific Old Patterns Are Breaking up." Address given to the American-Australian Association in New York, 18th September 1969.' p. 714.
[170] Ibid. p. 714.
[171] Ibid. p. 714.

After an initial shock to the strategic imagination in 1942, Australian entered a period of what might be termed relative strategic bliss with both Britain and the United States of America showing renewed interest in the region after the Second World War. This did not completely banish any concern for Australia's security, or the doubt that their 'great and powerful friends' would not be as committed to the region as Australia was by virtue of its geographic position. ANZUS was, after all, no guarantee in the same way that NATO was. Yet the strategy of 'forward defence', underwritten at different times by American and British military commitments in Asia, allayed the perennial anxiety surrounding Asia in Australian strategic psychology. As Asia underwent decolonisation, Prime Minister Harold Holt continued to place his faith and Australia's fortunes in British and American tutelage of these new states, and in their military garrisons on the Asian mainland. The shrinking British capability to maintain military forces abroad and their growing awareness of the need to cease what could be construed as colonial occupation struck the first blow against Australian forward defence. The second came from the Nixon doctrine. Its warning that the United States of America would never again embark on another land-war in Asia, and that Asian governments themselves would have to provide for their own protection against internal subversion made it difficult for Australia to sustain its current defence strategy. Working out a replacement for the strategy of forward defence would not be an easy task, yet Australian policymakers and parts of the public were not even willing to contemplate that change was necessary. Conceptions of Australia's strategic predicament endured, leaving it to Australia to shoulder that burden itself.

3

‘Burdens of security’ in Asia: Forward Defence 1967-1971

In the previous chapter, this thesis explored Australia’s immediate reactions to changes in British and American Asian strategic policy in 1967 and 1969 respectively, the general scepticism regarding Asian led regional security and the related rhetorical – and no doubt cultural – preference for ‘white faces’ to remain in Asia. Cabinet, the diplomatic corps and defence officials were all affected by these decisions because they either upset or weakened ‘forward defence’ in Asia, the strategic plan that was thought to provide the best defence of Australia. The two announcements that heralded a reduced or recalibrated presence in Asia both received policy responses that can be taken as statements of Australia’s strategic intent. These responses provide a picture of how British and American movements affected the strategic imagination, and what changes to the imagination, if any, they resulted in.

Between the British announcement in 1967 and the proclamation of the Nixon doctrine in 1969, Australian defence policy thinking at Cabinet level was thrown into disarray. Cabinet wanted to keep forward defence, but did not want to bear the cost of such a commitment alone. Yet the alternatives did not look to be any better either. Elected by the party room in early 1968 in the wake of Harold Holt’s death, Prime Minister John Gorton seemed to have come to terms with the end of empire more readily than some of his colleagues, and he came into office calling on Australians to help him foster a feeling of ‘real nationalism’. Whilst such calls were rarely given concrete expression, Gorton did bring new ideas about Australia’s strategic posture that questioned the current orthodoxy of ‘forward defence’. In contrast, the majority of Cabinet and the Department of Defence continued to favour forward defence partly because it could provide some check to Communist insurgency in Asia, because they wanted to continue to encourage American interest and troop presence in the region, and most hopeful of all, because Australian bases were thought to be able to provide a first foothold for any future British or American intervention in a future crisis. It was a pressing decision, given that the Government needed to make up its mind on whether they would remain in Malaysia and Singapore before the British had withdrawn the last of their men and military assets. When it came down to it, after almost a year of prevarication on the issue, the views of Cabinet prevailed over the Prime Minister and Australia committed to retaining a military presence in Malaysia and Singapore, and so effectively continue ‘forward defence’, in early 1969.

There were strategic justifications for doing so, but there may have been other reasons derived from the general scepticism of past governments regarding the stability of de-colonised states. Forward defence had been closely tied to the Imperial military framework in South East Asia and the South Pacific, and its continuation suggests that having carried on for so long within the mental maps of empire, Cabinet members found it difficult to dispense with this conceptual structure. Historians Sean Brawley and Matthew Radcliffe have previously attested to the endurance of a colonial impulse in Australian defence in the 1970s. They have made the argument that the RAAF base at Butterworth airfield in east Malaysia embraced the 'British colonial guise' in the wake of the British withdrawal.[1] Devoid of the psychological reassurance that had been a by-product of the British military presence in Malaysia and Singapore, RAAF anxieties resulted in heightened base security that was superfluous to actual needs as well as administrative skirmishes with the local security forces charged with the base's protection.[2] Although it is not clear whether this sort of colonial impulse was also present as far up as Cabinet, forward defence was a strategy that had relied on imperial garrisons, and this continued to be a reassuring strategic posture in the Australian strategic psychology. There is other evidence during this time, that the 'power of the imperial legacy' could often simplify 'complex new realities.'[3] Most members of Cabinet had thought about Australian defensive strategy in these terms and it is therefore hardly surprising that the residue of empire remained in their formulations.

In contrast with the British strategic connection, which after 1967 slowly dwindled into obsolescence, the American alliance continued to make up an important part of the strategic imagination, in large part because of their continuing presence in Vietnam and also in their relevance in the event of nuclear war.[4] When it became clear that the US would recalibrate their military role in Southeast Asia in mid-1969, the Australian government began to take more proactive steps to contribute to regional security themselves. Having not fully grasped that the United States' appetite for future military intervention in Asia was virtually non-existent, the government continued to attempt to engage and promote American interest in the region. The Minister for Defence, Malcolm Fraser, 1969-1971 was the clearest voice in this regard. Fraser believed that forward defence in Malaysia and Singapore, even without British support, was still a goal of primary importance for Australian strategy. He also understood, more than any other

[1] Sean Brawley and Mathew Radcliffe, 'Losing the Blanket, Building a Fence: Australian Anxiety and the End of Military Colonialism in Malaysia', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 45, no. 6 (2 November 2017): 1026–48, https://doi.org/10.1080/03086534.2017.1379669. p. 1030.
[2] Ibid. pp. 1037-1043
[3] Curran and Ward, *The Unknown Nation*. p. 143.
[4] Andrea Benvenuti and Moreen Dee, 'The Five Power Defence Arrangements and the Reappraisal of the British and Australian Policy Interests in Southeast Asia, 1970–75', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 41, no. 01 (February 2010): 101, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022463409990270. p. 112.

member of the government, that American military power would not be engaged in Asia to the same degree as it was during the height of the Vietnam War. He still assumed, however, that the United States had an obligation to the security of the free world, and so sought to encourage American interest in Asia and thus in Australian security.

Imperial Nostalgia?

After the Holt government received the news that Britain would be withdrawing its forces from Malaysia and Singapore earlier than expected, plans were made to ensure that the existing defensive posture would be maintained. This was a delicate process. The government did not want to give any indication to the Malaysians, or to the U.S. or the U.K., that Australia would be comfortable in shouldering the burden that the British were relinquishing.[5] Furthermore, they wanted their allies to feel a continuing obligation to underwrite Southeast Asian security. Australia, in the words of one Cabinet minute, 'should not enter into bi-lateral arrangements with Malaysia and Singapore which would lead the United States or Britain to believe that Australia had taken over the burdens of security in that area and thus relieved them of further responsibility.'[6] There was the hope that if they communicated a 'limited Australian attitude' to the commitment of their own forces in Malaysia and Singapore, this would help 'avoid any misunderstanding that Australia was [sic] committing herself to replacing the British.'[7] The Australians would remain in a 'holding pattern' until the United States and Britain had clarified what the future of their involvement in the region would be.[8] This was the primary Australian objective, to retain the commitment until more was known about 'the future of security arrangements in South East Asia.'[9] The decision to not consider any new defence commitment should not be read as a statement against forward defence, however. The Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee had, for example, suggested that they retain the Anglo-Malaysian Defence Agreement as the legal framework for an Australian presence in Malaysia with the knowledge that Holt had already agreed in principle to the Five Power Defence Agreement that would replace it. There was the desire for the Malaysians and Singaporeans to take

[5] 'Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee - Cabinet Minute - Australian Defence Policy - Current Considerations in Relation to Malaysia/Singapore - SUBMISSION 562', 11 December 1967, A5840, 771/FAD, National Archives of Australia, https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=1892998. p. 4.
[6] Ibid. p. 2.
[7] Ibid. p. 3.
[8] Ibid. p. 2.
[9] Ibid. p. 2.

more responsibility for their own defence, but this was not intended to be a replacement for an Australian presence in the region.

Prime Minister John Gorton offered one possible alternative. Coming into office with a 'new nationalism', it was not, however, a fully conceived alternative to the deeply inscribed assumptions of British race patriotism that had held so much sway for much of that century. It was 'new simply because it was not wholly dominated by Britishness.'[10] On this subject, and its intersection with diplomacy and foreign affairs, the difference between himself and his predecessor, Holt, could not be more stark.[11] Where Holt had declared that Australia was 'in essence still a British country'[12], Gorton would remark privately to British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan that he regarded Britain as a 'foreign country.'[13] But like his inability to conjure an alternative vision of the Australian nation, Gorton's instincts on foreign and defence policy were just as rhetorically confused. In terms of Australian strategic orthodoxies, Gorton judged that Britain would no longer play any sort of role as Australia's protector. As has been argued earlier, and by Curran and Ward:

> 'the old certainties about Australian Britishness had not only underpinned the physical and material security of the nation, they had also pointed to the kind of international networks, rituals and traditions that Australians could call upon.'[14]

As Gorton attempted to break from this tradition, he argued that Australia would need to take up in defence 'the burden which any prudent country must take up to protect itself', and re-examine the 'old theories' on which Australian defence doctrines had been established.[15] Gorton was not the only member of Cabinet to suggest such things. Defence Minister Allen Fairhall proclaimed in early May 1968 that with the British withdrawal from Asia, the 'colonial era had [sic] gone' and that Australia needed to take more 'independent initiatives in the solution of military problems.'[16]

While this was an attempt to end forward defence and to have Australia bear more of the costs of its defence, it was not an attempt to end ANZUS. Gorton was thankful for the American

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[10] Curran, *The Power of Speech*. p. 53.
[11] David Goldsworthy et al., 'Reorientation', in *Facing North: A Century of Australian Engagement with Asia*, ed. David Goldsworthy ([Canberra]: Carlton South, Vic: Dept. of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Melbourne University Press, 2001), 310–71. pp. 312-313.
[12] Kristensen, "'In Essence Still a British Country'". p. 48.
[13] Gorton and Wilson, record of conversation, London, 7 January 1969, FCO 24/ 384/1, The National Archives.
[14] Curran and Ward, *The Unknown Nation*. p. 129.
[15] John Gorton, 'Speech at the Barton Electorate Dinner, Sans Souci, NSW', 2 July 1968, MA 7984, Box 5: Speeches and Statements 1968, National Library of Australia.
[16] Allen Fairhall, 26. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 2 May 1968. p. 1073, 1077.

alliance and that Australia was 'shielded by a greater power.'[17] He was also careful to encompass the American alliance within this new approach.

Some journalists noted that Gorton's thinking on defence had diverged significantly from his predecessors. Instead of forward defence, Gorton instead proposed that it might be replaced by an 'over the horizon' approach, establishing highly mobile units based in Australia. Coupled with the idea of a citizen army, civilian in times of peace but able to be transitioned into military roles in times of conflict, Walsh referred to Gorton's new approach as an 'Israeli-type defence scheme', and as 'fortress Australia', two terms that the Prime Minister disagreed with.[18] The general thrust of this suggestion was true, however. Gorton was known in the party room to not personally be in favour of continuing forward defence.[19] There were also claims that Gorton had specifically kept his Cabinet in the dark about his ideas of concentrating forces on Australian soil.[20]

Gorton's 'new theories' were clearly a departure from the older Australian strategic traditions to which the majority of Cabinet gave support. Most, however wanted to continue forward defence as they held little faith in the capacity of Asian nations to prevent communist insurgency. Those supporting Forward Defence managed to block any revision to strategic policy throughout 1968. In mid-May, Cabinet further postponed making major decisions until more was known about the peace talks that were aiming to resolve the war in Vietnam, until there was some indication on what the United States planned to do in Asia in the future, or at the very least until they had seen the forthcoming Australian Strategic Basis Paper for 1968.[21] Communist insurgency in Asia was still considered to be the main threat to Australia and there was a concern that the British withdrawal from the region would allow this to spiral out of control.[22] The Defence Committee thus suggested that an Australian presence there could help 'stabilise' this and promote confidence in the area.[23] Gorton agreed in principle to these suggestions, but remained undecided on if and how Australia would remain in the region. Returning from a visit to Washington in late May, Gorton delayed making any announcement about an Australian departure from Malaysia or

[17] John Gorton, 'Toasts of Lyndon Johnson/ John Gorton, during Gorton's Visit to the United States of America', 27 May 1968, MA 7984, Box 5: Speeches and Statements 1968, National Library of Australia.
[18] Maximilian Walsh, 'The Gorton Era Began This Week - Canberra Observed', *The Australian Financial Review*, 10 May 1968. p. 2.
[19] Andrea Benvenuti, *Anglo-Australian Relations and the 'Turn to Europe', 1961 - 1972*, Royal Historical Society Studies in History New Series (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Royal Historical Society, 2008). p. 159.
[20] Maximilian Walsh, 'Drastic Defence Changes - Australia in the Dark', *The Australian Financial Review*, 30 May 1968. p. 4.
[21] 'Australian Military Presence in Malaysia/Singapore - Report by Defence Committee - Cabinet Decision 233', 15 May 1968, A5868, 81, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=3067862. p. 7.
[22] 'Australian Military Presence in Malaysia/Singapore - Report by Defence Committee'. p. 5
[23] 'Australian Military Presence in Malaysia/Singapore - Report by Defence Committee - Cabinet Decision 233'. p. 3

Singapore after being asked to do so by President Johnson.[24] By the end of the year, no decision had been made.

There was some indication during this process that Cabinet had begun to prioritise some sort of continued commitment to Malaysia and Singapore over their fears that they would have to take on the costs of doing so. There was the potential that Australia could act as an intermediary between Singapore and Malaysia and promote defensive co-operation, as there had been significant tension between the two fledgling nations. This had to be balanced against the dangers stemming from the existence of political factions within Malaysia that were not 'pro-Western.'[25] Little had been done to manage the concerns of these local elements, and they could undoubtedly cause problems for an Australian commitment there. In discussing the other benefits of keeping Australian troops in Malaysia and Singapore, there was a heavy emphasis on encouraging U.S. and U.K. interest in the region for as long as possible. The extent of this desire, even after the Wilson government had flagged the imminent withdrawal of its troops from east of Suez, is nothing short of remarkable. Cabinet's estimations for the future role of an Australian military presence in the region was that it should do what it could to 'ensure that facilities are available to enable the quick and effective arrival and deployment of additional forces including the United Kingdom and the United States forces if the need arises.'[26] This was suggested by the Department of Defence to only be a possibility in the event of a 'major emergency. Cabinet asked that this be restated, to reflect that assistance would be limited to 'the direction mentioned by such Australian forces as are in the area.'[27] While this may have been evidence of a new Australian national assertiveness in defence, albeit in the privacy of the Cabinet room, it was hardly the fruit of a 'new theory' of strategy. Australia would contemplate shouldering the cost of retaining a military presence in Malaysia and Singapore at least, but only in the vacuum left by the British withdrawal and with sincere hopes that they or the Americans would augment Australian power in the event of a major crisis. Forward defence would continue. While Gorton could talk of new opportunities in defence and Fairhall could proclaim that 'the colonial era had gone', it was the old pillars of the imperial strategic imagination that still held sway.

The decision to continue the military commitment to Malaysia and Singapore, come the Strategic Basis paper in August, was further postponed. The Strategic Basis papers, as outlined in

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[24] Ian Hancock, *John Gorton: He Did It His Way* (Sydney: Hodder, 2002). p. 178.
[25] 'Australian Military Presence in Malaysia/ Singapore Army and RAAF Contributions, Appendix B, in, [Personal Papers of Prime Minister Gorton] Papers of Five Power Arrangements and Related Matters [Includes Defence Committee Reports, Cabinet Submissions, Cables and Newscuttings]', 2 December 1968, M3787, 29, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=4982141. p. 2.
[26] 'Australian Military Presence in Malaysia/Singapore - Report by Defence Committee - Cabinet Decision 233'. p. 3.
[27] Ibid. p. 3, 14.

the previous chapter, were a number of periodic reports from the Department of Defence that had the purpose of prioritising 'possible and actual threats to Australia's vital interests' from which Australia's armed forces could then be appropriately structured.[28] As such, these documents provide the historian with a unique look inside the way in which the country's strategic imagination – in the form of bureaucratic consideration at least – grappled with a time of profound change, when the old settings were coming under strain. In 1968, the drafting committee included the chiefs of the Army, Navy and Airforce, and the heads of the Department of Defence, External Affairs, the Cabinet Office, Treasury and the Prime Minister's Office. In anticipating that the U.S. would continue to be involved in South East Asia, the paper outlined that Australia could not withdraw from Malaysia or Singapore, or rule out future military involvement in South East Asia, if it wanted to be protected under ANZUS.[29] It also made some propositions to develop a force that would allow for 'the maximum of strategic flexibility', and the potential for Australian forces to not be stationed continuously overseas, but to be deployed to South-East Asia when required.[30] Even the foreign policy and defence bureaucracy, however, was not immune to the pull of tradition. They understood that there was 'little option but to continue the present forward defence posture' because of the current commitment to Vietnam and to Malaysia and Singapore.[31] This reasoning was circular at best, and amounted to saying that forward defence needed to be continued because Australia was currently committed to it. If it was the case that a current commitment required a future commitment, why bother conduct a review of the policy at all? The continuing commitment of forces to Vietnam and Malaysia should have been the result of a decision to sustain forward defence because it was considered to be in Australia's interests to do so, not because it was an apparently unalterable state of affairs. Forward defence was clearly a policy with significant inertia.

Cabinet were in no mood to pick up on the circular nature of such an argument. Many fully supported its conclusions. Where they disagreed was in the mere suggestion that a new, more mobile, composition of the Australian armed forces would have the flexibility to remain in Australia. Where Defence had gestured toward a future where Australian forces may not need to

[28] Stephan Frühling and Australia. Department of Defence, *A History of Australian Strategic Policy since 1945* (Canberra: Australian Dept of Defence, 2009). p. 4.
[29] 'The Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy - 1968 - Report by Defence Committee'. pp. 48-49.
[30] Ibid. p. 49.
[31] Ibid. p. 51.

be continuously stationed abroad, Cabinet responded, 'neither should it be assumed that forces would not remain continuously overseas.'[32]

The government was left without a major policy statement for much of the rest of the year, something that frustrated journalists and observers. An editorial ran in *The Sydney Morning Herald* with the line, 'Defence Dither.' Not mincing its words, it claimed, 'it is now dismally clear that, for all the talk of strategic reviews and Cabinet meetings, the only decisions the Government has taken on defence are relatively minor routine ones affecting aspects of the re-equipment of the services.' Presumably unaware of the deep fissures in cabinet, the *Herald* pressed for some sort of resolution: 'are we to maintain a forward defence posture or are we not?'[33]

Eventually, Gorton publically announced in Parliament on the 25th February 1969 that Australia would remain in Malaysia and Singapore after the British withdrawal and to resolve the ambiguity that had plagued the government's stance on forward defence throughout much of 1968. It contained questionable assessments, however, and quashed the possibility for the alternative approaches to defence that both the Department of Defence and Gorton himself had contemplated. He labelled the recommitment as a 'substitution for the efforts of a major power', but one that would inevitably 'fall short of what previously existed.'[34] There were more problems exacerbated by the Prime Minister's ill-conceived gestures to a new policy in 1968 that he now had to walk back. The decision to keep Australian forces in Malaysia and Singapore, for example, was not the result/outcome of the promised 're-examination', but was, by Gorton's own admission in this speech in keeping with Australia's 'historical actions in Korea, in Vietnam and in the region.'[35] With pressure from the United States and an unyielding cabinet, Gorton was forced to reaffirm the Australian commitment to Malaysia and Singapore. Despite the clear historical precedent for such action, it took over a year for Cabinet to be able to stomach having to bear many of the costs of an overseas military presence, and even then, there was clearly some feeling that they had to point out that their efforts would not resemble the previous British presence in a serious way.

The leader of the opposition, E. G. Whitlam, levelled a withering response, preparing in part for an election that would be held in October of that year but having also been offered more than enough material to unload on a Prime Minister wedged between his own reveries and a prevailing orthodoxy. In his statement on the future of Australian Defence policy, Gorton had, according to

[32] 'The Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy - 1968 - Report by Defence Committee - Cabinet Decision 762', 19 December 1968, A5868, 306, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=3069320. p. 3.
[33] Editorial, 'Defence Dither', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 December 1968. p. 2.
[34] 26. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 25 February 1969. p. 34.
[35] Ibid. p. 35.

Whitlam, offered a 'rebuttal of himself', 'combined [sic] a contradiction', and retreated 'into old modes of thought and outdated postures.'[36] The critique that cut most deeply was not in the charge that Gorton had offered contradicting statements, but that the decision to keep such forces in Malaysia and Singapore amounted to a 'nostalgic path' and a 'garrison mentality.'[37] Deputy leader of the opposition, Lance Barnard, echoed Whitlam's charge and contextualised the Australian re-commitment in regards to the rest of the region:

> 'Australia enters the 1970's as the last white garrison in South East Asia. The Dutch, the British, and the French have gone. The only vestiges of empire remaining are two minor Portuguese territories, the British in Hong Kong and now the Australian ground forces in Singapore-Malaysia.'[38]

'Garrison' would reverberate around the chamber in the ensuing debate, picked up by the scornful opposition who depicted the Prime Minister's statement to be an indication of a colonial mentality. The weaker responses from the government backbenches amounted to something of an admission to the charge, pointing the finger back at Labor in arguing that they too had taken part in their fair share of colonialism as H. V. Evatt had, two and a half decades prior, offered 'garrison' troops to occupy Japan in the aftermath of the Second World War.[39] That was two and a half decades prior, however, and clearly a weak counter-attack. The more considered responses maintained that the opposition had intentionally mischaracterised the situation and that the commitment was founded solely on Australian interests, not colonial or racial undertones.[40] That they felt the need to specifically rebut these claims, however, only revealed their vulnerability to them.

Scholars have offered different accounts of this confusing and haphazard period of Australian defence policy. Reflecting on this debate five years later, J. L. Richardson, a lecturer of Government at the University of Sydney, argued that the policy was not one of imperial nostalgia, but a 'compromise' – an attempt to balance commitments to regional security and costs.[41] Richardson accepted the premise that ground troops were necessary to communicate that Australia's commitment to the region's security was sincere. He also thought that Malaysian and Singaporean pressure had some part to play on the matter. But he maintained that the decision

[36] 26. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 27 February 1969. p. 268, 272-273.
[37] Ibid. p. 272-273.
[38] Lance H. Barnard, Ibid. p. 278.
[39] W. C. Haworth, Ibid. p. 295.
[40] W. T. Gibbs, Ibid. p. 299.
[41] J. L. Richardson, 'Australian Strategic and Defence Policies', in *Australia in World Affairs, 1966-1970*, ed. Gordon Greenwood and Norman Harper, Australia in World Affairs 4 (Melbourne: Cheshire, 1974). p. 247.

could only have been precipitated by one of two things; it was either the 'line of least resistance', or a 'gesture' towards 'a system of regional security.'[42] Others have followed the line of this interpretation. Andrea Benvenuti and Moreen Dee claim, for example, that Gorton's commitment to Malaysia and Singapore was for political reassurance.[43] This interpretation of the decision, however, originated in Cabinet with Fairhall in December 1968. He was conscious of the need to carefully manage how the commitment would be interpreted by both governments. The Malaysian foreign minister had specifically said in mid-1968 that his government would view the transfer of Australian infantry from Malaysia to Singapore poorly. Yet as the decision to move one battalion of infantry from Malaysia to Singapore was what Cabinet eventually agreed on, he proposed to present the Australian presence 'as a contribution to the defence of both Malaysia and Singapore' and as a 'contribution to regional security.' This would both be 'attractive to the U.S. and it could ameliorate the Malaysian reaction.'[44] The Gorton government was clearly sensitive to Malaysian and Singaporean preferences in the Australian presence there, but these were considerations after the decision to retain a military commitment there was made and only had a marginal impact on it.

When dealing with the contributions of Richardson, Benvenuti, and Dee, and their suggestion that forward defence was meant to re-assure Singapore and Malaysia by substantiating an Australian commitment to regional defence, there is the issue of how long it took to come to the final decision and this not being a very reassuring process in itself. *The Australian's editors*, for example, interpreted Gorton's subsequent statements on the Australian commitment to Malaysia and Singapore to be those of a 'man trying hard to convince himself', raising 'new doubts at home' and increasing 'them among our allies.'[45] Given the lack of any major announcement during 1968, it's hard to believe that Gorton was ultimately motivated by the need to reassure Malaysia and Singapore in early 1969. This was low on the list of priorities.

On the question of 'garrisons', Robert O'Neill claimed that 'the Australian battalion in Singapore was not a garrison force' but that it was 'there to assist in forming … a joint force In the event of external aggression.'[46] Gorton announced in 1971 for example that Australian forces

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[42] Ibid. p. 247.
[43] Benvenuti and Dee, 'The Five Power Defence Arrangements and the Reappraisal of the British and Australian Policy Interests in Southeast Asia, 1970–75'. p. 111.
[44] Allen Fairhall, 'For Cabinet, Australian Military Presence in Malaysia/ Singapore Army and RAAF Contributions', in *[Personal Papers of Prime Minister Gorton] Papers of Five Power Arrangements and Related Matters [Includes Defence Committee Reports, Cabinet Submissions, Cables and Newscuttings]*, 1968, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=4982141. p. 14.
[45] Editorial, 'Accentuating the Negative', *The Australian*, 2 July 1969. p. 8.
[46] Robert O'Neill, 'Defence Policy', in *Australia in World Affairs, 1971-75*, ed. William J. Hudson, Australia in World Affairs 5 (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1980). p. 19.

were there 'for no other reason other than to assist in the defence against external aggression or subversion.'[47] Cabinet had, however, endorsed a clause in the 1968 report by Defence on the basis for an Australian Military Presence in Malaysia and Singapore, stating, 'any formal commitments to the defence of Malaysia/ Singapore against an external threat should be avoided,'[48] but that it was happy for the force to assist in counter insurgency. The multiplicity of contradictory reasons for retaining forces in Malaysia and Singapore suggests that it was done to retain a general foothold in Asia rather than to defend against any one specific threat.

Daniel House has shown the importance of U.S. pressure on Gorton in his eventual concession to Cabinet in the commitment made to stay in Malaysia and Singapore after 1971. His detailed account of Cabinet meetings and Gorton's thinking between the British announcement in 1967 and Gorton's statement in February 1969 reveal the tensions within the alliance. Australia had asked for a guarantee that Australian troops in Malaysia and Singapore would have American support should they need it, but there was also the ongoing feeling that a potential withdrawal along with British forces would be incongruent with Australia's alliance obligations.[49] His interpretation of Gorton's February commitment overemphasises the importance of U.S. expectations on the Prime Minister to contribute to regional security at the cost of Cabinet's consistent view regarding the strategic relevance of Malaysia and Singapore to Australia's defence. Cabinet had considered Malaysia and Singapore to be Australia's area of 'primary strategic interest' in late 1968.[50] Again in February 1969, Cabinet agreed that 'preserving the "peace and security of the region"' was in Australia's 'vital interest'.[51] Yet he then interprets Gorton's and Cabinet's concerns that it would not be able to undertake this alone as attempts to temper its commitments in the region, and to not associate itself 'too closely with the defence of Malaysia and Singapore' in apparent divergence from the two previous statements of strategic priorities. Due to this startlingly sudden volte-face, House posits that the American alliance and American pressure on Gorton in particular was the primary reason behind the continued commitment.[52] In terms of forcing Gorton to concede to the majority in Cabinet, House may be correct in emphasising the importance of American influence. It should be made clear, however, that the vision of Australian strategy that Gorton endorsed in the end was one that considered Malaysia and Singapore to be

[47] Daniel House, 'Rethinking the Region : Australia and Britain's Withdrawal from Southeast Asia, 1965-1971' (PhD Thesis, Deakin University, Faculty of Arts, School of Social and International Studies, 2004). p. 160.
[48] 'Australian Military Presence in Malaysia/Singapore - Report by Defence Committee - Cabinet Decision 233'. pp. 3-4.
[49] House, 'Rethinking the Region'. pp. 113-157.
[50] Ibid. p. 140.
[51] Ibid. p. 152.
[52] Ibid. p. 157.

the region of Australia's primary strategic interest. Cabinet minutes had, in the months before the decision to remain in Malaysia and Singapore after the British withdrawal in 1971, attested to the perception of the strategic importance of the region to Australia and that it was in Australia's interest to promote stability there.

The announcement in February 1969 was not evidence of 'imperial nostalgia' on Gorton's part at least. It did indicate, however, that while Defence could not but acknowledge that the British withdrawal had 'raised fundamental questions about the tenability of present policies', Cabinet decided to continue to adhere to those policies.[53] Two observations can be made at this point. Firstly, that Gorton and Cabinet could agree, in different ways, on the high value of the American alliance. Secondly, that amidst the confusion surrounding how Australia would strategically position itself in its region, there was a willingness for Australia to shoulder some burden of regional security provided that this was in continuity with the way in which the Britain had contributed to this before their withdrawal.

'Providing for Australian Security', and 'Maintaining American Interest'[54]

The British withdrawal from east of Suez was a nasty shock to Australian policy makers, but, in this period of adjustment, forced no significant departure from Australia's strategic tradition. The Nixon doctrine would provide another shock to the policy makers, but would actually catalyse a divergence in policy. Neville Meaney, writing a decade after Nixon's address in July 1969, argued 'The Guam or Nixon Doctrine had given the ANZUS alliance and Asian and Pacific regional security a new meaning.'[55] The Australian government, in order to reinvigorate the American alliance after the initial shock of the Nixon doctrine, 'took an active role in in fostering regional co-operation, both military, political and economic, among the "free" nations' in Asia.[56] The Gorton government, following a theme first put forward by the short lived Minister for External Affairs Gordon Freeth (February to November 1969) adopted a rhetorical emphasis on regional 'co-operation' with Malaysia and Singapore under AMDA's replacement, the Five Power Defence Agreement. In what was a startling departure from a longstanding traditional fear, the rhetoric of

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[53] 'The Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy - 1968 - Report by Defence Committee'. p. 5.
[54] 'Continued Australian and New Zealand Defence Presence in Malaysia and Singapore - Decision 250', 1970 1970, A5869, 191, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=4006181.
[55] Neville Meaney, 'The United States', in *Australia in World Affairs, 1971-75*, ed. William J. Hudson, Australia in World Affairs 5 (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1980), 163–208. p. 174.
[56] Ibid. pp. 175-176.

'co-operation' was also noticeable in ministerial statements on Australian relations with Japan.[57] This was, according to Meaney, an attempt to 'justify American confidence, and to earn American support.'[58] This represented a slight shift for the pro-forward defence majority in Cabinet. Malaysia and Singapore continued to be thought of as an area of primary strategic importance and an Australian military commitment there made sense for these reasons alone. The Australian perception that the United States would look favourably on nations that pro-actively contributed to regional security then provided a way to allay the fear that an Australian commitment would not be sufficient in the event of a major crisis. Australian military bases in Malaysia and Singapore were both natural responses to strategic anxieties as well as a way to engender American interest and support in the region.

Cabinet had known in late 1968 that the United States would look favourably on Australian contributions toward regional security, even if these were in name only and really directed at alleviating traditional Australian anxieties concerning Asia. The language of the Nixon doctrine further encouraged Australian ministers to draw American attention to their co-operation with other nations in the region. Publically and internally, the United States had set out particular criteria as to how they would view security issues in the Asia under the Nixon doctrine. It was the American intention to 'establish a lower posture', in Asia, 'by reducing the number of official Americans (most of them being military and control personnel).'[59] Along with this, however, came the claim that the Americans were not fully withdrawing from the region, but that U.S. support in the future would be given to nations that displayed particular behaviour. In countries where there was a 'clear and pressing need for external aid', highest priority would be given 'to those which do most to help themselves and co-operate with their neighbours.'[60] Similarly, the U.S. maintained that it was difficult to make 'general propositions' when talking about how they would react to threats outlined in existing defence agreements, but that they would take into considerations factors such as, the substance of the threat, the 'importance' of the threatened country, and 'the degree to which other countries will assist in its defence.'[61] For nations like Australia that placed so much of their nation's defence in the care of the ANZUS treaty, the Nixon doctrine did undermine confidence in such security pacts, but also provided new opportunities to restore the connection.

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[57] Ibid. p. 176.
[58] Ibid. p. 175.
[59] Keith Waller, 'Inward Cablegram - U.S. Policy in East Asia - "The Guam Doctrine" [2.0cm]', 8 October 1969, A5882, CO818, National Archives of Australia, https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=3165068&S=6. p. 5.
[60] Ibid. p. 5.
[61] Ibid. p. 6.

Gordon Freeth, for example, provided one attempt to re-articulate the Australian/ American relationship in Asia in the wake of the Nixon doctrine. Giving his overview of the region, he regarded China to be a 'continuing and unsolved problem' because of its 'attitude of hostility towards its neighbours.'[62] The pressure that China exerted on what was already a fragile political order was made all the more precarious due to the 'continuing economic backwardness' of many of the countries in the region. In view of these two issues, the 'indispensable requirement for future progress' was 'continued Western support for the region under the leadership of the United States of America.'[63] Where President Nixon would categorically state that the United States had a 'right to expect' that the problem of internal security and external defence when not involving a nuclear power would be handled by the 'Asian nations themselves,'[64] Freeth would suggest that it was more of an American burden than the President had admitted. Nixon had unequivocally relinquished primary responsibility for the internal security of smaller nations, but Freeth suggested that the extent of American responsibility in the region would depend on how they could nurture Asian development. 'In order to avoid having American troops fighting in future wars in Asia', Freeth counselled, 'it may well be necessary to intensify our current effort towards developing the self-reliance of the countries in the region.'[65] His solution, that Australia and the U.S. embark on a strategy that would seek to prevent regional instability rather than react to it when it came revealed that he had misunderstood the Nixon doctrine. This was the responsibility of Asian nations themselves. 'Co-operation' in terms of Australian engagement win the region was, however a step forward from Holt's emphasis on leaving the United States to do the heavy lifting.

Others would take what they understood to be the new thrust of American policy and attempt to strengthen the alliance by positioning Australia as an indispensable factor in its realisation. The Australian commitment to Malaysia and Singapore, made in large part to parrot the dwindling British presence as well as what they felt to be their obligations under the ANZUS treaty, began to be lauded as an Australian attempt to encourage co-operation for those nations to be responsible for their own security. Australian diplomatic relations in the region were to be built up, as Freeth stated that he wanted Australia to 'be in a position to do what it can to bring about

[62] Gordon Freeth, 'Document 381 - "In Asia and the Pacific Old Patterns Are Breaking up." Address given to the American-Australian Association in New York, 18th September 1969.', in *Australia and the World: A Documentary History from the 1870s to the 1970s*, ed. N. K. Meaney (Melbourne, Australia: Longman Cheshire, 1985). pp. 708-709.
[63] Ibid. p. 709.
[64] 'Inward Cablegram - President Nixon's Asian Tour: Informal News Conference - "The Guam Doctrine" [2.0cm]', 27 July 1969, A5882, CO818, National Archives of Australia, https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=3165068&S=6. p. 8.
[65] Freeth, 'Document 381 - "In Asia and the Pacific Old Patterns Are Breaking up." Address given to the American-Australian Association in New York, 18th September 1969.' p. 710.

such [diplomatic] solutions' to instability in the region.[66] In the wake of the Nixon doctrine, Freeth sought to position Australia as an outward looking and stabilising presence, aligning itself with the new American strategic policy and giving it the appearance of being a proactive agent of American goals.

Freeth's positive spin on the Nixon doctrine was not something that was widely accepted. Professor of International Relations Hedley Bull was one prominent critic of the government's apparently blind overreliance on the American connection. Bull argued that Australia might 'strengthen its bargaining position by political co-operation with other great powers', including 'the Soviet Union.'[67] *The Australian's* editorial writers focused on the direr parts of Bull's speech, reporting that with America's new policy toward Asia, the professor thought that they would 'regard Australia as expendable, a concept so heretic that Canberra has so far been unable to come to grips with it.'[68] Public confidence in the American handling of Vietnam was further tarnished when news of the My Lai massacre broke in late November 1969. American troops had decimated a small Vietnamese hamlet 18 months earlier, raping and killing civilians including old men, women and children. December saw the increase in trade union protest and boycotts of Australian naval logistics linked to the war in Vietnam.[69] The public perception of the war in Vietnam, a commitment closely linked with the Australian-American connection, reached lower and lower ebbs.

Between the abortive ministerial career of Gordon Freeth, who lost his seat in the 1969 federal election, and William McMahon's 1971 victory in the leadership ballot against Gorton, it was the Defence Minister Malcolm Fraser who provided the clearest articulation of the how to fulfil alliance commitments through co-operation in Asia. He would go further than this, however, in his attempt to depict Australia as a leader in regional defence. The result was a combination of Australian diplomatic initiative and an alliance optimism not seen since Holt. Through his understanding of the Nixon doctrine's demands, Fraser attempted to place pro-active Australian diplomacy at the centre of whatever energy the Americans had left to discharge what he considered to be their diplomatic and military responsibilities in the region. Meaney understood Fraser to be pessimistic about the possibility of future American intervention in the region. But the statement on which he based this judgement of Fraser, 'Australia is likely to be more alone than ever before',

[66] Ibid. p. 713.
[67] 'Government Blamed for Foreign Policy Bungle', *The Australian*, 21 November 1969. p. 4.
[68] Editorial, 'McMahon's Major Challenge', *The Australian*, 21 November 1969. p. 12.
[69] Peter Edwards, *A Nation at War: Australian Politics, Society and Diplomacy during the Vietnam War 1965-1975*, The Official History of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948-1975 (St. Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial, 1997). pp. 243-244.

came within his final two weeks as Defence Minister in 1971, a period of frustration and tension between himself and the Australian Army.[70] His comments in March 1971 stand in stark contrast to much of what he said between December 1969 and March 1970.

The speeches of Fraser as Minister for Defence have more far-reaching significance than this period of Australian foreign policy, as they were early glimmerings of the 'middle-power' approach to Australian foreign relations. Gareth Evans and Bruce Grant, for example, describe the 'middle power approach' as the Australian potential for 'creative' diplomacy in world affairs, accompanied by 'room to manoeuvre' in the relationship with the United States. They regard this approach to be an invention of the Whitlam Government.[71] Fraser's rhetoric during this period shows evidence of a creative Australian policy, but one that was largely a reaction to U.S. policy. It suggests that the re-emergence of the middle power approach to Australian foreign policy occurred before Whitlam's time in office, and that it came about because the U.S. had put its allies on notice for not showing initiative and confidence in enacting systems of regional defence. Similarly, those who do attribute the middle power approach to Fraser, refer exclusively to his time as Prime Minister.[72] An earlier date for this approach should be posited, December 1969.

The notable sports broadcaster Tony Charlton, a household name in 1969, conducted an interview with Fraser in early December 1969 broadcast to a national audience. In his opening, Charlton reflected the feeling of public anxiety that the announcement of the Nixon Doctrine had precipitated, asking Fraser whether he was content with the present form of the ANZUS treaty as it did not contain specific conditions under which assistance would be provided to Australia.[73] The rest of the interview that focussed on Australian-American relations would be coloured by Fraser's response, that he emphasised the idea of 'mutual obligations' under ANZUS.[74]

Like Freeth, Fraser used the interview to re-affirm that the United States had particular responsibilities in maintaining the security of other like-minded nations, stating, 'I don't believe that the United States, powerful as she is, can stand in isolation in the world.'[75] He did concede, however, that the strategic landscape had changed since ANZUS was signed in 1951. He was

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[70] *The Australian*, 2 March 1971. Cited in, Meaney, 'The United States'. p. 164.
[71] Evans and Grant, *Australia's Foreign Relations*, 1995. p. 344.
[72] Malcolm Fraser, *Malcolm Fraser on Australia*, ed. D. M. White and David Alistair Kemp (Melbourne, Australia: Hill of Content, 1986). pp. 25-26.
[73] 'Transcript of Interview between Mr. Tony Charlton, GTV 9 and the Hon. Malcolm Fraser, M. P., Minister for Defence. In [Personal Papers of Prime Minister Fraser] Speeches and Statements [as Member for Wannon and Minister for Defence, Relating to Wool Industry, Defence Capability, Vietnam War, F111 Aircraft]', 2 December 1969, M1376, 1, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=8897474. p. 1.
[74] Ibid. p. 3.
[75] Ibid. p. 2.

confident that the 'United States would stand by their treaty obligations', but that the days where nations were obliged to give an 'automatic response' when events invoked the application of a treaty were gone – 'any government must reserve for itself the ultimate responsibility of making the decision to move in support of a treaty partner.'[76] With such a realist bent to his analysis of the ambiguity at the heart of ANZUS, Fraser understood that the response to any treaty would 'be very much dependent upon the attitudes and relationships between the countries concerned in that treaty.' Therein lay the weakness of the alliance as well as the necessary steps to mitigate it. His solution to the problem that the Nixon doctrine posed to the American alliance was to give Australia the look of a nation that sought to compensate for the dangers of American overstretch and show strategic initiative in its region along the lines of American policy.

When Charlton suggested that as the United States, 'encouraged us strongly to stay in Malaysia, couldn't we have used this as a bargaining power to have ANZUS extended to Malaysia/ Singapore?'[77] Fraser steered the conversation elsewhere. He did not want to even give the impression that he would take a transactional approach with the United States in regional defence. Instead he underlined Australia's traditional role of responsibility in the region, and a willingness to contribute to regional security as the United States re-appraised its own contributions. 'With all the obligations the United States has right around the world, I don't think it would have been reasonable for us to seek an early retirement for Malaysia/ Singapore merely because the British withdrew [sic], or to press for a public and spoken extension of a particular commitment.'[78] Never mind that the government had requested that the United States clarify its intentions for the future of its Asian policy only two years earlier, Fraser was here attempting to put the relationship on a new footing.

Fraser argued that this new approach was a good fit with the broader strategic needs for both countries. In response to a question about whether joint military instillations on Australian soil – Pine Gap, Woomera and North West Cape – served Australian interests, Fraser brought the discussion back to mutual obligations: 'If we can do something either directly or indirectly which makes the defensive capacity of the United States greater than it might otherwise be, I believe that adds to the defensive capacity of Australia.'[79] The reasons for such close strategic collaboration were made clear in a comparison he drew with Canadian defensive strategy. 'I don't think the Canadians have a strategic problem in the sense that we do. This is a question of geography', he

[76] Ibid. pp. 2-3.
[77] Ibid. p. 4.
[78] Ibid. p. 5.
[79] Ibid. p. 7.

stated.[80] Canada had conducted drastic defence reforms by unifying their armed forces in 1968 and Fraser was attempting to offer a cautious approach to what was becoming a thorny issue in Australia.[81] As Canada's strategic geography differed so significantly to Australia's, adopting similar reforms would be too risky. 'Mutual defence' was not an assured bi-product of geographical proximity for Australia as it was for Canada, and it needed to be pro-actively cultivated.

It was not only Fraser and Freeth who considered the relationship between Australia's commitment to Malaysia and Singapore, and remaining in the good graces of the United States as an important one to manage. The Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had asked the Australian High Commission whether, under ANZUS, the United States would come to Australia's aid, 'if our troops here were attacked.'[82] It was also known that the Malaysians had asked the Americans to use their 'influence' to have the Australians clarify their commitment there, leading the High Commission to conclude that 'the degree of U.S. support the Australian and New Zealand presence enjoys is an important element of Malaysian thinking.'[83] This indicated two things. Firstly, Australia's reading of the Nixon doctrine was not an idiosyncratic one. Other nations had questions about how generously the Americans would now interpret their obligations to Australian forces abroad under ANZUS. Secondly, notwithstanding the truth of the High Commission's conclusions on how the Malaysians saw the Australian military commitment, that they made such conclusions reveals how they understood Australia's role in the region. Despite its flaws, ANZUS was perceived to be more watertight than other treaties, and the relationship between the United States and Australia as more intimate than other American relationships in the region. Thus, Malaysia was interested in Australian military support for its own immediate benefits, but that there was added value in close military co-operation with Australia as it provided a reliable gateway to American support. The Malaysians, for example, 'had not revealed any strong interest in the related question on U.S. naval interest in Singapore', but were interested in the Australian commitment.[84]

Fraser would continue to emphasise the need for Australia to provide an independent contribution to regional security, and to support the United States in its bi-polar struggle. In a speech to a Young Liberals' convention in Perth, he claimed that Australia had adopted a doctrine

[80] Ibid. p. 8.
[81] Andrews, *The Department of Defence*. pp. 185-191.
[82] 'Inward Cablegram - Malaysia and the Guam Doctrine, in "The Guam Doctrine" [2.0cm] [6 of 183]', 2 January 1970, A5882, CO818, National Archives of Australia, https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=3165068&S=6. p. 4.
[83] Ibid. p. 4.
[84] Ibid. p. 4.

of 'regional defence', a term preferred more than the 'older one of forward defence.'[85] This amounted to no change in the substance of Australian policy itself, but was merely an attempt to distance the Government from the criticism it had received in the public debate in 1968. Again, it was the commitment to Malaysia and Singapore that was touted as evidence of this attitude: 'we are committed because we believe a regional approach is the only proper solution to the problems of security.'[86] Pursuant to this aim, Fraser suggested that Australia was in a 'unique' position to contribute to the region 'economically, diplomatically, administratively, possibly independently of our major partners, to assist our neighbours to equip themselves.'[87] He also suggested the possibility that Australia develop a 'more independent capacity than that which served to discharge our obligations as a junior partner in a major alliance.'[88] This call for independence in defence capability in the region was a stark contrast to Cabinet's anxious procrastination when deciding on whether to continue the commitment to Malaysia and Singapore two years earlier. It must be read, however, in combination with his prior statements on the American alliance. The United States continued to be indispensable in Fraser's strategic estimations, as he had earlier observed, 'if United States power is once challenged and found wanting, no matter what the nature of the challenge then free world credibility everywhere is threatened.'[89]

It was this aspect of the continuing importance of the United States to Australian security, and the development of an independent capability in the hope that this would strengthen the American alliance, to which Fraser devoted his Ministerial Statement on Defence of March 1970. This statement has been looked at previously in regards to Fraser's caution in driving reforms to the branches of Australian Defence forces.[90] It also, however, contains a lengthy discussion of Australia's strategic situation, approaches to defence policy and to the commitment in Malaysia and Singapore. The Nixon doctrine, according to Fraser, was full of meaning in terms of 'the manner in which American commitments might be discharged in the future.'[91] Fraser recalled, 'American help will be more readily forthcoming to those countries that help themselves.'[92] Re-

[85] 'Address by the Hon. Malcolm Fraser, M. P. Minister for Defence, to the Young Liberals' Convention. In [Personal Papers of Prime Minister Fraser] Speeches and Statements [as Member for Wannon and Minister for Defence, Relating to Wool Industry, Defence Capability, Vietnam War, F111 Aircraft]', 12 February 1970, M1376, 1, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=8897474. p. 3.
[86] Ibid. p. 3.
[87] Ibid. p. 17.
[88] Ibid. p. 17.
[89] Ibid. p. 14.
[90] Andrews, *The Department of Defence*. p. 191.
[91] 'Speech by the Hon. Malcolm Fraser, M. P. on Defence (Ministerial Statement), from "Parliamentary Debates." In [Personal Papers of Prime Minister Fraser] Speeches and Statements [as Member for Wannon and Minister for Defence, Relating to Wool Industry, Defence Capability, Vietnam War, F111 Aircraft]', 10 March 1970, M1376, 1, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=8897474. p. 2.
[92] Ibid. pp. 1-2.

visiting the resolved debate over forward defence, Fraser goaded 'If a policy of isolating ourselves ever made any sense, which I deny, the Nixon doctrine makes it a complete nonsense.'[93] His statement contained aspects of the speech to the Young Liberals' convention that were modified for the more hostile audience in parliament. He was cautious both of the risk that his audience would conflate the terms 'independent' and 'isolation', and of the potential to equate the government's previous policy with subservience. Instead of intoning that Australia develop a 'more independent capacity than that which served to discharge our obligations as a junior partner in a major alliance'; Fraser instead said that Australia was 'moving from a situation where we have been supporting commitments of major powers to a position of partnership with other regional powers.'[94] The implications were the same as those in his speech to the Young Liberals' Convention. Australian proactivity in contributing to the defence of other nations in its region – at this time in Malaysia and Singapore – was the way to exact generous American support in the future.

How this figured in Fraser's strategic imaginary can be seen most clearly in a submission to Cabinet on the 20th March 1970 in which he reminded his colleagues of the reasons for the Australian military commitment to Malaysia and Singapore. Cabinet had recently discovered that Malaysia would be asking for some degree of rent for the airbase at Butterworth, something that they had not considered when deciding whether the Australian commitment to Malaysia and Singapore would continue beyond 1971.[95] Fraser's submission went into great detail on how this would help to strengthen Malaysia's defence force at a time when it too needed to take up some of the burden that had been previously borne by Britain, and how much this would cost the Australian government.[96] Fraser implored that the issue of rent not prevent the government from maintaining the bases, and outlined that they were a critical part of Australian strategy:

> 'It must be remembered that the primary role of the Australian forces in Singapore and Malaysia was to provide for Australian security. We believe this regional commitment serves Australian interests and that while detailed arrangements on matters of cost are important they remain secondary to our primary objective… Our present and future commitment continues on the same basis as the best means for providing for Australian security and for maintaining American interest and for fostering ANZUS… I believe there is no credible alternative to the continued pursuit of these objectives.'[97]

[93] Ibid. p. 3.
[94] Ibid. p. 4.
[95] 'Continued Australian and New Zealand Defence Presence in Malaysia and Singapore - Decision 250'. pp. 2-3.
[96] Ibid. pp. 10-22.
[97] Ibid. p. 23.

It could not have been put in stronger terms. The Australian commitment to Malaysia and Singapore was in response to what it saw as its primary strategic vulnerability, as well as a means by which to encourage American support and interest in the region.

Fraser's ministerial statement was noticed by the United States, despite – or perhaps because of – the cacophony of pessimism coming from other reflections on Australia's strategic situation. It was mentioned in an analysis of Australia and Japan's reactions to the Guam Doctrine prepared for the U.S. Department of State, Dr. Bernard K. Gordon, the Project Chairman for South East Asian studies at the Virginian based 'Research Analysis Corporation'. His impression was that Fraser stood alone in Government in his commitment to Malaysia and Singapore. Others, he argued, had struggled to 'come to grips with the changes in Australia's position from that of security consumer to security provider.'[98] Gordon's study was circulated to American embassies in Southeast Asia and to Australia. It reflected a subtle change in the way that American observers perceived Australia's posture in the region. The U.S. embassy in Australia understood their hosts in 1969 to be playing a positive role in the region as a 'contributor' to regional defence policies.[99] Touching on the same question of whether Australia was a 'security consumer' or 'security provider' that Gordon would later focus on in his analysis, the embassy wanted to encourage 'Australian initiatives in regional development and defence [sic] situations where we cannot or should not take initiatives ourselves.'[100] Thus, at two levels of the American foreign policy apparatus, the diplomatic and the academic, Australia was perceived to be a contributor – albeit a passive one – to the regional defence initiatives of other nations in 1969 and 1970. It is significant then, that in 1971, the National Security Council identified the Australian 'exercise of leadership in and contribution to regional defence', as one of the United States' 'most direct stakes in Australia.'[101] While it was probably too soon to speak of any results or evidence of this leadership (none were given in the memorandum) and keeping Gordon's analysis in mind, the only factor that could have led to this impression was the Australian commitment to Malaysia and Singapore, as well as Fraser's rhetoric on independence and partnership with regional powers.

Despite the seemingly positive response to the idea of this new seemingly more proactive Australian attitude, it would be some time before they came to fruition, as Fraser would find himself on the backbench almost a year to the day after his ministerial statement. Struggling with

[98] Bernard K Gordon, 'The Strategy Gap in Asia: Japan and Australia - Study III in the Guam Doctrine: Elements and Implementation" (Research Analysis Corporation, October 1970), RG 84, Records of the American Embassy, Canberra, Box 54, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). p. 54.
[99] U.S. Embassy Canberra, 'Australia - Annual U.S. Policy Assessment', 16 January 1969. p. 3.
[100] Ibid. p. 13.
[101] National Security Council, 'NSSM-127 Study: Policies Toward Australia and New Zealand', 24 August 1971. p. 1.

what he saw as 'inadequate' communications with the Army, Fraser was inaccurately reported to have said that the communications were 'misleading'. In response, Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Daly visited Prime Minister Gorton and was offered his full support in the brewing tensions. Gorton, when asked to confirm or deny whether Daly had accused Fraser of disloyalty to the army, refused to answer the question as a matter of principle. With an apparently unsupportive Prime Minister and damagingly inaccurate reports of his attitude to the Army, Fraser tendered his resignation straight to the Governor General on the 8th of March, leading to a leadership vote and a new Prime Minister in William McMahon on the 10th. Ironically, Fraser's replacement as Defence minister was Gorton himself. [102]

Gorton's return to Defence would show the stark difference between his assessments and those held by Fraser and the remaining members of Cabinet who had favoured the continuation of forward defence. The Defence debate in 1968 had left Gorton's personal views on forward defence unchanged. It was his view that any military commitment to Asia was subordinate to Australia's primary responsibility to defend its own shores. In a letter drafted for him to accompany the submission of the 1971 Strategic Basis paper to Cabinet, particular emphasis was given to the balance of forces at home and abroad, stating, 'more emphasis than hitherto should be given the continuing fundamental obligation of continental defence.'[103] A handwritten note, what was presumably Gorton's preferred wording, put it in more strident terms:

> 'The obligation for the continental defence of Australia should dominate our force development, but as far as possible, forces… should be capable of operating overseas… and make an adequate contribution… to allied operations.'[104]

Fraser's emphasis on taking the initiative in diplomacy and security in Asia, independently of the major powers if need be, was gone. In his return to the Defence portfolio, Gorton reverted the terms by which to understand Australian strategy to his own conception. Australia would focus primarily on the defence of its own continent, and not think about going abroad unless there was a significant commitment from a major ally, the latter of which appeared unlikely given the British withdrawal and the Nixon doctrine.

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[102] Philip Ayres, *Malcolm Fraser: A Biography* (Richmond, Vic: William Heinemann Australia, 1987). pp. 178-185.
[103] John Gorton, 'For Cabinet, The Strategic Basis of Defence Policy. [Personal Papers of Prime Minister Gorton] Defense Policy 1968 and Defense Policy 1971 (Strategic Basis of Australian Defense Policy 1968 and 1971).', May 1971, M3787, 44, National Archives of Australia. p. 3.
[104] John Gorton, 'For Cabinet, The Strategic Basis of Defence Policy, Containing Handwritten Notes. [Personal Papers of Prime Minister Gorton] Defense Policy 1968 and Defense Policy 1971 (Strategic Basis of Australian Defense Policy 1968 and 1971).', 19 May 1971, M3787, 44, National Archives of Australia. p. 3.

As well as being discarded by his successor, modifications to rhetoric from the United States raised questions on Fraser's new approach to Australia's strategic posture. In a preface to the 1971 Strategic Basis paper, the Department of Defence would provide a corrective to their understanding of the Nixon doctrine as expressed in the paper, and in doing so also challenged Fraser's interpretation of the Nixon Doctrine. Fraser had advocated for Australian foreign policy proactivity in Asia, with the now optimistic impression that 'American help will be more readily forthcoming to those countries that help themselves', or that the United States would, at the very least, stand by their treaty obligations. The latter appeared to be shared by the Department of Defence. Four days after the completion of the 1971 Strategic Basis paper, U.S. Secretary of Defence, Melvin Laird, released the annual U.S. Defense Report. With this on hand, the Department of Defence suggested that the 'assurance of U.S. support might be regarded as more ambiguous in Laird's Report than in the text of the Strategic Basis.'[105] Searching for the key to embolden the United States in Asia, and to engender American goodwill, Fraser had advocated for a policy of independent diplomacy in the region. Fraser had been noticed by some parts of the American foreign and defence policy community in this respect, but not enough to bring the entire juggernaut around.

Before 1967, Australia's strategic posture of forward defence had alleviated traditional anxieties about Asia that were in turn stoked by the apparent southward spread of Communism. Yet it had involved a small degree of force mobilisation when compared with Britain and the United Sates, and this was rarely undertaken in the context of anything short of a joint commitment with either of these two Australian allies. Britain's announced withdrawal had thrown the tenability of this strategy into limbo, but despite this major blow and the dissenting views of Prime Minister John Gorton, Australia continued to maintain a strategic posture of forward defence, ready to shoulder more of this burden independently of the U.S. or the U.K. This was because it was seen by a majority in Cabinet to be the best strategy of providing for Australian defence. Fraser had been prepared to consider tentative moves towards independently taking up this responsibility, but this was heavily qualified by the fact that he saw it as a means of attracting U.S. interest in the region. If Australia could develop a reputation of being an indispensable contributor to regional security, then perhaps the U.S. would be drawn into making unyielding guarantees about maintaining Australia's own security.

[105] Department of Defence, 'The 1971 U.S. "Defense Report" and Its Relevance to "The Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy 1971." [Personal Papers of Prime Minister Gorton] Defense Policy 1968 and Defense Policy 1971 (Strategic Basis of Australian Defense Policy 1968 and 1971).', May 1971, M3787, 44, National Archives of Australia. p. 4.

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Contrasting 'New Realities' with 'Old Fears, Shibboleths and Suspicions', 1972-1975[1]

Ending 23 years of Liberal and Country party coalition government, Prime Minister Edward Gough Whitlam came to power in December 1972 with a clear sense of purpose in the changes he wanted attempt to make to Australia's foreign outlook. *The Whitlam Government*, an exhaustive first-person account of Whitlam's three years in office, provides a lengthy aplogia on the significance of his government's foreign policy. Published in 1985 after four years of immersive work undertaken by E. G. Whitlam with research assistance provided by a young Mark Latham, it was described by one biographer as the 'most significant work Whitlam would ever produce', words that echoed the author's own description of 'magnum opus.'[2] 'International Affairs' stands as the second chapter in a tome of close to 800 pages, preceded by no other chapter on policy and only by a brief account of the political climate before the 1972 campaign, the campaign itself, and the new government's first few days in office after victory on the second of December 1972.[3] The reason for providing the subject of international affairs such a prominent position is not hard to discern. 'Foreign policy', Whitlam claimed, 'was one of my government's strongest and most successful areas of achievement.'[4]

Whitlam's most commonly articulated theme during his election campaign had been the 'notion of a more "independent" Australia', which became, as Curran and Ward put it, 'his rhetorical lodestone.'[5] He would continue to place independence at the centre of discussions on foreign affairs well into his term, announcing on the day that the Governor General commissioned him to form government, that Australia's stance would be 'more independent… less militarily oriented and not open to suggestions of racism.'[6] Whitlam's strategic imagination highlighted with some drama a new Australia breaking free of its colonial incubus.

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[1] Edward Gough Whitlam, 'Australian Institute of Political Science Summer School Canberra, Opening Address by the Prime Minister', 27 January 1973, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/release/transcript-2803. p. 6.
[2] Jenny Hocking, *Gough Whitlam* (Carlton, Vic: Miegunyah Press, 2012). pp. 448-450.
[3] Gough Whitlam, *The Whitlam Government, 1972 - 1975*, (Ringwood, Vic: Penguin Books, 1986). pp. 1-24.
[4] Ibid. p. 25.
[5] Curran and Ward, *The Unknown Nation*.
[6] Edward Gough Whitlam, 'The Prime Minister's Press Conference at Parliament House Canberra', 5 December 1972, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00002730.pdf. pp. 14-15.

Whitlam's strategic imagination had been formed long before his electoral victory in 1972. In September of 1953, while waiting for Casey's report from the first ANZUS council meeting, Whitlam reflected in Australian Federal Parliament, as the recently elected member for Werriwa, on what he regarded as a wise decision to exclude Britain from the treaty. Australia, he argued, was not a member of NATO, so why would Britain be party to their collective security treaty? He also wanted to draw attention to the fact that none of ANZUS' signatories were countries with colonial possessions that were not also held under trust from the United Nations. Papua was a notable exception to this as it was 'an Australian colony' – something that he would seek to bring a quick end to during his time as Prime Minister – but it had been 'virtually placed under the United Nations as a trust territory.' His point, that Australia need not be seen to be in the same category as other 'European peoples' who stood in the way of indigenous self-governance, indicated a sensitivity to post-colonial politics from an early point in his political career.[7]

This maiden speech on Australian foreign policy also reveals the origins of his strident opposition to the Western intervention in Indo-China, and his willingness to criticise the United States despite also admiring it. It was with regret that he claimed that the United States were not showing their traditional 'sympathy for peoples who are seeking self-government' in the Pacific. American support of continued French control of Indo-China was the example that first came to mind. The Liberal/ Country Coalition Government had interpreted this as necessary opposition to the global spread of Communism. To Whitlam, the French were standing in the way of self-government and much of the Communist activity there was fueled by Vietnamese nationalism.[8] 'The best way to deal with any red menace, as we so glibly term it', he argued 'is to give them self-government.'[9]

The changes Whitlam made to Australian policy during his time in office was to bring it into harmony with his outlook, and was a task that he carried out with more resolve than his more tentative framing of a new Australian nationalism.[10] As Minister for Defence, Malcolm Fraser had understood Australian military independence within the framework of the American alliance, seen in his consolidation of military ties with Malaysia and Singapore in the hope that the United States would view Australia as an important contributor to regional security and thus be more generously disposed to provide support for those commitments. Whitlam, in contrast, sought to inaugurate a new sense of Australian 'independence' in foreign affairs and defence. His hope was that:

[7] 20. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 15 September 1953. p. 210.
[8] Ibid. p. 211.
[9] Ibid. p. 212.
[10] Curran, *The Power of Speech*. p. 100.

> 'People will be encouraged to shed the old stultifying fears and animosities which have encumbered the national spirit for generations and dominated, often for domestic partisan purposes, the foreign policy of this nation.'[11]

On coming to office he immediately withdrew Australian troops from overseas military commitments, breaking with the previous government's policy of maintaining forward defence as best way to shore up Australian security. The withdrawal from Singapore and Vietnam, as well as some ill-disciplined outbursts from senior ministers over the US' continued bombing of North Vietnam caused significant strains in Australia's relationship with the United States. Similarly, Whitlam's desire to distance Australia from its colonial and imperial past, along with some of his own diplomatic indiscretions, was a great cause of friction between Australia and the United Kingdom. Such open fracas with Australia's two most significant traditional allies would have been unthinkable to the previous government operating within an older strategic imaginary.

Read outside of the context of decolonisation, Whitlam's statement that Australia would conduct itself so as to 'not be open to the charge of racism' seems like a strange goal for a Prime Minister to set in foreign policy. Yet this had particular significance for Australia in light of its previous attitude in engaging with non-white states, and in light of the effects of decolonisation on international politics. The White Australia Policy had also only recently been dismantled. Chapter two of this thesis looked at the rhetoric of 'white faces on the Asian mainland' and its relevance to Australian forward defence. Whitlam, in contrast, was sensitive to any impression that Australia had a racial preference in what nations it would have close relationships with. During his time in government he would direct much of his effort to removing the 'racist' undertones of many Australian policies that had coloured the old strategic imagination. It is significant in this context that it was the 'charges' of racism that he wanted to prevent. Decolonisation had increased the number of African and Asian members of the United Nations and other international bodies since the mid 20th century, and they exerted significant pressure in international politics on countries with racially discriminatory laws. This 'international glare' had played some part in affecting gradual change in Australian policies over the 1960s, especially the series of modifications to the White Australia Policy.[12] Whitlam wanted to turn over that page of Australia's past for good.

It's no coincidence that an increase in Australian confidence to take a more independent line to that of the United States, the ending of many legal and constitutional ties to Britain, and a desire

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[11] Whitlam, 'Australian Institute of Political Science Summer School Canberra, Opening Address by the Prime Minister'. p. 7.

[12] Matthew Jordan, 'The Reappraisal of the White Australia Policy against the Background of a Changing Asia, 1945-67*', *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 52, no. 2 (June 2006): https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8497.2005.00416.x. pp. 238-243.

to build anti-racialist credibility with a decolonising international political system occurred alongside a fresh articulation of Australia's geo-strategic situation. Australia, according to Whitlam, had nothing to fear from their geopolitical location, and could only benefit from cultivating friendship and closeness with the peoples there. On this he was the beneficiary of many recent events in international affairs and Australia's strategic situation. In 1971, Australia defensive planners claimed that they could not foresee any 'direct threat to the security of Australian territory in the 1970s outside the unlikely contingency of a general war.'[13] A period of reduced tensions between the super powers, 'détente', was thought to provide space for Australia to strike a more independent tone from the United States without betraying the allied cause. Whitlam's views on Cold War issues such as the apparent spread of communism in Asia had, since the 1950s, been free from the oppressively bipolar strictures that had affected Coalition thinking on those topics. Events had more or less confirmed his previous judgements on Australia and Asia's strategic situation, Nixon's diplomatic overtures to China for example, just in time for his electoral victory.

Decolonisation and the International Glare

Racial anxiety may be too simple a label to describe the complexities of the Australian national psyche and strategic imagination in the 20 years before the Whitlam government, but it was certainly a dominant trait in both. Australia had consistently parsed shifts in international relations through a narrow regional lens that saw itself as the only white nation in Asia, and was ever defensive of its treatment of its indigenous population and the racial tone of its immigration policy.

The issue of race in Australia's foreign policy was one that had been steadily growing since the early 1960s, simmering on the backburner in External Affairs while other challenges, such as the British bid to enter the European Economic Community, Australian troop deployments in South East Asia, and the Nixon doctrine soaked up most of the department's energy. During this time, there were concerns about how to manage the international perception of the degree to which Australia was a state with racialist policies or attitudes. In reaction to African decolonization in the early 1960s, and the possibility that it could become a new theatre of Cold War struggle, External Affairs directed the modest assets that it had committed to Africa in August of 1961 to cultivate local goodwill.[14] Secretary of External Affairs, Arthur Tange, had identified Australia's own

[13] Gorton, 'For Cabinet, The Strategic Basis of Defence Policy, Containing Handwritten Notes. [Personal Papers of Prime Minister Gorton] Defense Policy 1968 and Defense Policy 1971 (Strategic Basis of Australian Defense Policy 1968 and 1971).' p. 56.
[14] Goldsworthy, *Losing the Blanket.* p.82.

indigenous and immigration policies as a potential stumbling block for diplomatic relations with Africa. With communist powers seeking to exploit African decolonization, Tange argued that, 'racial discrimination will be a major international issue henceforth.'[15]

As has been shown, racial fears had been a major theme in how Australian Prime Ministers had viewed the Pacific region and the world. Menzies, still operating under the assumptions of the cultural and racial British ideal, made no adjustment to his stance on the policies of Apartheid South Africa despite petitions to do so from External Affairs.[16] The term 'winds of change', a reference to British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan's 1961 speech in Cape Town heralding decolonization in Africa, became a term used pejoratively by Menzies lamenting that the Commonwealth was now, 'at the mercy of the new members.'[17] Holt was more aware of the need to present a less racially prejudiced Australia, softening the racialist migration policy that had stood with only the smallest and most reluctant amendments since Australia passed its first act of parliament. After the continual prompting of the Department of Immigration and Menzies' exit from federal politics, Holt provided the first genuine grounds for limited numbers of non-European people to migrate and attain permanent residence.[18] This was a relatively small concession. Holt still favored European immigrants, and continued to cast a wary eye northward. On the question of decolonisation more generally, the British considered him to be, 'pretty contemptuous of the Afro/Asian Group [in the United Nations] and of African Governments in general.' Holt, 'tended to equate Africans with the natives of New Guinea whose rule is "one man one pot" (for boiling political opponents).'[19] McMahon, unwilling to see the potential links between forward defence and colonialism, similarly paid lip service to the moral injustice of racial policy in his condemnation of apartheid, yet also allowed a racially selected South African rugby team to tour Australia in 1971 despite protestations within the U.N.[20]

The U.N. was just one forum in which the racial precepts of the Australian strategic imagination had begun to be challenged, introducing the concept of an international community contemptuously glaring at Australia's ambiguity on issues of race and decolonisation. A fledgling U.N. and Australia's pre-occupation in keeping its great and powerful friends in Asia had meant

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[15] Ibid. p. 89.
[16] Ibid. p. 90.
[17] R. G. Menzies, quoted in, Stuart Ward, 'Run Before the Tempest: The "Wind of Change" and the British World', *Geschichte Und Gesellschaft* 37, no. 2 (2011): 198–219, https://doi.org/10.13109/gege.2011.37.2.198. p. 214.
[18] Gwenda Tavan, 'The Limits of Discretion: The Role of the Liberal Party in the Dismantling of the White Australia Policy1', *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 51, no. 3 (September 2005): 418–28, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8497.2005.0383a.x. pp. 421-424.
[19] D. P. R. Mackilligan, 'Letter from D. P. R. Mackilligan to A. M. Pallister', 8 July 1966, PREM 13/ 729, The National Archives. p. 1.
[20] Patrick Mullins, *Tiberius with a Telephone: The Life and Stories of William McMahon* (Victoria, Australia: Scribe Publications, 2018). pp. 417-418.

that any source of 'international opinion' was largely ignored during the Menzies years. There had been brief references to it during this time, however, but these were not a test by which a Prime Minister would judge his actions. Immigration Minister Alexander Downer, for example, made reference to 'much resentment outside Australia', when introducing a bill that would abolish the infamous 'dictation test' in the Immigration Restriction Act in May 1958. The 'creaking operation' of the 'archaic, heavy-handed piece of machinery' had 'tarnished our good name in the eyes of the world.'[21] The Minister for External Affairs, Garfield Barwick would similarly invoke 'Australia's international standing' when attempting unsuccessfully to bring Menzies' cabinet of September 1963 around to a tougher anti-apartheid stance.[22] However aware senior ministers or heads of department were of this international glare, successive Prime Ministers were routinely unaware of it, or ignored it.

In contrast to such ambiguity on the issue of race in international affairs, Whitlam as opposition leader made Australia's denunciation of racism in all forms a central tenet of his rhetoric. In a speech at Port Moresby, January 1971, he spoke about how the rest of the world saw Australia, scathingly detailing international perspectives on Australian domestic and foreign policy failures such as the Aboriginal infant mortality rate, inaction on the sale of arms to South Africa, and Immigration policy.[23] Taking aim at the war in Vietnam and the government's broader policy of forward defence, Australia had, Whitlam said, 'eagerly supported the most unpopular war in modern times on the ground that Asia should be a battleground of our freedom.'[24] Although he differed with his colleagues on the other side of the chamber on how to respond to the regional challenges, his impression of the region bore close similarity to the words of many that had sought to sum up Australia's geo-strategic picture before him; 'we are a European nation on the fringe of the most populous and deprived coloured nations in the world.'[25]

Unlike the government, however, who had responded to this problem by continually seeking to engage British and American military power as a northern bulwark, Whitlam saw forward defence as damaging to Australia's international reputation. His thoughts on Gorton's 1969

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[21] Alexander Downer, quoted in, Tavan, 'The Limits of Discretion'. p. 422.
[22] Goldsworthy, *Losing the Blanket*. p. 90.
[23] Edward Gough Whitlam, 'Press Release "Statement by the Leader of the Australian Labor Party, Mr EG Whitlam QC MP, Port Moresby"', 17 January 1971, Item 12641 [Box 0108], The Whitlam Institute, http://u0227.uws.edu.au:1801/view/action/nmets.do?DOCCHOICE=12639.xml&dvs=1548198374935~627&locale=en_US&search_terms=Statement+1971&adjacency=&VIEWER_URL=/view/action/nmets.do?&DELIVERY_RULE_ID=4&divType=&usePid1=true&usePid2=true. p. 2.
[24] Ibid. p. 2.
[25] Ibid. p. 2.

announcement that Australia would remain in Malaysia and Singapore have been covered in the previous chapter.

In his eyes, Australia's delayed transferal of power to indigenous Papua New Guineans amounted to an unacceptable continuation of colonial rule and a perpetuation of a colonial mentality in a region where European empires had all but ended.[26] Regardless of the debatable strategic advantages that were offered by forward defence they were outweighed by the reputational cost. Colonialism, he exhorted:

> 'would be bad for us as a nation, even if we were able to isolate ourselves from the pressures and opinions of all other countries; but we enjoy no such luxury of isolation. In particular, we live in a region in which every one of our neighbours for thousands of miles around were former colonies. Each detests colonialism… every justification that Australian government makes for dragging its feet in Papua-New Guinea, every argument about the inability of native peoples to govern themselves smacks of racial superiority.'[27]

Whitlam was the first to really grasp the importance of post-colonial diplomacy in foreign policy. Policies that showed an Australian ambiguity to international post-colonial sensitivities, Whitlam argued, leant too much 'on the world's goodwill and on Australia's credibility.'[28]

Protests against the 1971 South African Rugby Tour to Australia revealed a new public awareness more attuned to the diplomatic imperatives that were necessary in a world marked less conspicuously by Western political dominance and more by indigenous national government. A racially selected – all white – South African Rugby Union team toured Australia in the winter of 1971. Many of the games were played behind barbed wire, and the Rugby was often overshadowed by news of protestors making daring ploys to disrupt play and police heavy-handedness in their response.

Action against the South African Rugby tour expressed a moral objection to Apartheid policy as it was based on racialist selection, but also made the case that the tour could be detrimental to Australia's image overseas.[29] The group, 'Halt All Racial Tours' claimed that by being seen to tolerate racial prejudice in the form of a racially selected rugby team, Australia's name would become 'even more besmirched than it has become through involvement in Vietnam.'[30] Bruce

[26] Ibid. p. 1.
[27] Ibid. p. 1.
[28] Ibid. p. 2.
[29] Samuel Webster, '"Paint Them Black and Send Them Back": The 1971 Springbok Tour of Australia' Unpublished Honours Thesis, (University of Sydney, 2016).
[30] 'Moratorium Supporters!', MS8076, Box3, Folder 6., National Library of Australia.

Grant similarly argued that harbouring South African sporting teams damaged Australia's international prestige.[31] It was to Australia's apparent place of respectability on the international stage that protest groups appealed to as a way of recruiting participants. The 'Campaign Against Racialism in Sport' claimed that even an implied acceptance of Apartheid, 'damages [Australia's] international standing.'[32]

Prime Minister McMahon had written to his South African counterpart B. J. Vorster to express regret that apartheid policy was applied to the selection of national sporting teams, yet he would also publically defend the team once it was in Australia and do all in his power to make sure that tour was not disrupted by protests. When a 'black ban' from the Australian Council of Trade Unions seemed like it would prevent the South African team from flying out of Perth Airport to continue the tour, McMahon offered the use of a RAAF transport to ensure that they were not left stuck on the tarmac.[33] In response, Whitlam claimed that this amounted to Australian approval of apartheid, and that McMahon's offer of the RAAF was 'the most damaging thing an Australian government has ever done to Australia in the world at large.'[34] When the time came, a year later, to campaign for the next Federal election, the issue of race and sport was incorporated into his platform. A commitment to deny visas or entry into Australia to any sporting teams that were 'racially selected' was included in the long version of his famous 13th of November policy speech in 1972, given to the press as a bound booklet bearing the title, *It's Time for Leadership*.[35] After winning the election, he would reaffirm this commitment in a speech to the Summer School of the Australian Institute of Political Science in January 1973,[36] and then again – exactly word for word – at the Australian Labor Party national conference on the 12th of July 1973.[37]

There were significant links between the moral issue of racism, and the perceived diplomatic consequences that would ensue if Australia was considered by the other nations to be akin to racialist states such as South Africa. It was deemed important, for example, 'in terms of our

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31 Bruce Grant, 'Editorial', *The Age*, 29 June 1971. p. 9.
32 'Apartheid Is Not a Game', Anti-apartheid movement and South Africa's human rights: ephemera material in the Riley Collection., National Library of Australia.
33 Mullins, *Tiberius with a Telephone*. pp. 417-419.
34 'An Adventure', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 June 1971. p. 1.
35 Edward Gough Whitlam and Graham Freudenberg, 'Australian Labor Party Policy Speech 1972 Titled "It's Time for Leadership" Delivered by Gough Whitlam at Blacktown Civic Centre', 13 November 1972, Item 7746 [Box 0285], The Whitlam Institute. p. 33., The promise did not make it into lean 'podium' version of the speech, Edward Gough Whitlam, 'Podium Version of Australian Labor Party Policy Speech 1972 Delivered by Gough Whitlam at Blacktown Civic Centre on 13 November 1972', 13 November 1972, Item 7747 [SAFE], The Whitlam Institute.
36 Whitlam, 'Australian Institute of Political Science Summer School Canberra, Opening Address by the Prime Minister'. p. 2.
37 'Australian Labor Party – National Conference: Address by the Prime Minister , Mr. E. G. Whitlam, Q.C., M.P., '[Personal Papers of Prime Minister E G Whitlam] Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee [Box 24]' (Sydney, 1974 1973), M2283, 100, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=7294370. p. 176.

international standing that Australia – as a rich, mainly white, immigrant society… should emphasise in African, Asian and, indeed, other eyes the differences between Australia and the white minority regimes in Southern Africa.'[38] Australia's administration of Papua New Guinea, the recent memory of its restrictive immigration policy and its blemished record of indigenous policy made the need to clean up its appearance all the more pressing. Australia's geo-political region was the other factor that made moral opposition to racism a diplomatic imperative. For Australia, there was the 'added danger that, if we were to appear to be insensitive on the issue of race, the bridges which we have patiently and with some success built to Asia might, in future, be eroded.'[39] Opposition to racism, even at this early stage of the Whitlam administration, was parsed through a desire of wanting to become an 'accepted, co-operative and helpful member of the Asian and Pacific region.'[40]

Whitlam himself was prepared to draw his own connections between prudential diplomacy in a decolonising world and moral opposition to racism. In a letter providing an explanation of Australia's 'major interests and objectives' to the new Australian High Commissioner to London, John Armstrong, Whitlam took the opportunity to explain why Australia needed to be tough on Southern Africa.[41] The international glare and concerns about Australia's place in its region featured prominently in this account. Generally, Whitlam thought that Australia needed to 'allay suspicions' that it was 'a racialist and colonialist power.'[42] In regards to the international glare, Whitlam judged it to be easier for Australia to influence world affairs as a well-respected member of the international community if the 35 nations of sub-Saharan Africa were well disposed to it.[43] In terms of Australia's relations with the nations in its geo-strategic neighbourhood, Whitlam identified, 'racial differences of a clear kind between us and other countries of our region: in our relations with them we certainly cannot afford to be marked by any taint of racialism or colonialism.'[44] This new Australian attitude would be signalled, primarily, in Australian voting on South Africa and Rhodesia, the other white minority administration in Southern Africa.

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[38] Ibid.
[39] '[Personal Papers of Prime Minister E G Whitlam] Folder of Foreign Affairs Themes [Box 1]'.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Edward Gough Whitlam, 'Letter to J. I. Armstrong', January 1973, A1838, 67/1/3 Part 12, National Archives of Australia. pp. 1-5.
[42] Ibid. p. 5.
[43] Ibid. p. 5.
[44] Ibid. p. 5.

Australia, Asia, and great and powerful friends

Whitlam laid out this broader foreign policy rubric in detail in his opening remarks to a Summer School on Australia's international relations held at the Australian Institute of Political Science in late January 1973. He had not yet been in office for two months, but the changes he had already enacted in Australia's foreign policy posture were indeed, 'real and deep.'[45] Critically, however, he also argued that this did not amount to a change in in the 'essential foundations' of Australian policy.[46] This was an attempt to legitimise his new national outlook by giving it continuity with what had always been the 'true' expression of Australia's outlook in the past.[47] Australia's national interests had not changed, but what had changed was the 'perception and interpretation of those interests, obligations and friendships by the elected government.'[48] Whitlam's new construction of Australian foreign policy was no more genuinely Australian than that which had been based on a national will to survive in the midst of what was perceived as an antagonistic and alien region. If Whitlam wished to depart from that, as he did indeed want to, then Australian foreign policy would need fresh foundations and a new rationalizing logic – a new strategic imagination. In this vein, Whitlam did provide a new national perspective:

> 'We do not see any immediate threat of external aggression to the countries of South East Asia. We do not want to look on South East Asia as a front line in terms of the old cliché of forward defence. We do not see South East Asia as a frontier where we might fight nameless Asian enemies as far to the north of our own shores as possible – in other people's backyards.'[49]

This statement came late in his speech, nestled amidst commitments to specific policies, but provided the necessary basis for the enunciation of those policies. Détente had limited the degree to which the superpowers were going to involve themselves in proxy conflicts and Australia need not fear the southern spread of communism. Furthermore, Whitlam rebuffed the older fear of the 'Yellow Peril', in its military, racial and imperial dimensions, through the language of the 'frontier', the 'nameless Asian enemies' and 'other people's backyards.'

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[45] Whitlam, 'Australian Institute of Political Science Summer School Canberra, Opening Address by the Prime Minister'. p. 2.
[46] Ibid. p. 1.
[47] Curran, *The Power of Speech*. p. 59.
[48] Whitlam, 'Australian Institute of Political Science Summer School Canberra, Opening Address by the Prime Minister'. p. 2.
[49] Ibid. pp. 8-9.

This allowed for two broader shifts in Australian foreign policy, the tenor of Australia's relationship with the United States, and the tenor of its relationships with the nations in its region. Whitlam deemed it his 'duty' to maintain the American alliance, but held that 'adherence to ANZUS' did not 'in itself constitute a foreign policy'.[50] This caricature of the concerns of his predecessors neglects the reasons for those concerns, but does capture the now familiar single-minded obsession in attempting to acquire the specifics on what would trigger American military protection under the terms of the treaty. He claimed that there was now no need to look northward in fear, and the American alliance could now take on the guise of an 'embodiment of the common interests of the people of Australia, New Zealand and the United States.'[51] ANZUS was clearly more than just an embodiment of common interests. However vague its clauses were, it was still a treaty with the United States. It represented, according to Whitlam, 'a security guarantee in the ultimate peril', but this was still a far more restrictive interpretation of the treaty than had been held by an Australian Prime Minister since it was signed.[52] This rhetorical transmutation of ANZUS from military pact to statement of common interest reflected the new tone in which Australia would conduct its diplomatic relations with the nations in Asia. Australia would attempt to promote, 'peace and prosperity' in the neighbourhood, recognise Peking, not Taipei, as the capital of China, support the Association of South East Asian Nations in enacting a zone of neutrality in South East Asia, and the development of relations with Indonesia.[53] 'Regional co-operation' would be 'one of the keystones of Australia's foreign policy' under Whitlam, with 'less emphasis on military pacts' and a more 'independent outlook in foreign affairs.'[54]

Many have correctly identified Whitlam's shift away from the regional concerns that had been the mainstays of his forbears in this major shift in the Australian strategic imagination. Diplomatic rapprochement with China, the final withdrawal from Vietnam and the end of the doctrine of forward defence were conscious departures away from the traditional responses to a strategic fear of the 'near north' that had then existed in one form or another for generations. In July of 1971, McMahon famously denounced Whitlam's leading of a delegation to China where he met with Chinese Premier, saying, 'Zhou Enlai had Mr Whitlam on a hook and he played him as a fisherman plays a trout.'[55] This was despite considerable advice from Keith Waller, Australia's Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs, that the Americans were softening on Peking themselves.[56]

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[50] Ibid. p. 4.
[51] Ibid. p. 4.
[52] Ibid. p. 4.
[53] Ibid. pp. 5-7
[54] Ibid. p. 9.
[55] Mullins, *Tiberius with a Telephone*. pp. 433-435.
[56] Alan Fewster, *Three Duties & Talleyrand's Dictum: Keith Waller, Portrait of a Working Diplomat* (Australian Scholarly Publishing Pty, Limited, 2018). pp. 187-190

Days later, when the news of Henry Kissinger's visit to Zhou on behalf of President Nixon became public, McMahon was humiliated. After he was elected, Whitlam wasted no time in establishing diplomatic relations with China, doing so in January of 1973.[57] The Gorton government had begun Australian withdrawal from Vietnam in early 1968, but it was Whitlam who made the final withdrawal of the remaining military advisors.[58] He also made the decision to withdraw the infantry and artillery commitment to Singapore that he had so criticised in opposition.[59] Some elements of the prior commitment remained, however, notably the two RAAF squadrons of Mirage aircraft at Butterworth airbase in Malaysia as a contribution to Malaysian air defence, provided, 'until such time as the Malaysians determined that they were no longer required.'[60]

It was a vision that required a reappraisal of Australian relations with the United States and Great Britain, the two 'great power protectors', as well. This effort was hampered, however, by deep ideological differences that existed within the government, giving it a less united voice on issues of foreign policy as perhaps the Prime Minister would have liked. Such was the Government's reaction to the infamous 'Christmas bombings', Nixon's final, lethal bellow of defiance at North Vietnam. An eleven-day American assault on Hanoi destroyed military targets as well as several residential areas and a hospital.[61] The bombings were widely unpopular domestically and internationally. When Whitlam was asked to opine on the bombings, he cautiously expressed his regret that an end to the war seemed to still be a far-off prospect but offered no comment on the bombings themselves even after he was pressed to do so. [62] His minister for Trade, Jim Cairns, was in no mood to fall in line behind his Prime Minister and called Nixon a fraud, accusing the President, as Curran puts it, 'of rank dishonesty.'[63] In his report to London on the new Labor government in Australia, the British High Commissioner in Australia Morrice James deployed his well-worn air of condescension to aptly describe, nevertheless, the cacophony that would periodically erupt from Canberra. 'Many of the new Labour [sic] Ministers… vigorously go their separate ways and seek publicity by calling for action in fields of government outside their own portfolios… The views of Mr. Whitlam (and still more those of his deputy Mr. Barnard) run counter to those of the Left Wing.'[64] The amount of divergence between

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[57] Derek McDougall, 'Edward Gough Whitlam, 1916-2014: An Assessment of His Political Significance', *The Round Table* 104, no. 1 (2015): 31–40, https://doi.org/10.1080/00358533.2015.1005360. p. 37.
[58] Ibid. p. 36.
[59] Jeffrey Grey, *A Military History of Australia*, 3rd ed (Port Melbourne, VIC: Cambridge University Press, 2008). p. 258.
[60] Whitlam, *The Whitlam Government, 1972 - 1975*. pp. 153-154.
[61] Curran, *Unholy Fury*. p. 156.
[62] Ibid. p. 160.
[63] Ibid. p. 160.
[64] Morrice James, 'Foreign and Commonwealth Office Diplomatic Report No. 269/73: The Australian Labour Party Government (1)', 3 April 1973, FCO 32/ 948, The National Archives. p. 2.

Whitlam, Barnard and the left of the party may be overemphasised in James' dispatch, but the latitude with which members of the government made comments on international issues did add complexity to the already tricky task of recasting the character of Australia's relations with the United States and the United Kingdom.

The Nixon administration was not prepared to tolerate such insubordination from its allies. The Americans were already shocked at the abruptness of Whitlam's withdrawal of all remaining Australian personnel in Vietnam.[65] Criticising the Christmas bombings was not a good way to follow this up. Whitlam's private letter of protestation, carefully penned by Secretary of External Affairs Sir Keith Waller, was particularly irritating. His exhortation that both the United States and North Vietnam return to the negotiating table was interpreted by the Americans as 'being placed on the same level' as their 'communist enemy.' Having not yet been offered an invitation to visit the President within the first six months of being in office, Nixon was making Whitlam into something of an example. Whitlam had sent the letter, in part from domestic and internal party pressure, and the problems it raised were compounded by his ministers' added verbal indiscretions. [66] The prolonged snub became, according to Barnard, '"an emotional issue in Australia", with "average Australians" now concerned about the state of the relationship.'[67] The invitation came at long last on June 17th 1973, but the damage to relations between the two leaders had been done, and remained frosty until Gerald Ford replaced Nixon in the wake of the Watergate scandal.

However difficult Whitlam would find dealing with the United States and Great Britain in his efforts to navigate away from Australia's old strategic imagination, it was the actions of those greater powers that had created the geo-political environment that enabled the Prime Minister to make such departures. Whitlam's speech to the National Press Club in Washington on the 30th July praised the President for adjusting the geo-political balance of power in Asia through the recalibration of American military might there. Although he was keen to repair relations with the President in their meeting on the 30th of July, it's difficult to gauge how sincerely this was reflected in his speech. He would, after all, hurl an infamous missive at the British Prime Minister, Edward Heath, just one day later. While there may have been designs to use the speech to ease his passage into the Oval Office, or even to explain the new Australian outlook to a cautious American Foreign Policy establishment, there is no reason to doubt that his remarks on the Nixon doctrine were an indication of his true opinion. Whitlam contextualized his actions in foreign policy as, 'only part of a profound change taking place in the whole pattern of international relations, especially in the

[65] Curran, *Unholy Fury*. p. 148.
[66] Ibid. pp. 161-163, 215.
[67] Ibid. p. 221.

Western Pacific.'[68] These had not originated in Australia, but in the United States. 'These initiatives – President Nixon's initiatives – have created a new reality for our region. Part of Australia's task has been to ratify the new reality.'[69] David Goldsworthy has argued that for Whitlam's predecessors, 'the dominance of strategic concerns militated against dramatic policy departures.'[70] Whitlam himself, in this speech, attests to the importance of the Nixon doctrine in Australia's new regional outlook.

Repeating many of the themes that he had touched on in his opening of the Summer School of the Australian Institute of Political Science, Whitlam explained the attitude that Australia would take in order to keep in step with the 'new reality' in the region:

> 'We are not a satellite of any country.
>
> We are a friend and partner of the United States particularly in the Pacific; but with independent interests of our own.
>
> As a Government, we are determined that Australia shall not be open to the charges of racism…
>
> Australia's past shortcomings, the mistakes in our international dealings have sprung in large measure from a vague and generalized fear of our own environment, the feeling of being alien in our own continent and our own region…
>
> What is sometimes called a new nationalism… is, I hope, really the beginning of self-confidence, the realisation that we are there to stay as a people whose possession of a vast rich continent has endowed us with unique opportunities, yet very great obligations.
>
> My great hope for my Government… is that it would see the end of old inhibitions, the self-defeating fears about Australia's place in the world, and the beginning of a creative maturity.'[71]

These final words to the National Press Club in Washington DC provide an excellent illustration of the linkages between the imperatives of independence, continued partnership with greater powers, anti-racism, middle power diplomacy, and the incompatibility of the 'new nationalism' with the anxieties of the old strategic imagination.

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[68] Edward Gough Whitlam, 'Prime Minister's Address to the National Press Club, Washington.', 30 July 1973, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00002980.pdf. p. 2.
[69] Ibid. p. 2.
[70] David Goldsworthy et al., 'Reorientation', in *Facing North: A Century of Australian Engagement with Asia*, ed. David Goldsworthy ([Canberra]: Carlton South, Vic: Dept. of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Melbourne University Press, 2001). p. 313.
[71] Whitlam, 'Prime Minister's Address to the National Press Club, Washington.' pp. 10-11.

Part of Australia's 'creative maturity' had broadly overlapping elements with the 'new nationalism', taking on specific contours during Whitlam's time as Prime Minister. Under his administration, there was a desire to move away from Australia's colonial past and, 'bury the old metaphors of Anglo-Australian relations once and for all.'[72] He wanted to end appeals from the Australian states to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, recast the Queen in Australian legislation as the 'Queen of Australia', remove the reference to the monarch in the oath of allegiance, and have some monarchical power be transferred to the Australian governor-general. All these measures pushed in one direction: towards a new idea of nationality based on Australian, rather than British citizenship.[73]

Much like relations between Whitlam and Nixon, the relationship between Whitlam and the British Prime Minister Edward Heath soured within the first few days of the fledgling government over the legal privileges afforded to Australian expatriates in London.[74] They deteriorated further on the 31st of July 1973 when, after 18 months of British prevarication on Whitlam's important reforms to Privy Council appeals and a refusal to condemn French nuclear testing in the Pacific, Whitlam described Heath to journalists as a 'thoroughly, consistently, forthrightly negative man.'[75] This was just one day after Whitlam had his long awaited meeting with Nixon. Anxious to 'mend his fences with HMG [Her Majesties' Government], Whitlam met with the visiting British minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Joseph Godber a month later, throughout which, according to a British account of the meeting, 'Whitlam sought to backpedal just about as hard as he could.'[76] Stubbornly, Whitlam tried to put aside the differences between himself and Heath on the issues of Australian migration to Britain, British entry into the European Economic Community and the condemnation of French nuclear testing.[77] Godber's telegram, relaying the meeting back to London, was extravagantly smug. He reflected, 'I have never seen a man make such obvious attempts to apologise without actually saying so', ending the report by regaling a, 'great difficulty in restraining myself from suggesting that he fell on his knees in front of me.'[78] It's hard to imagine Whitlam prostrating for any British minister, but he clearly would have attempted to mend the relationship. He required British co-operation, after all, in order to change the British laws that were necessary for Australia to sever the last vestiges of the colonial connection with Britain.

72 Curran and Ward, *The Unknown Nation*. p. 135.
73 Ibid. p. 137.
74 Hocking, *Gough Whitlam*. pp. 72-73.
75 Ibid. p. 93.
76 Joseph Godber, 'Telegram to the Prime Minister from the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.', 30 August 1973, FCO 24/1610, The National Archives. p. 2.
77 Ibid. pp. 1-2.
78 Ibid. p. 2.

Communities of Co-operation and Zones of Peace

Whitlam's attempts at introducing more formal regional architecture stemmed from this new vision of Australia's geo-strategic neighbourhood. He had gestured toward this in late January 1973, speaking of an 'organisation genuinely representative of the region, without ideological overtones.' The latter was an important element in his proposition, intended to 'free the region of great power rivalries that had bedevilled its progress for decades' and to 'insulate the region against ideological interference.'[79] This was a reversal of the relationship between Asian economic development and 'ideological interference' that Holt had favoured in 1966 – an Asia firmly in the American or British orbit and closely learning from the Western example. Whitlam's stance, however, was that Australia was interested in promoting Asian security, but that this was ultimately the remit of Asian nations. Western attempts to stabilise the region, in Vietnam for example, had the opposite effect of what was intended. Regional security was best achieved by shutting out all outside influence.

Both Holt and Whitlam had attempted to address the natural interest that Australia had in Asia's strategic, political and economic development after decolonisation, but Whitlam did so by departing from the colonial orthodoxy. There was an undeniable logic to this, but it also came with its own paradoxes. The association was primarily conceived as a strategic measure of which Australia had 'genuine interest' in lending support to. Yet the shape of proposal itself curtailed how much Australia could push for its implementation. Australia would not, he claimed, 'impose' or 'intrude' in developing the association, but would be 'patient' in waiting to 'participate in the genuine aspirations of the region.'[80] It was a peculiar bind that Whitlam had talked himself into. His choice of language was revealing on this point, speaking to more than Australia's mere geographical separation from the Asian mainland and evoking a history of intrusion and imposition that was antithetical to Asia's 'genuine aspirations.' Australia, after all, was only just disassociating itself with its own relics of British colonisation. It was Whitlam himself who had sought to do this, just as he had announced the end of what could be described as another intrusion into Asia – the military commitment to Vietnam. In this context, however the underlying logic was questionable. If Australia itself was an outside influence, how could it be expected to become a member of the association? There were more practical issues too. By the very nature of his original proposition, the Australian Prime Minister was prevented from pursuing an end that he himself

[79] Whitlam, 'Australian Institute of Political Science Summer School Canberra, Opening Address by the Prime Minister'. p. 9.
[80] Ibid. p. 10.

had identified as being in the national interest. It left him with little alternative than to wait for another leader in Asia to advocate for his plan. By early May this appeared to be unlikely at best. Despite Whitlam's cautious tone, the Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew claimed privately that the proposal was 'lacking in sensitivity' and had not involved adequate consultation with Asian leaders.[81]

Later that month Whitlam would expand on the proposed regional grouping in his first parliamentary statement as Minister for Foreign Affairs, further revealing how he hoped it could take advantage of recent shifts and help adjust how Australia conceived of Asia strategically. It was an attempt to synthesise the transition between his approach to the region, up to date as it was with recent developments, and the old diplomatic and defensive structures that had characterised prior attitudes. At the centre of these developments was China and her recognition by Australia and the United States. The assumptions of détente and its reduction of ideological friction on a global level played a supporting role. It was a 'substantial relationship with China' that Whitlam hoped to build, 'based on friendship, co-operation and mutual trust.' This, alongside the expansion of Australia's diplomatic representation elsewhere around the world, signalled an effort to play 'a significant and enlightened role in world affairs' with all countries 'irrespective of their political or ideological systems.' This was an important part of the message. Whitlam felt the need to state unequivocally that 'isolationism is not an option for Australia.'[82] The extent of his departure from established attitudes on strategic issues was enough for some to question whether Australia was withdrawing completely from international affairs. Reacting to such a possibility, Lee Kuan Yew had said to the then U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Marshall Green: 'the West is on its way out.' While Green was quick to reassure the Singaporean Prime Minister that the U.S. was not going anywhere, he too thought that a potential Australian withdrawal would be destabilising to Malaysia and Singapore.[83] It was not Whitlam's intention to destabilise South East Asia, nor to suggest that Australia would reduce its engagement in the affairs of the region. His interest in the development of a 'regional community… "without ideological overtones"' was therefore a 'logical' way of expressing that Australia was not in fact considering isolationism. It was rather seeking to expand its diplomatic engagement with a different emphasis to prior approaches, not seeking to undergird Australian security militarily but through

[81] Curran, *Unholy Fury*. p. 239.
[82] 28. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 24 May 1973. p. 2645.
[83] 'Memorandum of Conversation, Marshall Green with Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew', 6 April 1973, NSC Files, VIP visits, Box 938, Richard Nixon Library. p. 3.

international co-operation: an objective that would be aided greatly by a formal multi-polar community in Asia.

Whitlam contrasted this new grouping, tooled to provide 'a greater and more lasting measure of regional co-operation and understanding', with previous regional architecture such as SEATO. This was a reflection of Whitlam's divergence from a strategic policy that overemphasised emphasised military commitments, and China's new status in the Australian strategic imagination:

> 'Australia believes that the tactics of containment, forward defence and ideological confrontation are not only no longer relevant but are counter-productive… We believe for instance that the South East Asia Treaty Organisation – conceived as an instrument for the containment of China in the cold war era – must be modified if it is not to become completely moribund.'[84]

The notion of 'containment' in Australia was cold war synecdoche for its broader strategic aims: engaging culturally similar powers in the landmass to the north in pursuit of regional stability. China had been the chief antagonist in this regard. Changing perceptions of China had thus rendered SEATO obsolete. This created space for new 'longer-term security measures' including 'zones of peace and neutrality in South-East Asia and the Indian Ocean.' ASEAN and Sri Lanka had made such submissions to the United Nations, and it was here that Whitlam drew an explicit link between these and his own plans, claiming:

> 'these proposals have essentially the same objectives as our conception of a new regional community, namely, to allow peaceful development and the adjustment of relations among the countries to our west and north, free so far as is possible, from outside interference.'[85]

He regarded these efforts to ensure neutrality in South East Asia and the Indian Ocean as 'longer-term security measures.'[86] Whitlam's regional organisation, then, was as much an organ of security as it was one of international co-operation.

Hopes of a new community of security in Asia and independence from traditional allies were accompanied by a rethinking of strategic vision in a geographical sense and on the issue of American bases. Whitlam attempted to curb the psychological hegemony the old keystone of Australian defence, ANZUS, had on the strategic imagination. In speaking to his proposal for a regional grouping and potential zones of neutrality, he also importantly redefined the domain of ANZUS' geographical applicability. The treaty was understood to be 'most important' for

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[84] 28. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 24 May 1973 p. 2646.
[85] Ibid. p. 2648.
[86] Ibid. p. 2647.

Australian security but not in an all-encompassing sense. Whitlam would not allow the agreement to 'overshadow' all other factors of the U.S.-Australian relationship, nor allow that relationship to dominate Australian foreign and defence policy. The Indian Ocean and South East Asia would be zones of neutrality, covering Australia's Western and northern approaches. ANZUS would cover its eastern approaches in 'the Pacific' where it had already contributed to the creation of a 'zone of peace.'[87] The idea that ANZUS only applied to one third the map of Australia's geo-strategic purview, as it were, was a dramatic departure from Australian hopes for the treaty during the 1960s. This had conceptual consequences for a number of American commitments in the region, including the American communications station at North West Cape, although this was not a link that Whitlam made explicitly. This new vision would severely undermine existing strategic infrastructure in the region if immediately taken to its logical extreme.

Being aware of this, there were some occasions where Whitlam was able to show restraint and not seek to impose his plans with uncompromising doctrinaire zeal. His judgement on SEATO, for example, could potentially undermine the U.S. commitment to Thailand. Would Australia, given its new regional outlook, withdraw from the treaty described as 'moribund' and bring into question the viability of agreements made under its purview? Recognising that this would unduly aggravate an already strained relationship with the United States and get a potential partner in South East Asia offside, Whitlam did not adopt a destructive approach to SEATO, and promised to not 'do anything to "torpedo" the body.'[88]

Whitlam's stance on U.S. strategic posture in the Indian Ocean was the cause of more irritation. It was soon after speaking about his support for a zone of peace and neutrality in the Indian Ocean that he raised his Government's 'reservations' to the current U.S.-Australian agreement that provided the basis for the communications facility at North West Cape.[89] This was actually a step back from a statement made a few months earlier, in which he called the arrangements 'thoroughly obnoxious.'[90] This was precipitated, however, on the issue of Australia's lack of control of the base and its activities, and had rankled the Labor party since the first agreement between the Kennedy Administration and the Menzies Government was signed.[91] Whitlam notably did not opine on the contradictions between a zone of peace and neutrality in the Indian Ocean and the presence of the North West Cape radio array. The station itself was an important piece of American strategic

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[87] Ibid. pp. 2648-2649.
[88] Cited in, Neville Meaney, 'The United States', in *Australia in World Affairs, 1971-75*, ed. William J. Hudson, Australia in World Affairs 5 (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1980). p. 199.
[89] 28. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 24 May 1973 p. 2648.
[90] Cited in, Meaney, 'The United States'. p. 192.
[91] Ibid. p. 191.

infrastructure, capable of communicating with the U.S. submarines in the Indian Ocean that carried nuclear strike capabilities. Surely the mere existence of the base, regardless of whether Australia had a say in its operation, severely undermined proposals for neutrality in the Indian Ocean. Whitlam's silence on this may be because he knew it would stretch American patience with its antipodean ally too far.

He was, after all, currently waiting out the Nixon Administration's prolonged snub after his criticism of the Christmas Bombings. Mere days before Whitlam would finally be admitted into the Oval Office, Kissinger expressed his frustration with the Australian Prime Minister's multiple geo-political interventions to the Shah of Iran. Hoping to counter Soviet influence in Iraq, President Nixon had been taken by the ambitions of the Shah to develop Iran into a regional power and was all too happy to facilitate this, increasing arms sales to Iran from $94.9 million to $682.8 million between 1969 and 1974.[92] On the final day of his July 1973 visit to the United States, the Iranian leader detailed his medium term strategic aims to an enthusiastic Kissinger. Having been given free rein over the Pentagon's product catalogue, he toyed with the idea of procuring the most recent of American air-superiority and interceptor technology, the F-14 Tomcat and F-15 Eagle. He had already decided to purchase the latest American naval destroyer, the *Spruance*-class. Kissinger was all too pleased to hear what use the purchased American military equipment would be put to and to play the role of power-broker at the strategic nexus between the Soviet underbelly, the Middle-East, and the Indian subcontinent. Russia, Kissinger noted, would not be happy to see Iran so 'heavily armed', while India needed to see Iranian willingness and capability to support Pakistan in the event of potential Indian aggression. The Shah concurred; 'we need a strong navy to get into the Indian Ocean… eventually, even Mr. Whitlam will have to change his view.' Kissinger replied:

> 'Especially Whitlam: What we want to do is to get our allies into a frame of mind where they feel that they have more to lose than we do when they criticize us and take us to task.'[93]

He was clearly aware of Whitlam's proposal for peace and neutrality in the Indian Ocean, and regarded it with a similar contempt to his meddling in Vietnam bombing campaigns however morally spurious they may have been.

Despite its détente with China and Russia, the U.S. had no intention of ceding strategic ground in the Indian Ocean, in South East Asia, or anywhere else in the world for that matter. Whitlam's

[92] Roham Alvandi, 'Nixon, Kissinger, and the Shah: The Origins of Iranian Primacy in the Persian Gulf', *Diplomatic History* 36, no. 2 (2012) pp. 370-371.
[93] 'Memorandum of Conversation, Shah of Iran and Henry Kissinger', 27 July 1973, Nixon Presidential Library, https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/virtuallibrary/documents/jun09/072773_memcon.pdf. pp. 8-12.

meeting with Nixon early in the following week confirmed the fundamental differences between the two leaders' strategic thinking. From an American perspective, Whitlam was naïve and a vandal. His attempts to adjust to the 'new realities' in Asia by questioning SEATO and supporting other regional agreements were unintentionally undermining the West's global position. He may have rejected the charge of isolationism, but that was the direction that his suggestions were pointing. Lecturing the Prime Minister on American grand strategy, the President stated:

> 'We cannot get too far out in front of public opinion, and since the latter is beset with isolationist trends, we must fight against that tide, both of us… By pandering to public opinion we could leave the world. But why should we do so when it is in our power to maintain a significant presence along with our friends so that there can be a reciprocal reduction in armaments and the prospect of real peace? Our views of the world may differ but our goals are the same.'[94]

Later that day, the Secretary of State William Rogers scolded Whitlam on his criticism of SEATO, warning him that questioning that treaty would weaken the perception of other U.S. treaties, such as ANZUS, by consequence.[95] The most revealing statement on how the Administration understood Whitlam's new approach to Australian strategy was Nixon's aside to the Japanese Prime Minister the following day:

> 'Excluding leaders like Heath and Pompidou, the other leaders, the intellectuals, have little interest or appreciation of security matters… Here we have a "new isolationism" which believes that any peace is better than paying the price for defense.'[96]

Here again was the isolationist charge, and with it, Nixon's judgement on Whitlam's desire to not 'impose' or 'intrude' in South East Asia or the Indian Ocean. Such an approach was folly and inimical to broader Western interests.

Singapore: 'Immediate North'

Australia's military commitment to South East Asia was part of that July discussion between Nixon and Whitlam, and another area in which Whitlam's decolonising impulse overlapped with

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[94] 'Document 38, Memorandum of Conversation, The President and Prime Minister Whitlam, Washington, July 30, 1973.', in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1967-1976*, vol. E-12, n.d., 38, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve12/d38.
[95] Curran, *Unholy Fury*. p. 247.
[96] Quoted in, Ibid. p. 248.

strategic posture. Australia announced in early 1973 that Australian infantry and artillery commitments to Singapore would be withdrawn: a signature move to mark the end of forward defence. Whitlam explained the decision with the same language that he had used to attack the previous Government on their 1969 decision to continue the commitment. Contributing to regional security, and upholding the 'Five Power Arrangements' did not 'require the stationing of forces abroad on permanent garrison duty.'[97] The colonial connotations of Australian forces in South East Asia still worried the Prime Minister. It became clear by early 1974, however, that while Australia would no longer continue a policy of forward defence, neither would their forces completely depart from South East Asia. A number of different objectives in Australia's new outlook needed to be balanced. At an official function in Malaysia, for example, Whitlam stated that Australia had declared its 'opposition to any forms of lingering colonialism' and that his Government had decided to withdraw 'ground forces garrisoned in Singapore.'[98] But he also felt the need to once again clarify misconceptions about this new approach to regional strategy:

> 'I repeat that isolationism is not a policy option for Australia… we are of course continuing defence co-operation [in South East Asia].'[99]

Australian strategic obsessions with South East Asia, exemplified by forward defence, had significantly overlapped with the military garrisons of empire – of which Australia had been a willing contributor. Making adjustments to Australian defence policy in order to remove the colonial taint required a deft touch, however, lest Australia be charged with turning inward and dropping its existing commitments to regional security. Two RAAF squadrons of 'Mirage' aircraft would thus remain at Butterworth in Malaysia alongside a company of infantry on a rotational basis. The RAN would also continue to base surface and submarine vessels in Singapore. Both Malaysia and Singapore had underdeveloped air and naval forces. The state of their ground army, however, appeared to be in better shape.[100] Whitlam's decision to withdraw Australian troops from Singapore was because they were superfluous to the current demands of regional defence, intending it to be a symbolic act of decolonisation as well.

The question of why Australian troops were withdrawn from Singapore though is a problem that has so far stumped three scholars. Continuing his crusade to dismantle the mythology of the Whitlam legacy, David Martin Jones joins with Andrea Benvenuti in assessing the Whitlam government on its claim to 'engage' with the region, set against the backdrop of what the authors

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[97] 28. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 24 May 1973. p. 2646.
[98] Edward Gough Whitlam, 'Prime Minister's Address at State Dinner, Kuala Lumpur', 29 January 1974, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00003139.pdf. pp. 2-3.
[99] Ibid. p. 4.
[100] O'Neill, 'Defence Policy'. p. 20.

label 'disengagement' in specific regard to the Australian military withdrawal from Malaysia and Singapore.[101] Such an argument appears to have its origins in Nixonian commentary. Their impression that the withdrawal amounted to 'disengagement' also neglects Whitlam's own explanation of his new policies. Whitlam's 'engagement' with the region, as mentioned above in regard to his speech to the Summer School of the Australian Institute of Political Science, was a conscious departure from *military* engagement. Such a distinction was not lost on foreign correspondent Michael Richardson, who by 1974 had noticed that 'the main thrust of the Labor Government's approach to South-East Asia' was, 'non-military involvement.'[102]

A subsequent misunderstanding, one in which Jones and Benvenuti are joined by Jeffrey Grey, hinges on an interpretation of Singapore's real strategic value to Australia, its potential vulnerabilities at that time, and on an under-realised understanding of how issues of race and decolonisation figured in Whitlam's mind. Grey argues that the Australian withdrawal from Singapore 'owed more to party ideology than any rational calculation of strategic need or vested interest.'[103] As Australian troops were there by invitation of the Singaporean government, Grey judged that this decision was a 'good example of the way in which the ALP could allow the presuppositions of one section of the party to dictate national policy regardless of national interest.'[104] Jones and Benvenuti also blame the left-wing faction of the Federal ALP, but put the withdrawal down to a deliberate 'distorting' of the role of Australian troops were playing in Singapore by emphasising their colonial connotations.[105] ALP thinking about South East Asia, 'glossed over regional complexities' and was not interested in 'a pragmatic calculation of national interests.'[106] Yet Foreign Affairs and Defence had been dubious on the strategic importance of having Australian troops in Singapore and Malaysia since 1971, and perhaps even earlier. Eric Andrews holds that the implementation of a coherent strategic policy by previous governments was no better than Whitlam's. This was not a specific weakness of the left in the Australian government. Under the direction of its secretary Arthur Tange, the Department of Defence was undertaking its own shift in strategic thinking in its departure from forward defence to 'self-reliance'.[107] Tange's doctrine was still in its early stages of implementation, but had been supported

[101] Andrea Benvenuti and David Martin Jones, 'Engaging Southeast Asia? Labor's Regional Mythology and Australia's Military Withdrawal from Singapore and Malaysia, 1972–1973', *Journal of Cold War Studies* 12, no. 4 (October 2010): https://doi.org/10.1162/JCWS_a_00047. pp. 32–62.
[102] Michael Richardson, 'Editorial, Test Time for PM's Truce.', *The Age*, 7 February 1974. p. 9.
[103] Grey, *A Military History of Australia*. p. 258.
[104] Ibid. p. 258.
[105] Benvenuti and Jones, 'Engaging Southeast Asia?' pp. 40-41.
[106] Ibid. p. 42.
[107] Andrews, *The Department of Defence*. p. 209.

by a government that 'accepted the changes in the strategic environment that the coalition had refused to acknowledge.'[108]

There was also an awareness of 'regional complexities' in Foreign Affairs and at least at the Prime Ministerial level. Australia's new policies, for example, were known to have caused strains in its relationship with Singapore.[109] Lee had told Marshall Green that for Whitlam to completely pull out Australian Forces from South East Asia was an act of 'sheer lunacy.'[110] Another problem, according to Foreign Affairs, was that the two nations disagreed on the new opportunities for smaller powers that were opened up by détente. For Whitlam, détente had opened up new avenues of diplomacy that did not need to be determined by the rigid bi-polarity of the Cold War. Lee Kuan Yew, on the other hand, was known to be afraid that this would result in decisions being made 'over the heads' of smaller powers and 'at their expense' as they no longer needed to be cajoled into bi-polar blocs by the great powers.[111] Problems of strategic importance and regional awareness aside, Singapore had lingering connotations of being the defensive keystone of the British Empire in South East Asia. Whitlam's sensitivity to the idea of Australia being a nation complicit in colonisation all but demanded that he put distance between his own policies and Australia's old imperial defensive frameworks. He would make this clear during his visit to Singapore in 1974.

Australia's relations with Singapore before his visit had not been totally dominated by the discrepancies in strategic perspectives on the region. Race, decolonisation and the international glare became issues in their own right between Whitlam and Lee. As a bi-product of the softening of Australian immigration law, Singaporean students that had studied in Australia were now permitted to remain in Australia once they had completed their courses.[112] The potential for skilled Singaporean citizens to migrate to Australia and emigrate from Singapore worried Lee, taking the issue up with Whitlam at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Ottawa 1973. The two clashed badly, and Lee acquired the reputation of being one of Whitlam's 'severest international critics.'[113]

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[108] Ibid. p. 209.
[109] 'Singapore: Foreign Policy', in '[Personal Papers of Prime Minister E G Whitlam] Officials Briefing Notes for Visit of the Prime Minister of Australia to South East Asia, January-February 1974, Volume II Burma, Singapore, Philippines [Mr E. Williams' Copy] [Box 5]', 1974 1974, M537, 16, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=7294003. p. 3.
[110] 'Memorandum of Conversation, Marshall Green with Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew'. p. 2.
[111] Department of Foreign Affairs, '[Personal Papers of Prime Minister E G Whitlam] Officials Briefing Notes for Visit of the Prime Minister of Australia to South East Asia, January-February 1974, Volume II Burma, Singapore, Philippines [Mr E. Williams' Copy] [Box 5]'. p. 1.
[112] Whitlam, *The Whitlam Government, 1972 - 1975*. p. 122.
[113] Paul Kelly, 'Whitlam Makes It up with Mr Lee', *The Australian*, 8 February 1974. pp. 1-2.

Given their previous quarrels, the Australian press were unsure of how their planned meeting in 1974 would turn out. 'Fundamental differences of outlook' remained, a correspondent from *The Age* warned. Could the 'uneasy truce' brokered since Ottawa be extended into 'an agreement to differ?'[114] This seemed to be the strategy that Whitlam's travelling delegation would adopt. Such a tact is suggested by a typed A4 page, undated and un-addressed, bar the opening salutation to Lee-Kuan Yew, 'Mr Prime Minister', filed loosely in the folder in Whitlam's personal papers relating to the 1974 visit. It is most likely the draft of a speech, but in any case, it was never given. The page reads:

> 'Mr Prime Minister,
>
> It has been suggested by certain sections of the Australian media that our meeting in Singapore is something like a return bout after Ottawa – something like the Joe Frazier/ Mohammed Ali return grudge match – with Lee Kuan Yew in the white corner and Gough Whitlam in the red corner.
>
> If I may push this analogy a little further, my supporters could say that a good big man usually beats a good smaller man in the ring. Your supporters could say that the taller they are the harder they fall.
>
> But, I assure you Mr Prime Minister, that I have come as an old and good friend to exchange views frankly with an old and good friend. As old and good friends should.
>
> I have come to Singapore not to seek controversy but to seek areas of agreement and emphasise the continuing and substantial arrangement we want to have with Singapore in the future.'[115]

The draft, although probably not seen by Singaporean eyes, make aspects of Whitlam's mindset going into the public and private meetings with Lee immediately evident. He was attempting, with personal warmth and a bid for even-handedness, to get relations with Singapore onto a different footing – unapologetic, however, of his stance in their run-ins a year earlier.

In his address to the state dinner given in Whitlam's honour, Lee would reveal his own attitude to the visit. He did not shy away from mentioning the historic friction between the two, the issue that he described as losing 'people by emigration to a wealthy country, where rewards are so much

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[114] Richardson, 'Editorial, Test Time for PM's Truce.' p. 9.

[115] '[Personal Papers of Prime Minister E G Whitlam] Folder Containing Papers Relating to the Visit of SE Asia by the Prime Minister, the Hon. E.G Whitlam, Q.C, M.P and Mrs Whitlam, January-February 1974 [Box 4]', 1974 1974, M537, 14, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=5413590.

greater.'[116] This was a prospect that he and his colleagues found 'most disturbing.'[117] Neither side, apparently, would back down from their positions taken up in their previous feud, but this did not mean that Lee would forsake the opportunity to put the relationship on different terms. He continued, 'but I do not doubt that you are against racial discrimination and your deep concern for the Australian Aborigines and their future in Australia is well known.[118] That Lee understood the consistency between particular foreign policies, domestic polices, and Whitlam's own personal convictions would have pleased the Australian Prime Minister greatly. It was also to make clear that Lee had not ascribed any mal-intent to Whitlam for his previous actions. Most pleasing to Whitlam, however, was Lee's following statement, 'you have waved away the aura of racial superiority of the white peoples, a belief which the passage of time has made not only untenable, but necessarily offensive.'[119] It's significant that Lee, in attempting to make peace with his Australian counterpart, praised him for his dealing with the international glare. When strategic disagreements were put to one side, Lee was clearly grateful for how Whitlam's clear stance on decolonisation and race.

Whitlam's speech to the Singapore Press Club a day later provided his own gesture of peace to Lee; a commitment to maintain an Australian contribution to the Five Power Defence Arrangement, but not one through which infantry would be permanently stationed in South East Asia.[120] Paul Kelly, writing in *The Australian*, interpreted the promise of future co-operation to be the continued presence of two squadrons of Mirage aircraft at Butterworth air base in Malaysia as part of the Five Power integrated air defence scheme.[121] Whitlam ascribed little strategic significance to this commitment. It was purely an attempt to appear to be sympathetic to the concerns of Singapore and other South East Asian nations. Morrice James notes, for example, that in a meeting with Whitlam later that year, the Australian Prime Minister had said that 'Britain's former imperial defence commitments'... 'such territories as Hong Kong, Brunei and even Singapore were not of equally great concern to Australia' as they were to Britain.[122] Australia had,

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[116] '[Personal Papers of Prime Minister E G Whitlam] - Australia and South East Asia: Principal Speeches Made by the Leaders of the Governments of Malaysia, Thailand, Laos, Burma, Singapore and the Philippines during the Visit to These Countries by the Prime Minister, the Honourable Mr E G Whitlam, 28 Jan 1973-13 Feb 1974 (Department of Foreign Affairs, Canberra, ACT), 1974 [Box 7]' (Sydney, 1974 1974), M533, 68, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=5025838. p. 9.
[117] Ibid. p. 9.
[118] Ibid. p. 9.
[119] Ibid. p. 10.
[120] E. G. Whitlam, 'To the Singapore Press Club, Friday 8th February 1974.' In, '[Personal Papers of Prime Minister E G Whitlam] Folder Containing Papers Relating to the Visit of SE Asia by the Prime Minister, the Hon. E.G Whitlam, Q.C, M.P and Mrs Whitlam, January-February 1974 [Box 4]'. pp. 5-6.
[121] Paul Kelly, 'Whitlam: 5-Power Pact Is Firm', *The Australian*, 9 February 1974. p. 9.
[122] Morrice James, 'Note for Record of Meeting between the Australian Prime Minister, the British Minister of State for Defence and the British High Commissioner in Australia', 23 May 1974, FCO 57/599, The National Archives. p. 2.

however, 'been drawn into shouldering some of Britain's former military commitments in the areas which were of lesser interest to Australia.'[123] Part of this was surely in reference to the previous government's commitment as well as in reference to his own provision of support to anxious leaders such as Lee.

The speech to the Singapore Press Club does give an indication of Whitlam's strategic thought on Singapore and the wider region, and how this assessment dovetailed into his work on lessening the international glare on Australia. The true 'crux of the matter', according to Whitlam, was that there was chatter in 'some quarters' that Australia 'may go isolationist.'[124] This was aimed specifically at Singapore. Foreign affairs had briefed Whitlam that the Singaporeans believed that 'the Australian Government' was 'practicing a form of eighteenth century nationalism which aims at an Australian withdrawal from the region.'[125] But it was Whitlam's view that the previous government, through an undue fixation on ANZUS, its doctrinaire opposition to China, and a dubious stance on racism, had isolated Australia, 'from a quarter of the world's population in China, from the whole of black Africa, from the other half of Europe east of the Elbe, from Latin America and even from India in any meaningful way.'[126] In putting the case to move away from such 'isolation', Whitlam provided the most comprehensive exposition of his own strategic imagination:

> The confluence of our history and geography – our origins as Europeans, our location on the edge of South-East Asia – give us a unique opportunity to demonstrate to the international community that countries with very different cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds can evolve intimate and lasting relationships.
>
> To this end we shall spare no effort to ensure that in the years ahead, Australia is accepted as a co-operative and helpful member of the Asian and Pacific region and a neighbour of the nations of South-East Asia.[127]

The goal of multi-racial harmony between states was what Whitlam was seeking in his diplomacy in the region. The only strategic anxieties that permeated his thinking were in

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[123] Ibid. p. 2.

[124] Whitlam, 'To the Singapore Press Club.' In, '[Personal Papers of Prime Minister E G Whitlam] Folder Containing Papers Relating to the Visit of SE Asia by the Prime Minister, the Hon. E.G Whitlam, Q.C, M.P and Mrs Whitlam, January-February 1974 [Box 4]'. p. 6.

[125] 'Singapore: Foreign Policy.' In, Department of Foreign Affairs, '[Personal Papers of Prime Minister E G Whitlam] Officials Briefing Notes for Visit of the Prime Minister of Australia to South East Asia, January-February 1974, Volume II Burma, Singapore, Philippines [Mr E. Williams' Copy] [Box 5]'. p. 4.

[126] 'To the Singapore Press Club.' '[Personal Papers of Prime Minister E G Whitlam] Folder Containing Papers Relating to the Visit of SE Asia by the Prime Minister, the Hon. E.G Whitlam, Q.C, M.P and Mrs Whitlam, January-February 1974 [Box 4]'. p. 6.

[127] Ibid. pp. 8-9.

'attempting to establish new forms of co-operative relationships.'[128] To Australia, he continued, 'South East Asia is, of course, our immediate north. Your hopes, your problems, your future are necessarily and forever, part of our own future.'[129] The phrase 'immediate north' was laden with meaning, capturing the closeness of these states to Australia, and an urgency in establishing warm relationships with them. If the term, 'Far East' conveyed the geographic situation of a European people in the South Pacific to Asia, and the term, 'near North' voiced a strategic and racial anxiety stemming from that geographic proximity, then 'immediate north' can be understood as an indication of the growing Australian confidence in their place in the region despite historic fears.

Portuguese-Timor

Whitlam's desire for closer accord with regional powers and his sensitivity to the international glare contributed in large part to his handling of the Indonesia's ambitions and eventual annexation of ex-Portugese colonial territory in East-Timor. The crisis is too complex to cover in any significant detail here other than to provide a brief introduction and make two broad points pertaining to Whitlam's strategic imagination as events unfolded throughout 1975.

Timor, according to DFAT's official history of Australian engagement with Asia, had featured in Australian foreign policy since the Second World War. Australian and local guerrillas had resisted Japanese occupation in the Portuguese colonial territory during this time. In the early 1960s the Australian Government gradually began to see the island's incorporation into Indonesia as inevitable. Even during 'confrontation', in 1963, the Menzies Government started to think about how they could manage Indonesia's claim to Timor with little 'embarrassment' to Australia.[130] Portugal had been one of the least accommodating European powers to decolonisation, and attempted to keep a tight grip on all of its territories throughout the post-war era. Revolution and regime change at home in April 1974 resulted in a loosening of Portuguese control and the sudden formation of three political 'associations': 'Apodeti', favouring becoming part of Indonesia, UDT advocating remaining a Portuguese territory, and Fretilin as the main group to champion East-Timorese independence.[131]

[128] Ibid. p. 11.
[129] Ibid. p. 11.
[130] Goldsworthy et al., 'Reorientation'. p. 358.
[131] Ibid. p. 360.

Both Indonesia and Whitlam considered Timor's absorption into Indonesia to be the best outcome of this political upheaval once the Portuguese relinquished their claim. Whitlam's reasons for this were threefold. Timor was unlikely to be an economically or politically 'viable' state because of its small size, and Whitlam wanted to be seen to promote good relations with the Indonesians because of the great importance of that relationship to Australia.[132] Alan Renouf, the Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs at the time suggests one more factor that was understood to lie behind Indonesia's designs to take control of the territory: East-Timor's dubious economic and political potential could be a source of instability in the region.[133] Graham Feakes, First Assistant Secretary of the South-East Asia and PNG Division of Foreign Affairs had cautioned Willesee in mid-December 1974 that the likelihood of this had been exaggerated, but that the Indonesians were still fearful that 'some hostile power might establish itself in an independent Timor.'[134] Australian policy, at this stage, was Whitlam's policy. Foreign Affairs, understood that Australia was in favour of Timor's incorporation into Indonesia because such action would 'contain' any future problems arising in or from the island. Incorporation would serve Australia's interests that included the security of shipping lanes and Australian claims to seabed fossil fuels, and importantly prevent the potential that the island itself could become a source of diplomatic tension with Indonesia or in the region.[135] The overriding importance of good Australian relations with their close neighbour is evident here. It was not that the Department of Foreign Affairs thought that Timor's possession by a power hostile to both Indonesia and Australia was likely, but that there was an awareness of Indonesian fears that it could become their 'soft-underbelly', and that quashing this anxiety through incorporation was the best approach.[136]

At the same time, Australia 'as one of the leading international advocates, in the United Nations and elsewhere, of self-determination for dependent territories', according to Foreign Affairs, also held 'a firm commitment to self-determination for Portuguese Timor.'[137] Alan Renouf has since noted that this amounted to a 'two-pronged' policy, and that 'the two prongs might be irreconcilable' if Portuguese Timor sought independence.[138] Goldsworthy and his co-writers put

[132] Ibid. pp. 360-361., is in agreement on these points with, Alan Renouf, *The Frightened Country* (Melbourne: Macmillan, 1979). p. 443.
[133] Renouf, *The Frightened Country*. p. 443.
[134] Graham Feakes, 'Portugese Timor', in 'The Future of Portuguese Timor - Policy', 13 December 1974, A1209, 1974/7573, National Archives of Australia. p. 4.
[135] Ibid. p. 5.
[136] Ibid. p. 4.
[137] Ibid. p. 6.
[138] Renouf, *The Frightened Country*. p. 443.

the issue less delicately, describing the attempts to hold to both as 'practically inconsistent.'[139] Richard Woolcott, Australia's Ambassador to Indonesia has defended the approach, claiming:

> 'there seemed to be no intrinsic reason then why the people of East Timor would not be as comfortable within Indonesia when it was decolonised as were the people of West Timor, all of whom spoke Tetum, the main language of East Timor.'

He concedes, however, 'in retrospect, this judgement may seem misplaced.'[140] Feakes' report on Australia's Portuguese-Timor policy, written two months before Woolcott's arrival in Jakarta as Ambassador dismisses the idea of peaceful incorporation as unlikely, given that the group favouring that outcome, Apodeti, had only the support of 'a very small minority.'[141] This was either unknown to Woolcott or Whitlam at the time, or could have considered it something open to change before the East-Timorese went to the polls to decide their future. Woolcott claims that his impression was based off a Menzies era assessment from the Australian consul in the capital of Portuguese-Timor, Dili, written in 1963. This erroneous prediction was not representative of the thinking high up in Foreign Affairs by December of 1974. Having read Feakes' report, the Minister for Foreign Affairs Don Willesee wrote to Whitlam in January 1975 of the 'incompatibility of the two objectives' and that 'self-determination is likely to yield a result other than the association of Portuguese Timor with Indonesia.' Woolcott circumvents this by maintaining that some still considered peaceful integration to be possible. Yet it is difficult to understand why there would be such a difference in view between an ambassador and the Prime Minister on the one hand, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and senior Cabinet ministers on the other. He claimed at the very least that in Whitlam's meetings with Indonesian President Suharto, he was present at all of them, the Australian Prime Minister clearly stated that incorporation must the outcome of an act of self-determination and that Australia 'could not condone the use of force.'[142]

It's possible that the Australian expectation that Portuguese rule would remain for at least another 12-18 months, and as long as another five years, according to Whitlam's later account of the crisis, provided grounds to believe that the East-Timor may eventually become part of Indonesia by peaceful means.[143] This optimism was not shared by Feakes, however, who thought

[139] Goldsworthy et al., 'Reorientation'. p. 364.
[140] Richard Woolcott, *The Hot Seat: Reflections on Diplomacy from Stalin's Death to the Bali Bombings* (Pymble, N.S.W: HarperCollins Publishers, 2003). p. 146.
[141] Feakes, 'Portugese Timor', in 'The Future of Portuguese Timor - Policy'. pp. 1, 6.
[142] Woolcott, *The Hot Seat*. pp. 146-147.
[143] Whitlam, *The Whitlam Government, 1972 - 1975*. p. 108.

that the best immediate outcome would be a continuation of Portuguese control for 'several years.'[144]

Timor's peaceful integration into Indonesia as an act of self-determination was the desired outcome by both Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister, but the Australian policy toward the territory was one of 'non-involvement'. Feakes suggested this as a way of preventing Australian 'relations with Indonesia to be at the mercy of… FRETILIN', of avoiding 'being identified with Indonesian expansionism' and having to 'explain publically our views about self-determination.'[145] He was more willing to imagine an independent East-Timor than the Prime Minister, however, and suggested that they begin articulating this to Indonesia.[146] The Defence Minister's view, as articulated in early 1975, was similarly to attempt to 'moderate Indonesian fears of an independent state in Timor', but that Australia would also probably not respond in any dramatic way should Indonesia 'move against Portuguese Timor', other than to cut defence ties.[147] Non-involvement by the Australian Government on any serious level would characterise their approach to the crisis in 1975.

Throughout growing fears about Indonesian intervention during the first half of 1975, Whitlam maintained his preference for integration through self-determination, relaying this to Suharto in a letter sent through Woolcott and in a meeting with the Indonesian President in April. This was despite Willesee's and Barnard's concerns. Whitlam continually stressed that the 'overriding issue' in the situation was Australian/ Indonesian relations. By August, after a clandestine Indonesian operation and internal fracturing in the makeshift political alignments in East-Timor, violence in the country broke out between the UDT and Fretilin. Woolcott reported that Indonesia would intervene should this continue. [148]

Whitlam's response to this came in Parliament on the 26th of August, and was a restatement of Australia's policy of non-intervention in line with its broader interests in the region. He acknowledged that some Australians had by now called for a political or military intervention, and in arguing against such proposals stated that this could lead to:

[144] Feakes, 'Portugese Timor', in 'The Future of Portuguese Timor - Policy'. p. 16.
[145] Ibid. pp. 10-11.
[146] Ibid. p. 17-18.
[147] Lance Barnard, 'Letter to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, The Future of Portuguese Timor - Policy', 11 February 1975, A1209, 1974/7573, National Archives of Australia. p. 7.
[148] Goldsworthy et al., 'Reorientation'. pp. 364-365.

> 'a situation where Australia was exercising a quasi-colonial role in Portuguese-Timor, and might lead to the point where we were assuming some de facto responsibility for the territory.'[149]

As has been shown in this chapter, avoiding the appearance of a colonial power would have been a priority of the highest order for Whitlam. It is difficult, however, to determine whether this had been one of the motivations behind his reluctance to play any intervening role before the outbreak of violence. It was probably raised when the possibility of working with Portugal and Indonesia to intervene emerged, but as Portugal didn't approach Australia with this proposal until the 1st of September by Whitlam's recollection, it could have been playing on his mind before this stage.[150]

Foreign Affairs had known of dangers of being associated with Portugal's odious colonial regime in Timor as far back as 1964 when fears had first circulated in Foreign Affairs of an Indonesian invasion of Portuguese-Timor Even. Yet even during this time, when resisting Indonesian expansionism in Malaysia was clearly not a problem for Australian defensive planners, the thought of defending Portuguese territory with no clear calendar for decolonisation was not one Foreign Affairs wanted to entertain. They considered how Australia could show 'that we were not to be identified with Portugal as a reactionary colonial power.'[151]

Whitlam's sensitivity to post-colonial politics was such that it's hard to imagine him entering into colonial ventures where those a decade before would not. He reminded Parliament that Australia's 'colonial role' was only just coming to a close in Papua New Guinea. Why would he then enter them into a new obligation that could even be construed as 'quasi-colonial', especially given his previous efforts to present a new image of Australia in Asia and the related importance to which he had ascribed good relations with Indonesia. Australia would continue to offer humanitarian assistance to East Timor, but Whitlam had by now totally ruled out any serious opposition to Indonesian annexation.[152] By the time that Indonesia had invaded Portuguese-Timor, on the 7th of December 1975, Whitlam would be out of office.

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[149] 29. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 26 August 1975. p. 492.
[150] Whitlam, *The Whitlam Government, 1972 - 1975*. p. 110.
[151] 'Saving 292, Portuguese Timor', in *Regional Defence - Defence of Pacific - East and South East Asia Timor*, 1964. p. 3.
[152] House of Representatives. 1975. p. 492.

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'Western with a Difference', 1976 - 1981[1]

Introducing the foreign policies of Prime Minister Malcom Fraser by remarking simply on the continuities and discontinuities between his approach and that of his predecessor Gough Whitlam is now a well-trodden path, and for good reason.[2] Compared with the abrupt break that Whitlam made with 23 years of Liberal Country Coalition Government and his dramatic, emphatic shifts away from a colonial strategic imagination, the comparative differences between Whitlam and Fraser's strategic imagination were far more subtle but no less significant.

Perhaps the first to make such a comparison between the Whitlam and Fraser's approaches to foreign policy was one of the diplomatic staff at the British High Commission, Canberra, writing three months into Fraser's first term. Providing Whitehall with what he described as a 'more reflective piece' to draw on in upcoming Anglo-US talks on Asia, Gavin W Hewitt concluded that:

> 'The style and emphasis of Australia's foreign policy may have changed, but the essential features of the ALP policy remain unchanged. The same importance is accorded to Australia's relations with her neighbours. The perceptions, however, of Australia's interests have shifted back towards closer affinity with the interests of the United States, with the UK and the Western industrialised world. Australia's voting pattern in the UN is unlikely to follow the unpredictable pattern by the ALP; and Australia's flirtation with the Third World and with the non-aligned, with no obvious immediate benefit for Australia, is unlikely to be repeated under the present government.'[3]

Whitlam's approach to Australia's 'great and powerful friends' and his perceived 'flirtation with the Third World' had few sympathisers in Washington and clearly irked the British diplomatic corps. Hewitt, despite his clear preference at this stage for Fraser over Whitlam, presciently identified three areas in which the Australian strategic imagination would be shaped under the new

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[1] Australia. Committee on Australia's Relations with the Third World, *Australia and the Third World: Report of the Committee on Australia's Relations with the Third World.* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1979). p. 177.

[2] Alan Dupont, *Australia's Threat Perceptions: A Search for Security*, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence, no. 82 (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, 1991). pp. 76-77., Evans and Grant, *Australia's Foreign Relations*, 1995. p. 27., Lee, *Australia and the World in the Twentieth Century [International Relations since Federation]*. p. 195., Gyngell, *Fear of Abandonment.* p. 102. All adopt this kind of structure.

[3] G. W. Hewitt, 'Letter to P. G. de Courcy Ireland, Anglo/ US Talks on Asia: Australian Foreign Policy', 5 March 1976, FCO 24/ 2212, The National Archives.

Prime Minister. These were in how Australia fitted into the region and conducted relations with its neighbours, what significance its traditional allies Britain and the United States held, and how it would deal with the Third World as a group of increasing significance in international politics.

There were, for example, many cases of a change in 'style and emphasis' under Fraser whilst retaining the general 'features' of Whitlam's approach. Whitlam had curbed what he saw as colonial and racialist impulses in Australian foreign policy and sought to project a new image of Australia to the world that could compensate for its thorny past on these issues. Diplomatic relations with China had been established following his proactive diplomacy whilst still on the opposition benches. For Whitlam, the Cold War was all but over in East Asia. While Fraser would not agree with this assessment, he regarded deepening these regional relationships with a high priority. Building on his interpretation of American foreign and defence policy articulated when he was Defence Minister in John Gorton's Cabinet, Fraser had taken the Nixon doctrine to be an American repudiation of its allies' total reliance on U.S. military power in Asia. He used this to fuel advocacy for more regional co-operation in its place. Days before the 1975 election Fraser stated in a radio interview that the ASEAN countries, Japan, and China would be the first on his list of overseas visits should he be elected Prime Minister.[4] Asked to explain this decision in late May 1976, three weeks before his departure, Fraser stated:

> 'Traditionally Australian Prime Ministers have gone to Britain or gone to Washington, but the world changes. We have vastely important relationships with Japan… and obviously the future direction of China's policies are of enormous [significance to the] world.'[5]

Yet there were also clear differences between Whitlam and Fraser especially in terms of their affinity with 'the Western industrialised world'. Strategic policy in the Fraser Government did not diverge from the move towards 'self-reliance' undertaken by the secretary of Defence, Arthur Tange during Whitlam's time in office, nor did it resurrect 'forward defence'. It did, however, place more emphasis on working together with Western allies, a shift that reflected Fraser's concerns about the balance of the superpowers in the Cold War. Whitlam had also used détente as a pretext to liberate Australia from following the American lead so closely, stressing Australian independence in foreign affairs whilst also maintaining that Australia remained an aligned nation. His successor's approach could not have been more different. Even during the prevailing anti-Vietnam sentiment of the early 1970s, the memory of Hitler's appeasement at Munich was for

[4] Radio Australia, 'Focus on Australia, Interview with Malcolm Fraser', 19 December 1975, FCO 24/ 2212, The National Archives. p. 2.

[5] Malcolm Fraser, 'The First Six Months with Malcolm Fraser, Interview on "Monday Conference"', 24 May 1976, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00004128_0.pdf. pp. 14-15.

Fraser one lesson of history that the West could not now afford to forget in the ongoing struggle against Communism.[6] As minister for Defence in 1970s, Fraser had drawn paralells with the West's apparently blind faith in détente and the fateful months before the outbreak of the Second World War in Europe. To him, such complacency could only result in ruin.[7] Long had he maintained a vigilant watch over the Communist enemy, and becoming Prime Minister would not be a cause to relent.

The emphasis on deeping Australian regional relationships on the one hand, and Cold War vigilance on the other, had a large part in shaping Fraser's most significant contribution to the Australian strategic imagination as Prime Minister. This was achieved by establishing a committee on 'Australia's relations with the Third World' in mid 1978. The Australian Government had no sound framework with which to conceptualise the shifts that had occurred in the structure of international politics. The Committee would need to 'comprehensively' come to grips with a world and region that had undergone decolonisation, and situate these findings within the context of the Cold War.[8]

The report, produced under the guidance of the Chair of the Committee, Associate Professor of International relations at the University of New South Wales Owen Harries, came to an understanding of Australia's place in its region and world that was heavily influenced by the overarching East/ West conflict. It sought to speak to Australia's particular experience as a nation situated geographically within the Third World, the 'global South', but which belonged to the 'North' for reasons of culture, language, political system and values. This was presented as a uniquely Australian way of viewing the world's current geo-political landscape. When the report's completion was announced in parliament, Minister for Foreign Affairs Andrew Peacock claimed that 'no other developed country has available to it such a detailed study of its over-all relations with the Third World' for the simple reason that Australia, 'unlike nearly all other developed countries' lived in 'a region of Third World countries.'[9]

This chapter seeks to chart the emergence of a new Australian strategic imagination that, having attempted to present a new independent image to the world and expunge all memory of its internationally notorious racial policies, needed to reconcile this with the overarching ideological

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6 Curran, *The Power of Speech*. p. 121.
7 Ibid. p. 122.
8 Committee on Australia's Relations with the Third World, 'Appendix A: For Press, Committee on Australia's Relations with the Third World, 6th April 1978', in *Report of the Committee on Australia's Relations with the Third World - Attachment to Submission No 3226*, 1979, 1, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=30488311. p. 193.
9 31. Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 18 September 1979. p. 1190.

confrontation that beset the globe. It will firstly look at the impact of Fraser's rekindling of Cold War anxieties on defence policy, and then at the Third World Report as an articulation of the emerging contours of a new Australian strategic imagination.

Détente and Australian Defence

'There was a time', wrote *The Age*'s defence reporter Hugh Armfield, 'when an American announcement that it intended to build up its military facilities on the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia would have been welcomed with ringing praise in Canberra.'[10] But in 1974, no such welcome would come. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Whitlam Government had supported the United Nations committee on an Indian Ocean zone of peace, and an ASEAN proposal for a zone of neutrality in its region.[11] The 1975 Strategic Basis Paper took the Whitlam and Willesee line on détente, finding the United States was perceived to desire 'strategic stability' with the USSR, who in turn were not seen to want to 'bring into doubt the détente relationship, or to destabilise seriously the overall international situation.'[12] Australia's security from any major threat was still, 'critically dependent upon… some major power or group of powers', with the United States being, 'Australia's natural major ally'.[13] Yet the report held that 'Australia's defence interests can be well-served by national policy that promotes international détente effectively, bridging and modifying strategic alignment and reducing confrontation.'[14] By this time, the United States had appeared to accept the 'Australian policy for mutual restraint by the Super Powers in the Indian Ocean', and the view from Canberra was that 'there should be no increase in the number of US Navy visits to West Australian ports.' Adding, however, that 'this policy should be reviewed if the Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean expanded considerably.'[15] This was characteristic of Whitalm's outlook. Détente was a force that liberated Australian foreign policy from having to volley with the American gun line. International organizations, chiefly the United Nations, had been the arena in which Australia would attempt to guarantee its strategic imperatives.

[10] Hugh Armfield, 'Canberra Looks Askance at Deigo Garcia', *The Age*, 8 February 1974. p. 9.
[11] 'Aust Opposed to Island Build-Up', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 February 1974. p. 4.
[12] 'FAD Paper No 14: "The Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy 1975" - Minister Responsible: Mr Killen (Defence) - Presented at FAD Committee Meeting 1 April 1976 - Decision No 448(FAD) - File No LC183', 1 April 1976, A12934, FAD14, National Archives of Australia, https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=8938777. pp. 5-6.
[13] Ibid. p. 44.
[14] Ibid. p. 45.
[15] Ibid. p. 45.

The strategic basis paper had clearly not been updated to accommodate the views of the new Prime Minister. On the Cold War, Fraser sang a different tune to Whitlam. This had been litigated in parliament in 1975, Fraser's first year as leader of the opposition and Whitlam's final as Prime Minister. In response to Lance Barnard's ministerial statement on defence, Fraser claimed that the government had not updated their analysis of the region to include current events that had altered the strategic picture. He was worried about the ramifications of North Vietnamese and Chinese hegemony in East Asia, but more concerning was the Government's failure to attenuate their criticism of the United States' proposal of increasing their regional presence in Diego Garcia by considering that they had been silent on existing USSR bases and refuelling facilities in the Indian Ocean.[16] Fraser placed high value on the United States maintaining a regional presence in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Australia should, Fraser argued, encourage 'sensible, reasonable and appropriate United States involvement'. The Government, through its criticism of military installations like the one in Diego Garcia had obstructed this, and, according to Fraser, should not have been encouraging 'the United States to withdraw into herself.'[17] The myth of Munich was clearly on Fraser's mind here, as were fears that the United States could face a crisis of national confidence particularly as it dealt with failure in Vietnam and the Watergate scandal.

The differences between these two perspectives on détente were clear to Tange. In providing the opening remarks of a speech to the 1976 Summer School at the University of Western Australia Tange ruled out opining on what foreign countries 'might be able to offer military threat to Australia.'[18] Détente was a live political issue, and thus the secretary of Defence's speech was 'deliberately unprovocative.'[19]

Tange's responsibility at this stage, however, was to ensure that Australia develop a sound defensive doctrine to replace the now defunct strategy of forward defence. This was despie the new Prime Minister's record of support for it as Defence Minister, his willingness to remind parliament even as recently as mid-1975 that Australia currently had a 'forward deployment' of forces in Butterworth, and that Canberra could be obligated to increase this presence in South East Asia under the Fiver Power Defence Agreement.[20] Australia's defensive strategy, and the composition of its defence force, would, however, no longer be predicated on fighting a war in Asia. Tange was all too happy to make this point:

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[16] 29. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 26 August 1975. pp. 2033-2034
[17] Ibid. p. 2034.
[18] Sir Arthur Tange, 'Defence Policy Making in Australia: Address to Summer School, University of Western Australia', 13 January 1976, FCO 24/ 2233, The National Archives. p. 2.
[19] Peter Edwards, *Arthur Tange: Last of the Mandarins* (Crows Nest, N.S.W: Allen & Unwin, 2006). p. 241.
[20] 29. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 26 August 1975. p. 2033.

> 'Australia is still in an historical transition towards a defence policy in which the structure of the Australian Defence Force, and in which our contingency planning for deployment of the Force, are related more specifically than in the past to the defence of this country rather than to contributing Australian expeditionary forces.'

Such a transition had been made necessary by a number of events. Tange listed the withdrawal of British power 'east of Suez', the 'Guam Doctrine', Western rapprochement with China, 'the growth of the capacity of countries in Australia's north to defend themselves from outside interference', and those same countries' desire to limit the involvement of the greater powers with their affairs as factors that had ended the viability of forward defence as a strategic doctrine.[21] Tange's goal was for Australia to continue to develop strategy and force structure in its place that would allow for a 'self-reliant' defence capability.[22]

ANZUS still bore significant value in Tange's estimation, in that it offered the possible contingency that the United States would come to Australia's defence in its time of need, and that it also undergirded the transfer of 'immeasurably valuable' military technology and intelligence.[23] Yet 'self-reliance' also had explicit limitations for how Australia could conduct military operations with allies in the future. Having 'a logically composed and integrated Australian defence force balanced for defence against an enemy attacking a defined territory – namely our own' also meant that said force 'may be different' from something 'worthwhile to principle allies' in combined operations.[24] Self-reliance in defence was hardly something that Fraser could object to, particularly given his own statements as Defence Minister in the wake of the Nixon Doctrine. What would the new Prime Minister think of Tange's indication that Australian defence policy would now involve a sober-minded and 'practical' perspective on its alliances given his outspoken advocacy of American leadership in opposition?

Fraser would deliver his Government's first major ministerial statement on foreign policy in mid-1976. This speech, 'Australia and the World Situation', was a realist analysis of international geo-politics, a caution against détente and an re-assertion of Australia's ideological allegiance in the bipolar Cold War. The foundational aspect of foreign policy, Fraser stated, was the realpolitik imperative of retaining national sovereignty. Australia's 'basic interest' was in its 'survival as a free and democratic country.' All other considerations of Australia in the world were made subject to this imperative, even the ideological differences of the Cold War. 'While common values and

[21] Tange, 'Defence Policy Making in Australia: Address to Summer School, University of Western Australia'. pp. 4-5.
[22] Ibid. p. 15.
[23] Ibid. p. 16.
[24] Ibid. p. 17.

attitudes may serve to make cooperation easier', Fraser recognised, 'their absence need not preclude such co-operation if there are parallel interests.'[25] These abstracted statements of the 'national interest', bearing some resemblance to Whitlam's more pragmatic approach to foreign affairs, quickly adopted an ideological garb not found in the Labor leader's rhetoric. He decried, 'unrealistic notions that an age of peace and stability' had arrived which only really encouraged a neglect of 'power realities.' [26] Without giving specific examples, Fraser claimed that the superpowers had exploited diplomatic situations in order to achieve, 'the dominance of one ideology over another.'[27] In Fraser's view, détente had not been what is was promised to be, he continued:

> 'Despite the hopes placed in détente, it has not stabilised relations between the great powers. Indeed a renewed arms race now looms as a real prospect.'[28]

Australia's automatic alignment was with the United States and against the USSR. America was, after all, the only power that could 'provide a balance to the Soviet Union.'[29]

The United States' role in global politics was the chief point of difference between both Whitlam and Fraser's approach to the Cold War. Both agreed at a basic level that Australia and the United States shared traits that made them natural allies. Whitlam had long stressed during his time in office that he would make Australian foreign policy more independent, but could still welcome, even as a concession to Fraser, what he saw as Australia's, 'basic alignment with America'.[30] Fraser would concur with the necessity of independence, arguing that their first responsibility as a nation was to, 'independently assess our own interests.'[31] Whitlam had taken advantage of the United States' recalibrated regional role after the failure in Vietnam to publically differentiate Australian and U.S. foreign policy. Fraser's, understanding of 'independence' drew heavily from the themes of the Nixon doctrine. Fraser did not want 'any power to be a policeman for the world', nor 'to do what small powers should do for themselves.'[32] But as détente could not replace realpolitik calculations of national interests and balances of power, Australia and the world could not 'afford any reduction of the credibility of the U.S. foreign policy.'[33] Repeating earlier remarks, he claimed:

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[25] 30. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives 1 June 1976. p. 2735.
[26] Ibid. p. 2735.
[27] Ibid. p. 2735.
[28] Ibid. p. 2735.
[29] Ibid. p. 2735.
[30] Ibid. p. 2747.
[31] Ibid. p. 2738.
[32] Ibid. p. 2735.
[33] Ibid. p. 2738.

> 'America is the only power that can balance the might of the Soviet Union. If America does not undertake this task it will not be done. If it is not done the whole basis of peace and security is unsupported.'[34]

Righting this perceived imbalance at both a global and regional geo-political level was the key to security. Regionally, Fraser stated that he thought it in Australia's interests that no power dominate its immediate neighbourhood, in which he included the Indian Ocean.[35] Whitlam's support for a zone of neutrality bore some resemblances to this. But as Whitlam had opposed the American build-up of forces in Diego Garcia outright, Fraser encouraged it. There was little hope, Fraser felt, in the success of the zone of neutrality given the increase of Soviet activity in the north west Indian Ocean. It was, 'clearly contrary to Australia's interests' for the balance of power in the region to shift against Australia's 'major ally, the United States.'[36] Conversely, he also held that it was against Australia's interests to for the great powers, 'to embark on an unrestricted competition in the Indian Ocean', and strongly endorsed an American request for restraint so that 'the balance can be maintained at a relatively low level.'[37] Internationally, he raised major concerns about the USSR's conventional military advantage in size over NATO and alluded to the development of a potential nuclear imbalance in favour of the Soviet Union.[38] This was much more alarming in comparison with the potential Indian Ocean build up, as righting a nuclear imbalance was a resource intensive task with dire strategic consequences should it be left too long. Yet it was Fraser's regional musings, and not his comments on strategic armaments, that attracted attention during his first overseas visit as Prime Minister later that month.

Japan was the first stop of this trip, and it was here that Fraser signed a treaty of 'Friendship and Co-operation' with the host country as a recognition of the 'fundamental importance' of that economic relationship to Australian trade.[39] He went further, however, to remark on Cold War ideological rivalries. Their common interests as democratic countries were to show that their system of government 'had the capacity to respond to the ever-changing demands made upon it.' This notion was closely tied to the 'maintenance of peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region', and more broadly to the 'maintenance of a stable balance between the great powers.'[40] The key regional players that Fraser identified as being central in this undertaking task included the United

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[34] Ibid. p. 2738.
[35] Ibid. p. 2736.
[36] Ibid. p. 2741.
[37] Ibid. p. 2741.
[38] Ibid. p. 2737.
[39] Malcolm Fraser, 'Speech Given by the Prime Minister at the Japanese Press Club', 18 June 1976, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/release/transcript-4163. p. 1.
[40] Ibid. p. 2.

States, Japan, Australia, and somewhat surprisingly; China. This was a case of 'parallel interests' being just as good a reason as 'common values' for making 'common cause' in diplomacy, as he had alluded to in his speech in Parliament earlier that month.

This rhetoric lent plausibility to reports that Fraser had canvassed the Chinese leadership on their thoughts on a so called 'four-power pact' to include China, Japan, Australia and the United States as a means of counterbalancing the USSR.[41] After departing Japan, the Australian delegation arrived for an official visit to China, in which Fraser met with Chinese leadership a number of times. On the 21st of June, the transcript of a meeting between Fraser and the Chinese Premier Hua Kuo-feng was leaked to the press. It is not certain whether Fraser's suggestion of an official 'four-power pact', originating in one report in the Melbourne *Herald*, was an embellishment of the transcript, was based on another leak from a senior member of the Australian delegation, or was even the result of a conversation with the Prime Minister himself.[42] A number of theories swirled around, firstly on who was responsible for the leaked transcript, and then, on where the notion of a 'four-power pact' came from. The British Foreign Office thought it possible that the leak was either the result of an accident on the part of the Australian Embassy in China, or that the Chinese had done so themselves.[43] Alan Renouf, then the Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs, claims that he too initially considered the latter, but soon found out that the Embassy was responsible.[44] Where, then, did the idea of a 'four-power pact' come from, and was it part of the Fraser Government's foreign and defence policy program?

It's unlikely that Fraser mentioned a four-power pact explicitly to the Chinese, but it had probably been a point of internal Australian discussion. Renouf for example, claims that 'the idea was not unknown to me', but thought it 'completely impractical.'[45] According to Renouf, the source of the leak was Fraser himself, who had discussed the pact 'off-the-record' with the *Herald* journalist weeks before the China trip. A colleague had then overheard two Australian officials discussing the idea, and possibly prompted by the knowledge of the leak, had passed this on.[46] The transcript itself made no mention of a 'four-power pact.' The other report to come out on the day of the *Herald*'s did not refer to it at all, and merely stated that Fraser had suggested that 'China,

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41 G. A. Duggan, 'The Peking Leak', 1 July 1976, FCO 24/ 2212, The National Archives.
42 Peter Costigan, 'PM Seeks 4-Power Pact', *Herald*, 22 June 1976.
43 Duggan, 'The Peking Leak'.
44 Alan Renouf, *The Champagne Trail: Experiences of a Diplomat* (Melbourne: Sun Books, 1980). p. 114.
45 Ibid. p. 115.
46 Ibid. p. 116.

Australia, America and Japan should work more closely to achieve common objectives.'[47] The transcript, as reproduced in the *Financial Times*, had Fraser suggesting:

> 'there are some things that I believe we can do I support of common objectives, but at this point will just say formally that we seek to develop our relationship, not on the basis of ideology but on the basis of the basis of common interests and shared objectives.'[48]

After the leak, Fraser and Peacock continually played down any talk of a pact between Japan, China, Australia and the United States. Even the Australian Ambassador to China, Stephen FitzGerald, who had been present in all talks between Fraser and Hua waded into the controversy to reject the notion of an 'alliance agreement or concert of nations' labelling such talk 'untrue and damaging.'[49] Given that the transcript was still in the hands of some members of the international and Australian press, such a stark denial would have been foolish and quickly exposed if it wasn't accurate. It probably was, however, a concept that the Fraser government had thought about and potentially filed for future consideration. It did, after all, fit with Fraser's realist approach to geo-politics and the depth of his suspicions regarding the USSR. Yet whatever plan did exist was exposed much too early to have any chance of success and was then scuttled ruefully by its chief advocate.

In light of Fraser's more alarmed attitude toward the Cold War, the consensus between the Department of Defence and the Whitlam Government to maintain détente, as established in the 1975 strategic basis paper, would not do. The Defence Committee produced two new papers: first, an 'International Security Outlook'; and second, a paper outlining 'Australian Strategic and Defence Policy Objectives'.[50] Distrust of détente was a central aspect of Fraser's strategic imagination. The Soviet Union could not be expected to keep up their end of Cold War de-escalation. The Prime Minister's stance is easy to see in the conclusions of the 'International Strategic Outlook' endorsed by the National Intelligence Committee. It took as its basis a selective reading of the 1975 strategic basis paper, namely that 'Australia's affinities, shared interests and interdependence with North America, Western Europe and to an important extent Japan, support cooperation in matters of fundamental strategic concern with those nations rather than with other

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[47] 'Fraser Urges China Link', *The Daily Telegraph (London)*, 22 June 1976. p. 4.
[48] Malcolm Fraser, 'Document 426 - "Building Barriers Against the Russian Bear" Edited Transcript of Discussion between Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser and Chinese Premier Hua Kuo-Feng, 20 June 1976, Published in the *Financial Times*, 2 July 1976.', in *Australia and the World: A Documentary History from the 1870s to the 1970s*, ed. N. K. Meaney (Melbourne, Australia: Longman Cheshire, 1985).
[49] Peter Bowers, 'Ambassador in Peking Defends PM's China Talks, *Sydney Morning Herald,* in, [Personal Papers of Prime Minister Fraser] Visit to Japan/ China, June 1976', undated, probably 29 June 1976, M1269, 3, National Archives of Australia.
[50] Andrews, *The Department of Defence*. pp. 223-224.

powers.'[51] This was a return to a bipolar outlook at the explicit expense of relations with non-aligned nations. Words from the Prime Minister himself provided another reason for the paper. Quoting part of Fraser's ministerial statement given in June 1976, the report made specific note of his exhortation for national vigilance, 'a nation does not have to face a threat of imminent invasion before it has grounds for concern at the international situation.'[52] But the lessons of Munich, again here clearly on display, did not only apply to the Soviet Union. Fraser had said this specifically in regards to the potential for the 'developing', or 'Third', World's economic problems in his ministerial statement.[53] The Defence Committee had made a direct link between this potential threat and the threats stemming from the Cold War.

The report itself mainly focussed on the USSR, refuting two of the opposition's responses to Fraser's June statement. Speaking in the House of Representatives, Bill Hayden, former Labor treasurer, took issue with Fraser's characterisation of the international and regional imbalances posed by the Soviet Union. In regards to the nuclear imbalance, Hayden quoted Henry Kissinger on the relative strengths of both respective arsenals and concluded that while the Soviets possessed larger and heavier missile forces, the United States had more reliable and sophisticated means of warhead delivery, and in greater numbers.[54] Similarly, Fraser's alarm at the Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean was deemed overblown, Hayden stating contrariwise that Moscow's fleet were there to exert foreign policy influence, not to be developed as a military incursion.[55] On this point, the opposition suggested that Fraser was attempting to stoke fears that would curtail the development of détente. Fraser's point was that the Soviet Union had made détente an impossibility because he alleged that they had taken advantage of the lower international tensions to improve their strategic weight. It was this position that the National Intelligence Committee supported.

In producing this 'International Security Outlook', the intelligence committee drew on the testimony of an unnamed Senior U.S. official, who had confirmed suspicions that tensions between the Super Powers were returning. When discussing the nuclear strategic balance between the USSR and the US, said adviser admitted, 'There is no doubt that we are not out ahead, and that an imbalance is developing.'[56] The imbalance was a product of the USSR improving the operational effectiveness of its nuclear delivery vehicles. These new technologies rendered the

[51] 'National Intelligence Committee Document: International Security Outlook', 6 August 1976, A12389, D66, National Archives of Australia, https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=4725273. s. 1, p. 2.
[52] Ibid. s. 1., p. 2.
[53] 30. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. p. 2736.
[54] Ibid. p. 2751.
[55] Ibid. p. 2752.
[56] 'National Intelligence Committee Document'. s. 5., p. 8.

concessions which the Americans had made to the USSR during arms limitations meetings anachronistic, as they were based on an assessment at that time that the effectiveness gap favored the United States. These concessions allowed the USSR to attain a higher number of delivery vehicles as compensation. In improving its delivery technology, the belief, 'in some sections of the US administration' was that the USSR had 'taken advantage of the ambiguities' in the first Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), resulting in 'substantial asymmetries in the comparative characteristics and operational performance of the two forces.'[57] The USSR's ballistic missiles could deliver heavier loads, a trait measured in 'throw-weight', and had warheads with greater explosive yields. The US in comparison possessed more deliverable warheads, and greater missile reliability and accuracy. Even if the USSR could exploit their advantage in 'throw weight' and somehow destroy all of the US's land based missile forces, American superiority in bomber and submarine technology meant that a retaliatory strike would 'inflict enormous losses, if not total destruction, on the USSR.'[58] The balance remained poised in asymmetry despite changes to the nuclear strategic context between the two superpowers. But in discussing these changes, the National Intelligence Committee had supported Fraser's impression that 'détente' had in reality been nothing of the sort, merely a veneer of peaceful intentions behind which the Soviets had attempted to gain a strategic advantage.

Other aspects of the international situation begun to be more expressly framed by great power rivalry. In the Indian Ocean, the National Intelligence Committee suspected that the Soviet presence would be engaged in military reconnaissance, intelligence gathering and communication activities.[59] Concerns also included the possibility that the Soviet presence would be used 'for the political purposes of winning over third-world countries and establishing presences in areas from which it can exert regional influence.'[60] They viewed the Cold War as a struggle between competing ideologies and the respective nations that adhered to them, but as including developing nations that had attempted to stay out of the bipolar rivalry.

This heightened awareness of the Cold-war strategic balance between the super-powers qualified the bid for 'self-reliance' outlined in the first government White Paper on Defence, completed in November 1976. This paper articulated the central tension in the newly developing post-imperial and post-Nixon doctrine strategic imagination. As its opening observation, the paper noted that, 'for most of its history, Australia was protected by Britain's imperial might', and that,

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[57] Ibid. s. 5., pp. 3-4.
[58] Ibid. s. 5., pp. 5-6.
[59] Ibid. s. 8., p. 12.
[60] Ibid. s. 8., p. 12.

'in the past decade, Britain has been turning increasingly to Europe and the North Atlantic… Britain can no longer be expected to accept significant military involvement in areas of concern to Australia east of Suez.'[61] In terms of the broader trend of de-colonisation, the paper recognised that a 'proliferation of sovereign nation states' had 'established a new world order.'[62] Through the Nixon doctrine, the United States had 'disengaged militarily from the mainland of South East Asia', and there remained 'large questions' about the whether they would become 'involved there again, particularly with ground forces.'[63] This did not produce the same alarm that it had done for the previous Liberal-Country coalition government. Forward defence was no longer associated with Australian security. South East Asia, a historic source of strategic anxiety, was now assessed to have 'reasonable prospects of stability.'[64]

Tange's emphasis on Australian military self-reliance had been taken up to great effect. 'No longer', the paper stated, would policy be based 'on the expectation that Australia's Navy, Army, or Air Force will be sent abroad to fight as part of some other nation's force'.[65] ANZUS, now interpreted without the distorting lens of forward defence, gave 'substantial grounds for confidence' that American military support would be forthcoming in the unlikely event of a major threat to Australian security.[66] 'Self-reliance', both in the mounting of a national defence, in accepting 'local responsibilities' in co-operation with regional friends, and in joining the US in combined operations, was now the 'primary requirement' for the structure and capabilities of Australia's defence force.[67] This new regional confidence was tempered by a Cold-War wariness of the international balance of power, and an acute sense of allegiance to the West. The strategic assessment of the balance of nuclear armaments provided by the NIC's 'International Security Outlook' had been reflected in this White Paper, but in less explicit detail.[68] Furthermore, the section outlining Australian self-reliance in defence ended with a comment affirming that Australia was, 'mindful of [its] natural associations with the Western strategic community' and of its obligations in that respect. In the wake of the old strategic imagination, obsessed as it was with racial fears and a British or American presence in Asia, a return to Cold War tensions reinforced ideas about natural international relationships. These were determined along the divisions of the Cold War – with a new emphasis on Australia as a Western nation.

[61] Department of Defence, 'Australian Defence' (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1976). p. 1.
[62] Ibid. p. 1.
[63] Ibid. p. 2.
[64] Ibid. p. 6.
[65] Ibid. p. 10.
[66] Ibid. p. 10.
[67] Ibid. pp. 10-11.
[68] 'National Intelligence Committee Document'. p. s. 5., pp. 3-4., Department of Defence, 'Australian Defence'. p. 2.

Despite the tone of self-confidence emenating from the White Paper, questions about American national strength and will continued to plague the Prime Minister. Fraser and his Minister for Foreign Affairs Andrew Peacock had revealed concerns about President Carter's approach to foreign policy in Asia. In a recapitulation of Eggleston's 'two ocean dilemma' and Waller's fear that the US in the era of Nixon was retreating from 'West of Hawaii', Fraser, visiting London in early 1977 for a Commonwealth Heads of Governnment Conference, had admitted to the British Prime Minister James Callaghan that if the United States had to fight a naval war in the Atlantic, they would only be able to cover the Pacific as far as Hawaii.[69] The possibilities were remote: Callaghan could not envision such a situation at all and told the Australian Prime Minister to take the issue up with President Carter. Fraser worried that NATO could potentially bring the United States into a conventional war with the USSR in Europe, reducing the American capacity to play that role in Asia.[70] Fraser had harbored nagging doubts about American fortitude in maintaining a global balance of power with the Soviet Union, revealing the limitations that beset any Australian defensive strategy. Where it seemed even remotely possible that the whole world could become engulfed in global conflict, Australian self-reliance could not stand alone. Tange had stated himself in his address to the University of Western Australia that ANZUS was still an important part of defence planning. Australia's security in the event of dire contingencies, such as those outlined by Fraser above, was unthinkable without potential American involvement.

These anxieties were never far away from bubbling up to the surface. Two months after the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting, Peacock would question American strategy in Asia in such a way that revealed his ongoing concerns about the American will to lead. Unfortunately for the government, this was leaked to journalists. Peacock's correspondence to his American counterpart, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, featured on the front page of the Australian Financial Review in early October 1977. Peacock had expressed to Vance the importance of including ASEAN as a friendly force in its strategy for the region, and to not place too much emphasis on its relationship with Japan as this could alienate such potential allies.[71] It could also unduly aggravate pro-Soviet Vietnam, sparking the potential for a 'major crisis' in South East Asia in which the major powers would vie for dominance.[72] Peacock was reported to want the Americans to go to 'some trouble to emphasise the importance of a non-Communist South-East Asia' and to back up this rhetoric with 'concrete actions' – namely that the US increase arms sales

[69] Patrick Wright, 'Prime Minister's Meeting with the Australian Prime Minister', 2 June 1977, FCO 24/ 2380, The National Archives. p. 1.
[70] Ibid. p. 1.
[71] Robert Haupt, 'Aust Fights U.S. Asian Retreat', *Australian Financial Review*, 4 October 1977. p. 1.
[72] Ibid. p. 8.

to ASEAN, and that it be taken into 'Washington's confidence on US strategic policy in Asia.'[73] Australia had bemoaned empty reassurences doled out by greater allied powers to its own leaders on countless occasions since Federation, and Peacock clearly thought that the cost of failure was too high for this to be allowed to happen again.

Peacock 'understood that the US would not and could not make a military commitment to the mainland of Asia', but this did not diminish his impression of the role that the United States had in leading the West in the Cold War.[74] If the perceived intimacy between the United States and Japan was enough to raise tensions with Vietnam, then surely an increase of arms sales to ASEAN would have been similarly provocative to the pro-Soviet state, yet this is what Peacock had implored Vance to do. Such a double standard spoke both to Peacock's concerns about the Cold War in Australia's immediate neighbourhood, and his doubts that America had the desire to lay the adequate diplomatic groundwork in preparation for the potential increase in bi-polar tensions. A forthright American presence in Asia had long been seen as a heartnening indication of an American will to lead in the Cold War struggle in Australian eyes. Even Tange linked the two in 1976, noting that the Nixon doctrine had been an American decision to 'reduce its presence in Asia and to turn away from open ended offers to police the world with such help as allies, such as Australia, were prepared to offer.'[75] The American posture in Asia post-Nixon Doctrine clearly still bothered Peacock and Fraser.

Harries and the Western Alliance

The Fraser Government's re-introduction of Cold War confrontation as a primary consideration of the Australian strategic imagination raised questions as to how Australia should approach the post-colonial world. Before the end of 1972, the Australiam government's attitude to decolonisation had been one of either annoyance or begrudging recognition. Prime Minister Harold Holt, for example, had remarked on the economic potential of new South East Asian states, but noted that Britain and the United States still had a heavy burden to carry in terms of the region's security. The idea of Asian collective security without British or American boots on the ground was anathema to strategic thinking at the time. The process of European powers

[73] Ibid. p. 8.
[74] Ibid. p. 8.
[75] Tange, 'Defence Policy Making in Australia: Address to Summer School, University of Western Australia'. p. 17.

relinquishing colonial territory for indigenous peoples to govern themselves had also brought unwanted attention on to Australia's shameful record on racial discriminiation.

Even as late as 1971, Prime Minister William McMahon had publically defended the rights of a racially selected South African Rugby Union team to tour Australia, to the extent that he considered seeing to their travel arrangements himself in the face of a nation-wide Union 'black ban' on the visitors. In a year designated by the U.N. for the end of racial discrimination, McMahon had furled sail and turned into the oncoming storm, hoping that the winds of change, as they were, would meekly blow by. Whitlam, as has been shown in the previous chapter, had attempted to correct this course by removing the racialist taint from Australia's name, and cast a new image to the world that Australia was comfortable and secure in its region independent of Britain and the United States. Détente had freed Whitlam from the need to reconcile this new approach to the decolonised world with the overarching strategic implications of great power rivalry.

But the return of Cold War tensions as a guiding concept in Australia's strategic consciousness exposed the gaping void in its conceptions of the 'Third World', the name given to states that did not fit in with the industrialised West or directly allied themselves with the Soviet Union or China. In April 1978, the Fraser Government announced the formation of a 'high level Committee to examine the wide range of issues involved in Australia's relations with the developing countries of the third World'.[76] Owen Harries was named as the Committee's chair.

The development of Harries' views on Australia, its place in the world and how it should conduct foreign policy reflected some of the changes that had occurred in the Australian strategic imagination since the decline of Australian Britishness and show how some of his own conceptions came to influence the findings of the Third World report. Of note here is the observable shift in Australian national identification from a 'British' country to a 'Western' country. Australia had been linked to the West by virtue of its Britishness, but the end of empire and Fraser's emphasis on the return of Cold War confrontation had resulted in an articulation of Australia's Western membership that did not hinge on the British connection. Australian identification with the West was a central assertion of the Third World Report. This, both in the report and Harries' prior work, often expressed itself in a frustration with the Third World in international politics, as he questioned whether it was in the Australian national interest to accommodate détente or Third World demands.

[76] Committee on Australia's Relations with the Third World, 'Appendix A: For Press, Committee on Australia's Relations with the Third World, 6th April 1978'. pp. 193-194.

Harries had migrated to Australia from Wales in October 1956 as a graduate of Oxford University, and eventually took a job as a tutor at the University of Sydney before moving on to the University of New South Wales. Even as one coming from the British Isles themselves, Harries was struck by Australia's British characteristics on arrival. This comparison served his broader purpose of critiquing English liberalism in his 1963 article, 'The Chink of Grasshoppers?' 'People who have never left Australia', he wrote, 'speak naturally of England as "Home" and "the Old Country"'.[77] Australia had 'borrowed heavily from Britain; its stock, its language, its laws and legal systems, its political concepts and institutions, its capital, its culture – all these are either wholly or very largely British in origin.'[78] Australian Britishness, in Harries' mind, was one major aspect that linked it to the notion of, 'the West.' To him, 'progressive' rhetoric that he understood to deny Australian Britishness in its calls for Australia to 'come to terms with its geography' as a Southeast Asian country was 'nonsense' and an attempt to weaken 'Australia's links with the West.'[79]

Later in the decade, Harries would adjust this stance on Australian identity and strategic alignment. Analysing Menzies' actions during the Suez crisis of a decade earlier, Harries had not time for the Prime Minister's alignment with the British perspective of the crisis, but saw the opposition to the United States as antithetical to Australian interests. Menzies had, 'been seized with the notion… of an Imperial foreign policy – with him as one of the key figures in its formulation.'[80] His 'intense and romantic attachment to Britain' had caused him to overlook the 'conventional wisdom' that Australia's security, 'required that precedence… be given to maintaining the American alliance.'[81] From this, Harries sought to challenge this conventional wisdom, concluding that in 1956 the American alliance was only 'conceived in regional terms', and that Menzies' behaviour revealed that 'in other spheres the British connection was paramount.'[82] But this was a major shift from just five years earlier, when Britishness constituted a major linkage to the West. It's no coincidence that as Australians had just started to come to terms with the British bid to enter the EEC and were then shocked once more with the announcement of the British withdrawal from 'east of Suez', Harries' view of 1956 was 'that Menzies' had not seen 'things in terms of Australian interests and policy.'[83] The decline of Britishness had raised new questions regarding how Australia would position itself within the constellation of states that made

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[77] Owen Harries, 'The Chink of Grasshoppers?', *The American Scholar* 32, no. 3 (1963): 397–406. p. 397.
[78] Ibid. p. 397.
[79] Ibid. pp. 397-398.
[80] Owen Harries, 'Menzies and the Suez Crisis', *Politics* 3, no. 2 (1968), https://doi.org/10.1080/00323266808401142. p. 202.
[81] Ibid. pp. 202-203.
[82] Ibid. p. 204.
[83] Ibid. p. 202.

up, 'the West'. 'Romantic attachment[s] to Britain' could not be allowed to misdirect attention from the primary importance the American alliance had to the Australian national interest.

The other dynamic important to note was Harries' history of frustration with the emerging third world. It was largely against Western liberal critics that he defended a more careful approach to decolonisation as opposed to the thrusting of self-rule onto unready indigenous state systems. Harries conceded that this argument could be 'abused' to perpetuate European colonial regimes indefinitely, but maintained that if everything possible was done to hasten self-rule, then colonial government was preferable in the short term to other dangers: 'civil war, anarchy, dictatorship or occupation by another and more oppressive foreign power.'[84] In a similar way, he cautioned against thinking of China and other 'emergent' nations in Asia and Africa as possessing the degree of power and responsibility on the international stage that they would apparently possess in the future.[85] The Soviet Union, America, and Britain to a lesser extent, remained the heavyweights in international politics. It was through this Cold War struggle between the West and Communism that Harries interpreted the actions of postcolonial indigenous governments. 'Neutralism' in the Cold War, as he understood it, could be 'old-fashioned neutrality in the Swiss sense' or on the other hand it could mean 'membership in the Afro-Asian bloc and very active interference in the affairs of the world at large.'[86] This frustration at the actions of non-aligned states in their relations with the West could bubble over into accusations of hypocrisy; 'see Nehru's different attitudes when the U.N. interferes in any Western colonial dispute and when it interferes in Kashmir or seeks to interfere in Goa.'[87]

Harries' frustrations did not come from explicit racial anxieties, but from a commitment to an interpretation of the Cold War as a struggle between competing ideologies that demanded a realpolitik approach. The Soviet Union had prospered in recent years in shifts in the balance of power, he claimed in a 1962 article, because they had learnt to exploit the 'illusions' that influenced Western policy. These were the concept of '"coexistence" in working for a unilateral relaxation of tension' and '"peace" as a means of undermining support for Western military preparation.'[88] Following E. H. Carr, Harries counselled against the 'liberal belief in the existence of a fundamental harmony of interest' that 'permeated the Anglo-Saxon attitude towards international politics',

[84] Owen Harries, 'Six Ways of Confusing Issues', *Foreign Affairs* 40, no. 3 (1962), https://doi.org/10.2307/20029567. pp. 444-445.
[85] Ibid. p. 446.
[86] Ibid. p. 448.
[87] Ibid. p. 451.
[88] Owen Harries, 'Do the Soviet Leaders Misunderstand the West?', *Australian Outlook* 16, no. 2 (1962): 199–206, https://doi.org/10.1080/10357716208444114. p. 205.

because the USSR had taken advantage of such naivety.[89] A realist view of international relations was the only way that Western governments could wrest back the initiative, with primary consideration given 'to the nature of one's own interests and the kinds of policies they require.'[90] He would have a similar warning to those who would look optimistically at developments in Soviet foreign policy that amounted to a 'change of heart', as the 'basic antagonism which gave rise to the cold war' remained, and would remain so while the Soviet Union continued to be ideologically distinct from the West.[91]

Harries' pre-occupations with the balance of power in a bipolar world made it very difficult for him to understand the true end of Whitlam's foreign policy. He did not think that Whitlam behaved as if power was, 'the decisive factor in international politics', and found Whitlam's downgrading of the importance of 'military and power political aspects' in policy, 'illogical'.[92] Yet he must also be praised for picking up on some of the inner logic of Whitlam's foreign policy, even if he staunchly disagreed with it and could not at the time explain its motivating factor. 'Style and image' were noted to be important parts of Whitlam's approach to international affairs, but, Harries argued, 'style, posture and the states of mind these produce cannot displace a concern about the substance of policy.'[93] For the realist, there were inherent risks involved in playing fast and loose with policy for aesthetic gain. On the issue of Papua New Guinean decolonisation, Harries argued that to treat it as an 'image builder for Australia, something to establish our anti-colonial credentials', could result in serious damage to future Papua New Guinean independence.[94] In rating, 'caution low and boldness high', Harries noted that Whitlam's posture in international politics had some basis, among which were that there were no foreseeable threats to Australian security, a recognition of the role of détente, and that the Third World was a 'meaningful and important entity.'[95] To his credit, Harries wrote that should these assumptions turn out to be true, then Whitlam's policy in turn, 'may turn out to be an exciting success', but it would be a success based on the reality that 'circumstances' had protected Australia's interests.[96] He had missed that Whitlam's goal in projecting this new 'image' of Australia to the international community was to promote goodwill in the decolonised Third World. His recognition that the image building policy could turn out to be a success was a wise one. Six years later, Harries would present a study to the

[89] Ibid. pp. 201-202
[90] Ibid. p. 206.
[91] Owen Harries, 'An Old Debate', *Quadrant* 8, no. 4 (1964). p. 31.
[92] Owen Harries, 'Mr. Whitlam and Australian Foreign Policy', *Quadrant* 17, no. 4 (1973). pp. 56-57.
[93] Ibid. p. 59.
[94] Ibid. p. 59.
[95] Ibid. p. 62.
[96] Ibid. p. 62.

Fraser government undertaken by a governmental panel under himself as the chair, written on Australia's relations with the Third World.

Australia and the Third World – Imagination, Strategy, Ideology and Policy

Fraser in his ministerial statement of June 1976 had shown a sensitivity to Third World problems. To him, it was 'an affront to human dignity' that the developing world was experiencing widespread 'poverty, hunger and disease.' Developed nations could do more to curb these problems by not just offering loans to developing nations, as they had done so far, but by opening themselves to trade with the Third World that would provide 'proper returns.'[97] These concerns for the Third World dovetailed neatly into his suspicions of détente, and his strident adherence to Cold War bipolarity as the core dynamic of contemporary international relations. The world, according to Fraser, was divided along two lines, those between the 'North' and the 'South, and between the 'East' and the 'West.' [98] The *Australia and the Third World* report, however, regarded the significance of north/ south issues as just another aspect of the East/ West divide. This would influence Fraser's personal views as well as Australian conceptions of the region. Fraser was genuinely concerned about the affront to human dignity occurring in the impoverished Third World, but this was afforded a strategic urgency by the power that the South now wielded in the East/ West conflict.

The report took two interpretive constructions of international politics as foundational to its findings. Strategically, the world was characterised by Cold War bipolarity. There was a recognition that the Third World was non-aligned by definition but this present disposition did not rule out the future possibility that some or even many of those nations in the Third World would find themselves under Soviet political influence or, on the other hand, take hold of Western political ideals for themselves. The Third World was another theatre in which Communism and the West would vie for dominance. Ideologically, the world was split into three distinct groups, a division from which the Third World derived its name. Many, if not all of the members of the Third World shared particular characteristics in a colonial past, opposition to the continuation of Western colonisation, relative economic poverty, a concern to not be too closely involved in the Cold War conflict, and a desire for industrial development.[99] The West and Communist bloc made up the

[97] 30. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 1 June 1976. p. 2736.
[98] Philip Ayres, *Malcolm Fraser: A Biography* (Richmond, Vic: William Heinemann Australia, 1987). p. 329.
[99] Committee on Australia's Relations with the Third World, *Australia and the Third World: Report of the Committee on Australia's Relations with the Third World.* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1979). p. xvii.

other two of these groups. These frameworks had particular consequences for Australia. With Harries at the helm, it is hardly surprising that the report espoused this construction. He had been articulating robust views of the struggle between East and West for close to 20 years by the time the report was released, and had shown keen instincts in sniffing out ideologies that were inimical to Western democracy. Ideologically, Australia was a member of the West. In tension with this was its geography. Australia was isolated from the centres of Western power in Europe and America and its regional diplomacy would be dominated by relationships with the Third World.[100]

The rigidity of Cold War bipolarity runs like a deep crevice throughout the whole report, giving more strategic and overall relevance to the Third World than any other factor. 'Objective factors', such as geographical location and resource endowment of individual Third World nations established their baseline strategic significance, and this value was amplified by their propensity to band together as a yet uncommitted to a side of the East-West confrontation or to the Sino-Soviet rivalry.[101] Détente had dampened some perceptions of the Third World's strategic significance. Yet the report argued that a possibility remained that 'any Third World country or group of countries could become an arena for a test of strength and will between the superpowers or between the Soviet Union and China.'[102]

This dynamic could largely account for how the West had conducted its relations with Third World nations since the end of the Second World War. Yes, decolonisation had been a powerful force in the formation of Third World identity and had circumscribed the international role of ex-colonial European powers, and to be sure, economic imbalances and oil supply would continue to provide a source of tensions between the West and the Third World.[103] These were as yet unresolved international frictions. Yet after taking these into account, it was Cold War strategic factors that had done most of the heavy lifting in post-war global politics. In Asia especially, the Western strategy of 'containment' had directly mediated West-Third World relations.[104] More broadly, a Western concern to 'win hearts and minds' in the Third World had made the West more 'forthcoming in response to demands and more generous with its aid' than was to be expected. By the same token, strategic concerns and Western uncertainty stemming from an 'ambiguous relationship between nationalist and communist movements' in different Third World nations had led 'Western governments to support the status-quo' in certain situations. 'Unrepresentative or

[100] Ibid. p. xix.
[101] Ibid. p. 13.
[102] Ibid. pp. 13-14.
[103] Ibid. pp. 23-26.
[104] Ibid. p. 25.

repressive regimes' had garnered Western support in this way.[105] The report understood Third World nations to have attempted to resist their definition as an arena of the Cold War and to have emphasised decolonisation as the mediating factor, asserting 'the importance of "North-South" issues as opposed to "East-West" ones.'[106] However, the Third World had attained from the Cold War 'an importance and relevance to the great powers which they would not otherwise have had', increasing 'their bargaining strength.'[107] The, 'quantity of aid and the level of political and military support received by individual Third World countries' from both the West and the USSR had largely been determined by their skill at exploiting this dynamic 'rather than their needs, intrinsic importance or commitment to the donors.'[108]

Unsurprisingly, the report did not hold an optimistic view of détente. American exhaustion in Vietnam had led to disillusionment in the policies that had lead it there and a 'longing to be relieved of the burdens of the Cold War.'[109] By the mid-70s, and in combination with the Watergate scandal, détente had caused the United States to act under 'a more restricted concept of its role in the Third World than at any time in the previous quarter century.'[110] The Soviet Union had, on the other hand, adopted a more assertive posture towards the Third World at the same time as the Americans had questioned theirs. Soviet success in the Angolan crisis in 1975, a return to cultivating its influence and reach in Middle Eastern affairs and the victory of North Vietnam were all given as example of the USSR's expanding ambit. Mirroring previous Fraser government judgements on the balance of strategic arms, the report stated that there was 'less symmetry and certainty about the political-strategic role of the two superpowers in relation to the Third World.'[111] A similar haze surrounded how much this had to play out. What were the limits of this restraint, and for how long would the United States continue to show it? How assertive could the Soviet Union get away with being in the meantime? There were no clear answers to these questions, and it was this unpredictability in international geo-politics that presented 'the most significant aspects' of the 'present strategic situation.'[112] At the very least, the committee considered the United States to have the advantage economically, through its control of global capital flows and its generous aid budget, whereas the USSR had the military advantage – and less inhibitions than the US in intervening in world affairs.[113]

[105] Ibid. p. 25.
[106] Ibid. p. 25.
[107] Ibid. p. 25.
[108] Ibid. p. 25.
[109] Ibid. p. 29.
[110] Ibid. p. 29.
[111] Ibid. p. 29.
[112] Ibid. p. 29.
[113] Ibid. p. 176.

The committee understood the Third World to be inextricably bound up in the Cold War, unwillingly at times and manipulatively at others. But on what basis did they understand the Third World to choose between either of these options at a given point? Just as the tensions of the Cold War were propelled by the competing ideologies of Marxism and liberalism, the Third world entered the fray bound together by their own distinct ideology with a distinctive view of history and program of action in the world. This was one of the major conceptual problems that the report had to deal with, namely how it could claim that a diverse array of nations with different cultural, ethnic, tribal, linguistic and religious backgrounds acted as a distinctive group in world politics. Harries' pointed out that such differences permeated individual nations as well, but that they were treated and acted as a whole in international politics.[114] In search for a unifying symbol or cohesive value, Harries turned to nationalism narrowly defined as a struggle to end colonialism.[115] In search for something to reinvigorate national energies, once national independence had been won, these states had perpetuated 'the notion of "struggle" that had provided the original basis for unity during the colonial period.' Sights were set on an ongoing struggle against colonialism everywhere, 'and an extension of the definition of colonialism to include any Western influence whatsoever.'[116] It was this common national narrative that Harries argued had provided the grounds for the Third World co-operative as a force in international politics.

Alongside the Cold War strategic discussions, ideology provided the other major lens through which the report understood international politics. The Third World's nationalism and moral demands on the international community was just as distinctive as the East's communism and the West's liberalism. Harries' ideologically tripartite construction of international politics held a tight grip on the report from page one. The after effects of colonisation were presented as the primary issue between the West and the Third World. The Third World had 'shown a significant degree of solidarity' in its 'opposition to colonialism' and in its blindness to the forms of colonialism practised either by their own members or by communist states.[117] They had asked for a 'better deal' economically, and through their collective weight had made 'Caucasian racialism a major issue in international affairs.' This was a source of friction particularly over the issue of 'ex-colonies controlled by white minorities.'[118] Although they considered de-colonisation to be an unfinished process economically, the Third World's development and modernisation goals were based on

[114] Owen Harries, 'Appendix U: The Ideology of the Third World', in *Australia and the Third World: Report of the Committee on Australia's Relations with the Third World.* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1979). p. 314.
[115] Ibid. p. 315.
[116] Ibid. p. 315.
[117] Committee on Australia's Relations with the Third World, *Australia and the Third World.* pp. 1-2.
[118] Ibid. p. 23.

Western models. Their moral appeals on this issue, and on the issue of racialism generally appealed to Western values.[119]

The report had mixed conclusions on the Third World's success in achieving their ideological goals. On de-colonisation and anti-racialism, it had enjoyed 'marked success', but comparatively very little on economic issues.[120] The committee drew a major link between the success or failure of Third World programs and how the West had backed its response to these moral claims with its own moral stance. The responses had been firmest when the West had been 'surest of their moral ground.'[121] One example of where this had worked in favour of the Third World was on colonialism and racialism, where Western morale and resolution had wilted 'in the face of sustained Third World pressure.'[122] In this case, the committee was interested in moral pressure as mechanism of influence, not in becoming an apologist for the existence of racialist states. Indeed, for the committee, the existence of states ruled by a white minority was a regrettable reality of the international political landscape, not just because they were morally indefensible, but because they opened the West up to Third World criticism that it could not in good conscience dismiss.

It was into this maelstrom of bipolar power-politics, tripartite ideological divisions and the imperative of moral steadfastness that the committee situated Australia's relations with the Third World. This conception of international politics and power led to a new articulation of the classic tension between Australian geography and Australian identity the latter of which was re-imagined as essentially Western:

> 'An important and abiding element of Australian foreign policy is the special set of challenges confronting us as a Western nation located in the Asia-Pacific region far from the traditional centres of Western power… Australia's identification with the Western group of nations is ensured by our racial, cultural and political affinities with Western Europe and North America...'[123]

Australia was, 'Western with a difference', different because of its geographical proximity to 'over 20 countries that belong to the Third World' in the region.[124] For this reason, the 'internal state of the Third World and the state of its relationship with the First and Second Worlds', were of at least 'as great concern' to Australia as to the rest of the West, if not more so.[125]

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119 Ibid. p. 24.
120 Committee on Australia's Relations with the Third World, *Australia and the Third World.* p. 175.
121 Ibid. p. 176.
122 Ibid. p. 176.
123 Ibid. p. 103.
124 Ibid. p. 177.
125 Ibid. p. 177.

In light of this, Australia's strategic interests ultimately lay in defending the West, but not, as it had been in the past, in convincing its great and powerful friends to come to Australia's defence. What it did mean was in supporting and encouraging the capacity of the United States as the only power that could counter the 'ideological and military challenge of the Soviet Union', and curtail the possibility of the Soviet Union attaining 'strategic gains of lasting significance' in the Third World.[126] Even so, the report counselled that Australia should not 'strive to defend every Western interest in the Third World as though it were equally its own' something that would be a 'failure to distinguish between common Western interests and the particular interests of individual Western countries.' Weakening this caution was the immediate reaffirmation that Australia's 'security, prosperity and general national well-being are interwoven with those of the other advanced industrialised democracies.'[127] By all definitions, those advanced industrialised democracies, including Japan, made up the West. Outside of these broader Western interests in the Third World, the report identified Australian specific interests as well. It noted that 'as a result of deference to Third World sensitivities' changes had occurred in some of the 'values and standards that Australia subscribes to in international relations.'[128] Australian adherence to racialist immigration policy and support for South Africa's membership in the Commonwealth of Nations were both given as examples of policies that had been closely held by an Australian government less than 20 years earlier, and now seemed 'anachronistic and needlessly offensive.'[129] The report concurred that 'these changes in national attitudes had been for the good', but warned of other Third World pressures on Australian values that were 'less benign.'[130] Human rights violations and the silencing of media were two challenges to Western values that the Committee felt Australia should be wary of compromising on. Australia's security lay generally, although not totally, with the security of other Western nations, and Australian national values that needed to be defended from Third World pressure were those shared by other Western nations.

Being aware of the Third World's potential to influence Australian national values, the Committee advocated that Australia get on the front foot and establish its post-colonial and humanitarian credentials. This posture would have multiple benefits. Firstly, on the issue of accepting Indo-Chinese refugees, a response generously disproportionate on a per-capita basis, would demonstrate to its neighbours a willingness when it came to fulfilling its 'responsibilities as a member of the region.'[131] Pursuing the ideal in which the Australian government, 'alone', was the

[126] Ibid. p. 104.
[127] Ibid. p. 104.
[128] Ibid. p. 105.
[129] Ibid. p. 106.
[130] Ibid. p. 106.
[131] Ibid. p. 115.

sole determinant of who was admitted to Australia, the government needed to 'live up to the standards' to which it had 'committed itself to internationally and avoid repetition of the past offence' caused to 'Asian neighbours and other Third World countries.'[132] The legacy of Australia's racially discriminatory immigration policy was a sharp stone in the sandal for any leader attempting to resist future pressure to take on more migrants in a situation foreseeable to the Committee where Asia became unsustainably over-populated.[133] Australia needed to be seen to be making sacrifices on immigration in order to make redress for this thorny past. Banking goodwill in this way could give it better ground to stand on when future international pressure demanded it make compromises that Australia found intolerable. The Committee treated mass migration as a sensitive issue and although it was not articulated in the language of the 'yellow peril', the dangers of 'overpopulated parts of Asia' remained ever present.[134]

Mitigating international pressure and retaining what was seen as a sustainable level of immigration were the significant drivers behind more 'liberal' immigration policies, but Asian migration was seen to have some positive aspects too. It displayed 'harmony' between immigration and foreign policies, showing the region that Australia was not a colonial or racist nation.[135] Asian applicants for migration were also seen to be incredibly good candidates because of their high 'occupational skills, initiative adaptability and financial assets.'[136]

Yet given this rosier side to immigration, the committee always had an eye to potential problems that would stem from the tensions between Australia's racialist past and its enduring Asia-Pacific geography. Settling large numbers of Indo-Chinese refugees was likely to 'overlap with a sharp acceleration in white emigration from Southern Rhodesia.'[137] Such an overlap may make it easy to make comparisons between Australia's responsiveness to non-European refugees from the region and white refugees from elsewhere. It was not that the Committee suggested or even foresaw that these two groups should be treated differently, but that they were so sensitive to racial issues because of the moral power and influence that the Third World wielded. If Australia were to respond to 'any rapid outflow of whites' from either Southern Rhodesia or South Africa, the Committee argued that it was 'highly desirable' that this be done as a part of some 'widely based

[132] Ibid. p. 145.
[133] Ibid. p. 145.
[134] Ibid. p. 145.
[135] Ibid. p. 145.
[136] Ibid. p. 145.
[137] Ibid. p. 148.

international resettlement arrangement'. It was not that Australia did not want these migrants, but wanted to avoid the suggestion that it was happier accepting white migrants over Asian ones.[138]

The report presented Australia as a Western nation ideologically, racially and culturally, with a significant stake in the Cold War conflict. The Third World was presented as ideologically different to the West, and because of its historical grievances based on colonialism were more likely to be antagonistic to the West. In Australia's specific regional context, ideology, identity and culture sat in tension with its geographic neighbours. Its history as a nation that had defended racialist policies made it vulnerable to the rhetorical power that Third World entreaties could and had brought to bear in influencing changes in Australian national values. These were the problems that the Committee had in mind when they were making policy recommendations for how Australia should navigate this quagmire.[139] What, then, did they recommend?

In relation to the West, the Committee argued that it was in Australia's interest that 'the West's influence and standing in the Third World should be strong.'[140] On its suggestions for relating to the Communist Second World, the Committee also reaffirmed its concern that the Second and Third World had natural affinities in a shared 'opposition to the status quo.'[141] It warned against linking Second and Third World issues together, and against leaving Third World countries 'with no option but to turn to the Soviet Union for support.'[142] Again, the recommendation that Australia determine its own interests with a sober mind was followed by repetitions of Cold War suspicions.

On the Third World More specifically, the Committee made recommendations tailored to preventing the Third World from using its numerical advantage to force Australia into making unwanted policy adjustments, retaining Australia's Western identity, and reducing its exposure to as little Third World criticism as possible. As they had done with Australia and the West, the Committee recognised that the Third World was too diverse a group for one foreign policy to provide adequate coverage of or nuance between competing views. Because the Third World's 'significant ideological content' was shared between members and member nations showed a propensity to 'emphasise linkages' between themselves, treating problems as nationally discrete was also an inadequate approach.[143] The Third World would have to be treated as a whole. For Australia, this meant striving 'to behave in a way consistent with the standards and values we

[138] Ibid. p. 184.
[139] Ibid. p. 177.
[140] Ibid. p. 180.
[141] Ibid. p. 178.
[142] Ibid. p. 179.
[143] Ibid. p. 178.

profess', both as a way of evading the criticism of hypocrisy, but also to prevent 'Third World opinion to become the main determinant' of Australian policy.[144] The Third World had demonstrated a rhetorical and moral power in exploiting 'discrepancies between proclaimed values and practice', and the Committee was wary of how this could be used against Australia.[145] The Committee also warned against losing sight of Australia's Western identity. Australia 'should not attempt to assume the general role of a 'bridge' between the Third World and the West' as this ignored the fact that its 'relationships with the Third World and the West' were not symmetrical – 'we want good relations with the former, but we are part of the latter.'[146] When the inevitable friction between Australia and a Third World state did occur, the Committee suggested to attempt to prevent the issue being linked with general questions of Third World concern, and more broadly, to ensure that Australia was not exposed on these general Third World qualms more than other important interests required it to be.[147]

The report in essence was an attempt to lay conceptual foundations in the strategic imagination for Australia to adjust to the state of post-colonial politics in its region and the world. The prism through which this was understood when the report was written, the overarching Cold War conflict, greatly curtailed any potential that such a report had to open up anything new for Australia's regional picture. For all the analysis of the Third World's ideological topography, its ultimate conclusions were little more than an exercise of relegating them to the 'non-aligned' grouping. Some adjustments did need to be made, but they had to balance Cold War considerations as a matter of priority. Despite Harries' criticism of 'image building policies' under Whitlam, the Third World Report contained some similar suggestions in order to reduce Australian liability at being politically manipulated by the Third World in light of its history of racial policies. Australian racial difference from its region had not been an acceptable way to speak of nationhood for some time, but the Third World report managed to articulate a similar sense of uniqueness and isolation in the region through the moniker of being 'Western'.

Reception

The report elicited many responses. Perhaps the most surprising was one contained within the text of the report itself. One former officer from the Australian Embassy in Washington, now

144 Ibid. p. 178.
145 Ibid. p. 178.
146 Ibid. p. 179.
147 Ibid. p. 181.

retired, took particular issue with one of the central assertions of the Report that had stated that Australia was a 'Western Country'.[148] J. T. Smith, by his own testimony, held this minority view in the Committee, and regarded the 'Western' characterisation to be denying an essential Australianness as a basis for foreign policy. Australian Foreign Policy, according to Smith, had only just shaken off the 'British tag', and now had the opportunity to emphasise an Australian distinctiveness in line with its developing multi-cultural society.[149] Claiming a Western identity would, according to Smith, only confuse Australia's regional neighbours and invite them to view Australia in the same way as they viewed ex-colonial European powers. Clearly this would be counterproductive. At the core of Smith's view was a quasi-radical nationalist view. Australians were not colonisers themselves but colonial subjects that had fought for the past '30 years' to differentiate themselves from British foreign policy.[150]

Virtually no academic criticism concurred with Smith on this issue. J. D. B. Miller, a senior figure in the Department of International Relations at the Australian National University, called Smith's note, 'empty headed.' He did, however, also have criticism for the report because of its apparent failure in dealing with the history of how Western nations had approached the Third World.[151] Similarly, Peter King and Martin Indyk agreed wholeheartedly that Australia was Western 'in civilisation and culture', and with the report's advice on differentiating Australian interests from Western ones.[152] Their specific problem with the report was that did not focus enough on Australian specific interests but chose instead to outline general Western interests.[153]

The majority of other academic reviewers took no issue with this characterisation of Australia as Western for reasons of history, civilisation, and culture. Criticism of the report split along two other lines. These were either that the economic section of the report contained a misleading free-market bias, or that the report had misconstrued the dynamic between nations that decolonisation had introduced into global politics. On the former, Stuart Harris found a plethora of issues with the report's interpretation of global markets and trade.[154] Also on the economic level was King

[148] J. T. Smith, 'Dissenting View from Mr J. T. Smith', in *Australia and the Third World: Report of the Committee on Australia's Relations with the Third World, April 1979.*, Parliamentary Paper; No.269/1979. (Canberra: GovtPr, 1979). p. 191. It was the Deputy Leader of the Opposition Lionel Bowen who provided background information on Smith's credentials. 31. Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 18 September 1979. p. 1191.
[149] Smith, 'Dissenting View from Mr J. T. Smith'. p. 191.
[150] Ibid. p. 191.
[151] J. D. B. Miller, Harold Crouch, and Stuart Harris, 'Australia and the Third World: A Review Symposium on the Owen Harries Committee Report', *Australian Outlook* 34, no. 1 (1 April 1980): https://doi.org/10.1080/10357718008444697. p. 101.
[152] Peter King and Martin Indyk, 'Australia's Relations with the Third World: A Review of the Harries Report', *Current Affairs Bulletin.* 56, no. 12 (1980): 4–23. p. 19.
[153] Ibid. p. 20.
[154] Miller, Crouch, and Harris, 'Australia and the Third World'. pp. 106-109.

and Indyk's take on the tensions between identity and geography in Australian foreign policy whereby Australia's dependence on 'resource exports and technology and capital imports' gave it more in common with members of the Third World than with the West.[155] On the report's interpretation of relations between decolonised states and their historic colonisers, Preson King, Professor of Political Science at the University of New South Wales, argued that the report did not concede enough ground to the claims of Third World nations on the West.[156] Harold Crouch put it similarly. The report was right to question the neo-colonialism thesis, that all Third World economic problems stemmed from an imbalance between ex-colonisers and ex-colonies in the global economic system, but should not have dismissed it entirely. It may well be, according to Crouch, that the net movement of capital was away from the Third World and to the West.[157]

Deputy Leader of the Opposition Lionel Bowen concurred with Smith's objection to Australia's 'Western' characterisation. The report moved with uncertainty, according to Bowen, between 'talking about the need for new approaches on the basis of national interest' and 'old Cold War concepts.'[158] Worst of all was the report's 'failure to engage adequately with the real political and human problems' in dealing with ASEAN and detailed analysis on South East Asia more generally.[159] His response received little attention from the Government, however, and the report was not debated any further.

The Fraser Government wasted no time in putting the recommendations of the report to use. The upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting set for the first seven days of August in Lusaka, Zambia, would involve considerable interaction with Third World leaders. Cabinet wished that certain aspects of the report be reiterated to the Australian delegation. Broadly, Cabinet bid the delegation heed the report's emphasis on Australia's status as a 'Western Country' and resolve the inherent tensions between this identity and its Southern geography. Australia was merely 'Western with a difference' and not 'a bridge' between the Third World and the West, nor an 'honorary member' of the Third World.[160]

The comparison between the lead up to this Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting and the fallout of one less that 20 years' earlier bears mentioning. Prime Minister Robert Menzies had notoriously taken issue with the increasing power of the Afro-Asian bloc in the

155 King and Indyk, 'Australia's Relations with the Third World: A Review of the Harries Report'. p. 19.
156 Preston King, 'On Developing an Interest in the Right Policy', *Quadrant* 24, no. 8 (1980). pp. 62-63.
157 Miller, Crouch, and Harris, 'Australia and the Third World'. p. 103.
158 31. Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 18 September 1979. p. 1191.
159 Ibid. p. 1191, 1193.
160 'Submission No 3355: Report of the Committee on Australia's Relations with the Third World - CHOGM Aspects - Decision No 9323', 13 July 1979, A12909, 3355, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=30488434. Annex A, p. 4.

Commonwealth in 1961. He and the other leaders of white Commonwealth nations, with the exception of Canada, had unsuccessfully defended South Africa's membership in the Commonwealth. British concession to South Africa's ejection had lead the Australian High Commissioner to wonder whether the 'sooty faces on the statues round the quadrangle' of Lancaster House, where the meeting was taking place, were an 'omen' of where British allegiances now lay.[161] Prime Minister Menzies had been alarmed and personally affronted that when British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan had taken leave of the meeting and offered Indian Prime Minister Nehru the Chair in his absence.[162] It had seemed obvious to Menzies up until this point that the Commonwealth was primarily an organ of racial British influence that could openly accept racialist domestic policies.

Twenty years later however, the permanent heads of government departments suggested to Cabinet that the focus of attention at the 1979 meeting would be on white minority states in southern Africa, and that the Australian delegation would face two competing imperatives, the need to unequivocally denounce racialist policies, and the need to limit Soviet influence in the region.[163] White regimes in southern Africa had long been staunch anti-Communists. The Permanent Heads Committee foresaw future calls for sanctions against South Africa to be an 'increasingly contentious issue between the Third World (i.e. Black Africa) and the West.'[164] It was both a reminder of white colonisation, one that the West wished it could expunge, as well as an anti-Soviet administration situated in a location with a high degree of geo-strategic importance in the Cold War. The role of the Commonwealth itself had changed from something that provided an affirmation of Australian Britishness as the core of its outlook in foreign relations, to an organ in which Australia was required to carefully mediate between the demands of the Third World and the strategic imperatives of the West. Underpinning this difference in outlook was the shift between a colonial to a post-colonial strategic imagination. Australia had gone from viewing the world as a nation self-assured in its racial and cultural moorings, and these natural connections with the British Empire, to a state where political ideology dictated its place in the world.

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[161] J. Chadwick, 'Note from Chadwick to Clutterbuck', 25 May 1961, DO 161/ 161, The National Archives. p. 1.
[162] Ibid. p. 1.
[163] 'Submission No 3355'. Annex A, p. 1.
[164] Ibid. Annex A, p. 1.

The only stable democratic, liberal, Western society in the Southern hemisphere.

For Prime Minister Fraser, like Harries, the Cold War and the Third World were intimately linked, and like his cautious forecasts on détente in his early days in office, the Third World was an international challenge of the time that required American leadership. Fraser's speech to The University of South Carolina, Columbia in mid-1981 reveals as much. The challenge of the Third World to Australia lay in its status as a Western nation, with its geography ascribing a particular relevance. This was Fraser's strategic imagination. Apart from New Zealand, Australia was:

> 'the only stable democratic, liberal, Western society in the Southern hemisphere. While we are thoroughly Western in our values and institutions, all our neighbours are Third World countries.'[165]

These Third World countries belonged to 'the South', while Australia 'by almost every test except geography' was a part of 'the North.'[166]

The conceptual hegemony of Cold War confrontation in the Fraser Government's strategic imagination, entrenched by the myth of Munich and further articulated in the Third World report, was unavoidable regardless of how one viewed the legitimacy of Third World claims. While Harries' and the Committee's thoughts on the Third World were often cautious warnings about how to navigate what they saw as the challenges the Third World posed to Australia and the West, Fraser was far more sympathetic to what he saw as genuine aspirations of the Third World. Both agreed that the Third World was formed amid decolonisation, that its particular ideology was central to its claims, that its current state of economic poverty and aspirations as a central tenant of this ideology, and that it was of strategic significance in the Cold War.[167]

One significant point of difference between the two, however, was that while Harries' approach was to neuter the more radical elements of the Third World through evasion or obstruction, Fraser wanted America to lead the West in being more accommodating to Third World requests. Yet Cold War conceptual hegemony on the strategic imagination even had its influence here. The Third World should be regarded sympathetically and given a degree of latitude in order to deny the Soviet Union another weapon to wield against the West. 'The West must ensure', Fraser

[165] Malcolm Fraser, 'Speech to University of South Carolina Columbia', 8 July 1981, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00005616.pdf. p. 1.
[166] Ibid. p. 1.
[167] Ibid. p. 4, 7, 8, 11.

argued, that the Third World's last resort for teachers, technologies, capital and advisors, '[wa]s not the Soviet Union.'[168]

On this point, it was not the myth of Munich that the leader of the West needed to be remined of, but the American revolution – a lesson on the difference between legitimate and illegitimate national self-assertion on the world stage. The ancestors of his American audience, afterall, had once had a dispute with their British rulers. This was 'not without relevance to the contemporary situation' between the West and the South, Fraser claimed. Quoting Edmund Burke, he noted:

> 'It is not whether you have the right to render your people miserable, but whether it is in your interest to make them happy. It is not what a lawyer tells me I may do; but what humanity, reason and justice tell me I should do. Is a political act the worse for being a generous one?'[169]

This, according to Fraser, was how the West under American leadership, should regard the Third World. Yet, as has been shown, the strategic imperatives under which the was afforded a degree of urgency were dictated by the Cold War.

The *Australia and the Third World* report was a clear sign of the shift from colonial to post-colonial in how Australian foreign and defence policymakers thought about their countries' place in the world. Building on Whitlam's achievements, Fraser had brought a degree of bipartisanship to important tenets of the strategic imagination such as the recognition of China and the development of a self-reliance defence capability. In stark contrast with his predecessor, his hard-line stance on the nature of détente and Cold War ideological rivalry, however, centred Australia's Western orientation in the strategic imagination. Fraser's emphasis on a tripartite configuration of the Cold War as the prevailing international geo-political structure was the lens through which Australian approaches to the region were calibrated. Despite the differences between Harries and Fraser on the nature of Third World aspiration, both saw Australia as an ideological castaway of the West caught between the Indian and Pacific oceans.

[168] Ibid. p. 10.
[169] Ibid. p. 12.

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'International Economics and International Strategy', 1983-1987.[1]

In mid-1985, the *New York Times'* Seymour Topping undertook a three week, '7,400-mile circuit', of the Australian continent, writing an article reflecting on Australia's place in its region in the context of the Cold War.[2] In his youth, Topping had served as an American officer in the Pacific during the Second World War. After the cessation of hostilities, he took up a career in journalism, becoming a foreign correspondent in Moscow and South East Asia, foreign editor, and then managing editor of the *New York Times*. His long form article in the *New York Times* Magazine, 'Being Australia', drew on interviews conducted during his trip. He made a point to reveal to his American audience how much their security depended 'on ties to that distant southwest Pacific nation' due to surveillance and communication capabilities provided for by joint-facilities such as Pine Gap and North-West Cape.[3]

Among those that he spoke to in Australia were some who still looked northward to Asia in fear – worried about the size of Australia's defence force in relation to the size of the continent. For Topping, rural Australia was where this was most clearly articulated. US defence facilities in Australia occupied remote locations and the sparse Australian population away from its major cities displayed a general conservatism and un-easiness at which Australia was moving away from its 'European base' through Asian migration. One farmer had summed it up this way:

> 'I would say that, almost to a man, rural Australia favours bases like Pine Gap because we believe very firmly that we need to be doing our share, so America will look out after us. Our defence [sic] capacity is very limited. We live in a sea of Asians and our huge country is potentially their breadbasket. Without the United States defending us, I think we would be in very bad shape.'[4]

The Hawke Government would have been the last to express their outlook in such stark racial terms, but it did have to deal with many of these issues during the course of its time in office. In the decade of the 1980s, Prime Minister Bob Hawke's strategic imagination had to situate

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[1] Robert James Lee Hawke, 'Speech by the Prime Minister of Australia to the Joint Meeting of the United States Congress, Washington', 23 June 1988, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00007343.pdf. p. 7.
[2] Seymour Topping, 'Being Australia', *The New York Times Magazine*, 29 September 1985, https://www.nytimes.com/1985/09/29/magazine/being-australia.html.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.

Australian interests amidst growing trade with Asia, managing relationships with the United States and Europe, husbanding Australian agriculture, developing a self-reliant capacity in defence, and maintaining joint-facilities like Pine Gap. The Prime Minister viewed Australia's proximity to Asia in terms of its benefits, and the connection with the West as foundational to its place in the world.

Within 12 months of Topping's article being published, his image of the loyal Australian farmer saw a stunning reversal. Angered by President Reagan's decision to sell four million tonnes of wheat to the Soviet Union – a big importer of Australian wheat – subsidised under the U.S.'s Export Enhancement Program, the alliance's faithful constituency in 'the outback' were stoked into a parochial revolt. The U.S. Ambassador William Lane offered little sympathy. Sitting in the embassy library, 'flanked by agricultural and economic attaches… with his back to a large wall map with markers on the bases at North-West Cape, Nurrungar and Pine Gap', he suggested that Australian farmers take measures to be more competitive in global markets.[5]

It was an ill-considered move from Lane for two reasons. The comment was taken as hypocritical, given that it was not the efficiency of American farmers that had clinched the sale to the Soviet Union, but U.S. Government subsidies. Having the joint-facilities in the background was not wise either, given that a minority of Australians thought that the potential dangers and questions of sovereignty that the facilities carried outweighed their benefits. It was in this vein that the deputy leader of the Australian Democrats, Senator Janine Haines, called somewhat dishonestly for Australia to deny American access to the facilities in retribution for the wheat sale.[6] She had long questioned whether the American joint facilities were of value to Australia's security. Whatever sympathy she may have held for the Australian wheat farmer, it was still an opportunistic gambit. There were similar murmurs even from Cabinet ministers, despite them having attesting emphatically to the importance of the bases because of their contribution to global nuclear deterrence through their ability to detect the launch of strategic weapons.

The U.S.'s wheat sale to the Soviet Union was in response to a European policy intended to improve food security but had ended up flooding global markets with cheap agricultural products. The resulting trade war was one fought entirely between the West's two largest entities. The prospect that this stoush could in some way weaken the bonds between Western countries disturbed Hawke and his Defence Minister Kim Beazley.

All of this seemed to be a far-cry from the national discussion over the previous two years. In 1984, it was not American access to Australian joint-facilities that Hawke had to defend, but a

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[5] 'Diversify, US Envoy Tells Wheat Farmers', *The Age*, 5 August 1986. p. 3.
[6] Ibid. p. 3.

marginal increase in migrants from Asia amidst fears that Australian society was changing too quickly. Following a ratcheting up of Cold War tensions caused by the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the election of a tough talking paragon of American defiance in President Ronald Reagan, Australia had played its part as a faithful member of the West. This included providing assistance to the United States in their testing of new warhead delivery vehicles, but stopped short of supporting the highly controversial 'Star Wars' orbital strategic missile defence system. Neither did Hawke echo his American counterpart's intentionally religious depiction of the Cold War as against an 'evil empire' and necessarily as a 'struggle between right and wrong and good and evil.'[7] In an attempt to galvanise party support behind what had been an internally divisive and electorally harmful issue for Labor over the past two decades, the Hawke government conducted a review of the ANZUS treaty. This was in no small part down to its perceived importance for Australian defence in the contemporary global strategic climate.

The consistent theme in Hawke's strategic imagination during his time in office – he was, after all, the last Cold War Prime Minister – was that Australia's connection to the West was to remain paramount. Unlike Fraser, Australia's geographical proximity to Asia for Hawke was not in any way antithetical to its Western orientation. His emphasis on 'enmeshment' with Asia implied a greater sense of belonging in the region than Fraser's and Harries' conception of Australia as a Western castaway in a foreign sea. It also allowed the Hawke government to contemplate changes to Australia's ethnic make-up through various patterns of Asian migration. The Fraser Government, it should be said, presided over large scale increases to this migratory demographic, but after some public outcry found itself at odds with its successor whilst in opposition. This fear of a non-military Asian invasion – a hallmark of the colonial strategic imagination – was clearly not yet bereft of all power in political debates and was still stoutly opposed by Hawke. For him, the racial character of migrants had no bearing on the public and political institutions that granted it membership with the Western world. While Hawke lead such conceptual shifts on how Australia understood its place in its region, Australia's identification with the West continued to have strong effects on foreign and defence policies. The American alliance, for one, was too important to Australia for it to continue to be a source of Labor party division. During the trade war, Hawke's exhortation to all audiences involved, the Europeans, the Americans, and the other victims, was to put in place what he perceived as Western liberal trade practices, or to drop the subsidies in a display of Western unity. Australia's defensive ties to the West rose to a new prominence in

[7] Ronald Reagan, 'Remarks at the Annual Convention of the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida', 8 March 1983, https://www.reaganfoundation.org/media/50919/remarks_annual_convention_national_association_evangelicals_030883.pdf.

Beazley's rhetoric following Hawke's appeals. Beazley articulated that his policy of Australian self-reliance dovetailed easily with Australian obligations to defend Western strategic interests, and took great pains to emphasise to the opposition that the Government strongly considered Australia to be a member of the West. This period was marked by an increasing familiarity with the region as well as an entrenching of Western identity in the imagination.

'Western Traditions' and Asian Enmeshment: Hawke's Imagination

Bob Hawke had enjoyed the status of a prominent public figure in Australia long before his election to Federal Parliament in 1980 and later election as Prime Minister in 1983. The Rhodes scholar had been President of the Australian Council of Trades Unions from 1969 to 1980, President of the Australian Labor Party from 1973 to 1978, and had presented the ABC Boyer Lectures in 1979. Hawke's perspective on Australia's place in the world, particularly on the global role of the United States of America, and the centrality of British institutions to liberal democracy in Australia, underwent some change in the decade before his election as Prime Minister. What didn't change was his continued emphasis on the importance of domestic and international 'consensus.'[8] Hawke's lifelong rhetorical refrain was to seek accord between people, and this was central to his approach to foreign and defence policy. His Boyer Lectures, delivered in 1979, for example, were fittingly titled 'The Resolution of Conflict.'[9]

Hawke regarded Australia's political institutions as an important aspect of national identity, but the importance that he attached to them having specifically British origins fluctuated. They occupied a central element in his thesis submitted for a Bachelor of Letters at Oxford University in 1955. Writing on the origins of the Australian Arbitration System, Hawke argued that the key shift from industrial action to seeking reform through parliamentary process in the 1890s was in part a result of the Australian worker being soaked in British parliamentary tradition.[10] Twenty years later, however, in putting forward his concept of 'intelligent radicalism' to the National Press Club, Hawke questioned whether Australia had, in the Westminster System, 'inherited the best way of running our affairs.'[11] Hot on the heels of the Whitlam dismissal, Hawke's main concern

[8] Curran, *The Power of Speech*. p. 189.
[9] Robert James Lee Hawke, *Bob Hawke Delivering a Series of Lectures Entitled 'The Resolution of Conflict' at the 1979 ABC Boyer Lectures*, sound recording, 1979.
[10] Curran, *The Power of Speech*. p. 160.
[11] Robert James Lee Hawke, *Bob Hawke Address at the National Press Club on 29 June 1976 [Sound Recording]*, National Press Club Luncheon Address., 1976, http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-222387911. 13:13.

was with how the executive was chosen. The alternative that he reached for was in the example of American system, looking to the 'ideal of American liberty as the best means to safeguard' Australia's democratic heritage.[12] The British endowment of democracy was clearly something that Hawke considered to be an indispensable part of Australia's political structure, but other connections, such as that with the United States, also had their importance and the potential to improve their system.

In terms of his view of Australia's role before entering into federal politics, Hawke defined himself as a 'liberal internationalist.' This, in his 1976 H V Evatt Memorial Lecture, entailed an interest in the advocacy of social justice, opposition to racism, and a desire for Australia to be a positive force in its region. His was among the cacophony of voices decrying the recent American and Australian indiscretion in Indo China and in support of détente as well. The language of zero-sum bi-polar confrontation falling from the lips of both Prime Minister Fraser and then Republican presidential candidate Ronald Reagan, was anathema to Hawke.[13] This stance would not last beyond the decade, however. The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan on Christmas Eve 1979 'appalled' Hawke, according to his biographer Blanche D'Alpuget, drawing his ire to the U.S.S.R.'s 'refusal of human rights to its citizens.'[14] This all but ensured that when he entered parliament in October of 1980 he was not as optimistic about the capacity of détente to make real progress in hastening a world more structured around international harmony and co-operation.

Impelled by the economic considerations of future Australian trade and the rapid growth being experienced in Asia at the time, Hawke embarked on an external trade policy of 'enmeshment' in Asia. According to his *Memoirs*:

> 'Enmeshment with Asia was not just words. It was a whole new mindset, a different way of thinking about the region and about ourselves… The only course was to restructure, benefiting from, the phenomenal economic growth of our region. We had to develop an export culture, with Asia firmly in our sights. We had to improve the skills and flexibility of our workforce.'[15]

While enmeshment was regularly deployed with a broader definition than this subsequent view, there was never any sense that it came at the cost of Australia's relationships or identification with the West. Speaking during his first year in office to the Australian Institute of International Affairs,

[12] Curran, *The Power of Speech*. p. 165.
[13] Ibid. p. 166.
[14] Blanche D'Alpuget, *Robert J. Hawke: A Biography* (East Melbourne: Schwartz in conjunction with Landsdowne Press, 1982). p. 394.
[15] Bob Hawke, *The Hawke Memoirs* (Port Melbourne, Vic: Heinemann Australia, 1994). p. 230.

Hawke attested that Australia's region had come to 'occupy a crucial place' in Australian perceptions of the world.[16] He had made it a focus of his government's foreign policy to be involved with the ongoing crisis in Cambodia, to pursue a 'vigorous and most fruitful' dialogue with China, and to work further within the 'absolutely vital' relationship with Japan.[17] As significant as these Australian overtures to deep engagement with the region were, it was its connections with the West that shaped the Australian outlook:

> 'An Australian view must inevitably be shaped by the fact that we are a country of Western traditions and alliances physically located in the Asia/ Pacific Region… This regional focus does nothing to gainsay the fundamental importance Australia attaches to its relations with the United States and the Western alliance more generally. We are an aligned nation and regard this fact as being basic to our international approach.'[18]

His emphasis on 'Western traditions' reflected the state of his current views on Australia's British democratic inheritance and the possibilities for their reform following an American example. 'Western' was an all-encompassing term in this respect as well as a statement of Australia's Cold War alignment. Australian political institutions were central to its identity, and it was these that constituted the basis of Hawke's Australian outlook. Regional engagement, or 'enmeshment' was not intended to alter this in any way. There was no either/or proposition being put forward here.

Sharing common political traditions with other nations often meant sharing a common perspective on international issues too, but this did not necessarily mean that Australia and another Western nation would share identical interests. Hawke opened with this point in a speech to the Foreign Policy Association New York in mid-June 1983:

> 'Americans and Australians share so much in the way of political traditions, economic institutions and economic interests that we can at times assume too easily an exact identity of values and interests.'

One area in which Australia's economic interests could differ from the United States was that Australia was more dependent on a liberal international trade, as it was more dependent on foreign investment, as well as agricultural and raw material exports. Yet Hawke was also interested in explaining how shared traditions between the two nations could result in a shared perspective on the world. Remarking on the 'shared perception of the global security threats to us all' Hawke

[16] Robert James Lee Hawke, '"An Australian View of the World", Speech by the Prime Minister to the Australian Institute of International Affairs.', 26 August 1983. p. 2-3.
[17] Ibid. p. 3.
[18] Ibid. p. 3.

spoke about both nation's desire to come to a diplomatic solution to the situation in Cambodia, and also of their awareness of the dangers stemming from Vietnam's close relationship with the Soviet Union.[19] While it was not Vietnam specifically that Hawke was concerned about, his suspicion of Soviet activity was not in keeping with his conciliatory rhetoric of détente that was characteristic of the mid-1970s. This was a reminder to the Americans present that while he may not use the same language as the President to describe their common enemy, the two nations were nonetheless both wary of any increase in its influence in Asia.

Just as 'enmeshment' in Asia was not intended to be a downgrading of Western associations by implication, the importance with which Hawke held Australia's Western associations had no bearing on his enthusiasm for 'enmeshment' in Asia. This is best shown in the controversial debate on Australian immigration in the first half of 1984.

In mid-March of 1984, the popular economic historian Geoffrey Blainey claimed that the Hawke Government's immigration policy held an apparent bias toward favouring migrants from Asia. The debate that followed aired some public disquiet on the Fraser government's policy of multi-culturalism, with a specific feeling that the introduction of Asian cultures would mean the end of Australian society as they knew it.[20] The Hawke Government's 'Asianisation' of Australia, a term Blainey popularised with clear pejorative connotations and scant evidence, apparently involved unfair official discrimination against British and European migrants.[21]

In parliament, the opposition attempted to reap electoral advantage from this by making similar accusations. The leader of the opposition Andrew Peacock along with Michael MacKellar, who had held the portfolio for Immigration and Ethnic affairs in the Fraser Government, hinted that the Hawke Government could be contributing to the erosion of Australian society, and euphemistically attributed this to the decline of whiteness in the Australian population.[22] The terms 'European nature of this nation' and 'traditional sources of migration' were employed to this end, drawing an explicit link between foundational elements of Australian democracy, Australian culture and European ethnicity.[23] The Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Stewart West, responded to these assertions early in the debate, resolutely stating that the Government adhered

[19] Robert James Lee Hawke, 'Speech by the Prime Minister to The Foreign Policy Association, New York', 16 June 1983, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/release/transcript-6137. pp. 1-2.
[20] Frank Bongiorno, *The Eighties: The Decade That Transformed Australia* (Melbourne, AUSTRALIA: Schwartz Publishing Pty. Ltd, 2015), http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/usyd/detail.action?docID=4009461. p. 54.
[21] Ibid. pp. 56-57.
[22] Both, Hawke, *The Hawke Memoirs*. p. 231., and Bongiorno, *The Eighties*. p. 59., have made this argument.
[23] 33. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 8 May 1984. p. 2017.

to 'non-discriminatory policies', that were neither 'anti-British' nor 'pro-Asian.'[24] Both West and Hawke denied that 'Asianisation' was taking place.[25]

MacKellar was not satisfied, however. He accused the Government of attacking 'those traditional institutions that characterise our society', stating:

> 'We are basically a British and European based society. We should remember that. The great institutions of this country have been handed to us because of our predominantly British tradition. This Parliament in which we stand, and in which we are proud to stand, is a British tradition.'[26]

His implication, that the Government was departing from these traditions by conducting an immigration program with an apparently anti-British and European bias, was a logical false equivalency. To say that maintaining Australia's British institutions was dependent on also maintaining Australia's racially British and European population was reminiscent of a time when such arguments were made in defence of the White Australia policy.

Mick Young, the Special Minister of State who had served previously as shadow Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, did not dispute the facts put forward by MacKellar about the British origin of Australia's parliamentary or judiciary traditions. He did make a point, however, of reminding Mackellar that the days when Australian political institutions were considered to sit in mutual complementarity with the sanctity of Australia's white population were long gone. The White Australia policy had been dismantled due to the 'bipartisan attitude back in the 1960s.'[27] It was to be disassociated from British parliamentary traditions, an artefact of the previous era that had a far better claim to represent the Australian national identity once stripped of its racist content.

Hawke, the penultimate speaker in a long and fractious debate, was most concerned about how it could cause division in the electorate and how it would be interpreted by observers abroad, particularly those in Asia itself. At this point, Australia's British traditions, or 'Western' as Hawke had labelled them a year prior, did not bare mentioning. These, after all, were foundational to his strategic imagination. If Australia was to look to its future prosperity, however, Hawke claimed that they 'must become' and 'will inevitably become more enmeshed in the region of which we are a part.' The current debate, Hawke argued, had the potential to upset this process. He continued:

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[24] Ibid. p. 1995.
[25] Ibid. pp. 2000, 2002.
[26] Ibid. pp. 2016-2017.
[27] Ibid. p. 2018.

> 'Therefore, anything that this country does which is in fact or which is seen to be in terms of prejudice against that region would be not only immoral but also manifestly against the present and future best interests of the people of this country.'[28]

Australia's Western traditions as Hawke understood them, British in origin and open to change following the American example, had no bearing on the steps Australia needed to take in order to secure its future prosperity.

The central point in this debate was a reaffirmation of one of Whitlam's achievements during his time in office. Race had been decoupled from any sense of defining Australian national identity. For Hawke, 'enmeshment' meant more than just deepening trade links in the region. It also required developing an awareness of actions that may unduly irritate its neighbours, and becoming comfortable with Asian migration to Australia at rates not seen before in Australian history. It did not include changes to political and public institutions, and any sense of Australian national identity that stemmed from those sources. This was Hawke's innovation in the strategic imagination. His ability to value deep enmeshment the region alongside a strong commitment to the West was a stark contrast to the divided world depicted in the *Australia and the Third World* report. It was a more developed view of the region than Fraser's, who was sympathetic to Third World claims, but could not get passed his understanding of Australia being fundamentally different from the other nations in the region. This was not an issue for Hawke.

ANZUS 1983-1985, 'Together Forever'

Having campaigned on conducting a review of the ANZUS treaty, the Hawke Government was only a few months in office before, in May 1983, it did just that. Written by the Defence Committee comprised of the secretaries of the Department of Defence, Foreign Affairs, and representatives from the intelligence agencies, a report was submitted to Cabinet as a basis for the approach that the Government would take to the relationship. The Hawke Government understood ANZUS to be the tough sinew at the centre of the softer connective tissue that made up Australia's linkages with the United States. It was a statement that these two nations held a shared strategic outlook based on common traditions and democratic values, and that it was of strategic value despite its notorious ambiguities. The review was an attempt to foster party consensus behind the importance of the treaty, and the alliance relationship early in Labor's return

[28] Ibid. p. 2026.

to the government benches This was particularly pressing given that Cold War tensions had significantly increased since the Whitlam government, fuelled by the example of undeniable Soviet aggression in Afghanistan, and the American electorate's presentation of the keys to the White House to a Cold Warrior *par excellence* in Reagan. The left-wing faction of the party had long held and publically aired issues with ANZUS, and Hawke could not allow these to detract from the importance with which he personally held the American connection, or unduly irritate their alliance partner when global tensions were so high.

At all stages, the review process displayed this confidence in the importance of the treaty to Australian defence, despite its lack of the kind of automatic guarantee that existed in NATO. When viewed alongside something like NATO, the treaty still provided 'some deterrent benefit.' ANZUS' comparative imprecision on the extent to which the American military would respond to a threat to Australia was an ambiguity that would also enter into any would be attacker's calculations.[29] Given the 'absence of any blanket guarantee of US intervention', the Defence Committee called for a 'degree of military self-reliance', arguing that 'Australia must look primarily to its own defence capabilities to protect itself against any threat, from within the region, to its security or its interests.'[30] This was by no means a pioneering conceptual break. Many of Australia's strategic thinkers back to Prime Minister Alfred Deakin had spoken of the necessity of a capacity to defend Australian shores unaided. Arthur Tange, less than a decade earlier, was another such of these.

This ambiguity on the kind of response to be expected from the United States under ANZUS was reinforced by the Americans at the ANZUS council meeting in July. Secretary of State George Shultz, according to the Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs Bill Hayden, made it very clear that all ANZUS guaranteed 'in the event of threat/attack on a member country was a "response" from other members.' This may have not even been a military response and included 'a range of alternatives.'[31]

In terms of what could trigger a response under the treaty, the Defence Committee understood that the articles of the treaty were regarded in the U.S. as only 'in terms of the Soviet adversary.'[32] Hayden, seeing it as largely consistent with President Nixon's 1969 'Guam' Doctrine, put this view

[29] 'Cabinet Submission 170 - Review of ANZUS - Decisions 588/DER and 634', 24 May 1983, A13977, 170, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=31405765. p. 2.
[30] Defence Committee, Department of Defence, 'Review of ANZUS', in, Ibid. p. 5.
[31] 'Cabinet Submission 403 - Review of ANZUS - Decision 2081', 13 September 1983, A13977, 403, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=31405984. p. 4.
[32] Defence Committee, Department of Defence, 'Review of ANZUS', in, 'Cabinet Submission 170 - Review of ANZUS - Decisions 588/DER and 634', 170. p. 4.

to the ANZUS council meeting in his presentation of the Government's review. At the meeting, however, the Americans made it clear that ANZUS obligated it to respond to any 'armed attack on any member of the alliance' so as to not give the impression that its other security agreements would be downgraded.[33] Yet the joint communique of the meeting stated that 'the ANZUS treaty does not absolve each government from its primary responsibility to provide for its own security', indicating that the Defence Committee's suggestions in this direction had been well founded.[34]

There was little practical difference between this understanding of the treaty and that put forward in the parliamentary paper on ANZUS published by the Fraser Government a year earlier. This understood ANZUS to represent a strong assurance of 'military assistance' in the event of a threat to Australia that was 'beyond the capacity of the Australian defence force to meet unaided.'[35] The 1982 Parliamentary Paper had a broader view of Australian strategic obligations, stating that the United States expected that 'Australia play a significant and, indeed, an increasing part in the defences of the Pacific and Indian Ocean areas.'[36]

Acknowledging the vagaries of what ANZUS actually promised to its signatories, the Hawke government saw that its value lay in its reflection of a 'coincidence of strategic interests between Australia and the USA.'[37] This was the basis of the treaty, a line that Cabinet took straight from the Defence Committee's review, with one omission. The Defence Committee had stated explicitly that ANZUS reflected a 'substantial and continuing coincidence of strategic interests against expansion by the USSR.'[38] Cabinet was happy to state that the US-Australian joint facilities played a specific role in the U.S. nuclear deterrence of the USSR, and that the benefits of this outweighed any associated risks of hosting them. But it did not state that the ANZUS treaty itself was to prevent USSR expansion.[39]

This was also an adjustment from the language of the Fraser Government's 1982 ANZUS review that had described the treaty as an 'important part of the web of alliances and treaty arrangements which constitute the Western Alliance.'[40] The closest the Hawke Government's review got to anything like this was in the joint communique following the ANZUS council meeting, which stated that it was 'firmly based on the partners' common traditions and concern to

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[33] 'Cabinet Submission 403 - Review of ANZUS - Decision 2081'. p. 5.
[34] Ibid. p. 23.
[35] Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, *The ANZUS Alliance: Australian-United States' Relations*, Parliamentary Paper. The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia 318 (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1982). p. 43.
[36] Ibid. p. 75.
[37] 'Cabinet Submission 170 - Review of ANZUS - Decisions 588/DER and 634'.
[38] Defence Committee, Department of Defence, 'Review of ANZUS', in, Ibid. p. 1.
[39] Ibid. p. 2.
[40] Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, *The ANZUS Alliance*. p. 29.

protect concern to protect democratic values.'[41] It added that the promotion of 'regional and global development and stability have also served the cause of mutual security' had occurred in that order.[42] Not connecting ANZUS with the entirety of the Western alliance reflected Hawke's more nuanced view of the global ideological fault lines than the Fraser government's tripartite framework. The alliance and the Australia's Western connections were irrefutably important to Hawke, but as he sought enmeshment in Asia, he was hardly going to then speak of ANZUS as one pillar of the exclusive Western strategic community.

Hawke would champion the American connection whilst in office. Hugh White, as the *Sydney Morning Herald's* defence and foreign affairs correspondent, recalled Hawke's pledge 'a few months after taking office – that Australia and America were "together forever." White claimed that he had sought to 'exorcize the demon of Labor's alleged anti-Americanism', a ploy that apart from denying the opposition a domestic political advantage represented 'more symbolism than substance.'[43] The left-wing would not be quelled into submission, however. Cracks in the alliance threatened to appear when the Lange Government in New Zealand took their views on nuclear disarmament to the ultimate extent, and implemented a ban on visits of nuclear ships in 1985. The Americans would eventually respond by suspending their obligations to New Zealand under ANZUS. Hawke put pressure on Lange himself, a move that infuriated Labor's left-wing who held a great deal of sympathy with the Lange government's view of disarmament.[44] Another decision, to allow American aircraft to refuel in Australia as they conducted tests on a new warhead delivery vehicle, the 'MX missile', was a further outrage to the left. Supporting an American orbiting missile defence system, Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative or 'Star Wars' program, was a bridge too far, however. Facing open mutiny, Hawke withdrew Australian support for the program with the understanding of the Reagan administration.[45]

The lead up to a promised report on Australia's Defence force structure by academic Paul Dibb saw Defence Minister Kim Beazley take a largely instrumentalist view of ANZUS. Much of its benefit to Australia according to Beazley, was derived from its provision to aid an independent defence of the continent from low level threats. He would, at times, reflect on the fact that it was in Australia's and the United States' interest in maintaining a 'generally pro-Western orientation' in South East Asia and the South Pacific, and that their connection was based on a 'shared cultural

[41] 'Cabinet Submission 403 - Review of ANZUS - Decision 2081'. p. 22.
[42] Ibid. p. 23.
[43] Hugh White, 'How Bill and Bob View the World', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 January 1985. p. 13.
[44] E. M. Andrews, 'Problems in Australian Foreign Policy, January-June 1985', *Australian Journal of Politics & History* 31, no. 3 (1985): 383–96, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8497.1985.tb00124.x. p. 383.
[45] Ibid. p. 384.

heritage and political traditions.'[46] Yet this was not afforded the same centrality that Hawke had given it when he spoke of Australia's 'Western traditions'. For Beazley, the alliance at this stage was referred to in instrumental terms.

His emphasis on the immediate practical benefits of ANZUS was in keeping with arguments put forward by Labor's right wing in their defence of Australia's continued adherence to the treaty against attacks from the left. Beazley had in his academic studies before entering parliament given considerable thought to the American relationship, especially its consequences for Australian domestic politics. His Masters Thesis, written on *Post-Evatt Australian Labor Party attitudes to the United States Alliance,* focussed on the tangible benefits of the alliance and the need to be wary of overstating ideological similarities between Australia and the United States. He concluded that for a majority in the Federal Labor Party between 1960 and 1972, ANZUS was considered to be 'of value' to Australia while also posing a significant risk to party unity. Battered by divisions and poor party discipline on foreign affairs, Coalition attacks on Labor's capacity to manage the alliance found easy purchase in public and political debate. Indeed, the best Beazley could say about A.L.P. foreign policy in the lead up to the 1972 election was that it merely 'maintained sufficient public credibility' to not further expose party division or hinder its chances with the electorate.[47]

He identified two reasons as to why ANZUS presented such a problem for the Federal A.L.P. One was that there was no broad agreement within the party on whether Australia even needed the alliance, as there were difficulties in assessing threats to 'Australian and American security in an area where politics and alignments' in South East Asia were 'volatile and fluid.' No 'line of demarcation between Western and Soviet influence' had been drawn in South-East Asia early in the Cold War as there had been in Europe. Echoing a key Labor talking point on the Vietnam War, Beazley claimed that the difference between communist 'subversion' and 'purely domestic processes', such as a nationalist assertion to self-government, were often hard to recognise. The second related to the 'ideological demands of the alliance' and the apparent need to view the West as 'defenders of freedom and democracy against forces of repression and totalitarianism.'[48] This was a hard ask for members of the left-wing faction of the party who viewed the United States 'as the epitome of capitalism and the free market economy rather than as the defender of

[46] Kim Beazley, 'Selected Speeches 1985 - 1989 by the Hon Kim C Beazley MP, Minister for Defence, February 1989 [Typed Bound Copy]', 1989 1985, M3355, 74, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=31559776. p. 13, 29.
[47] Kim Beazley, 'Post-Evatt Australian Labor Party Attitudes to the United States Alliance, Submitted to the Department of Politics for the Degree of Master of Arts' (MA, University of Western Australia, 1974). p. 339.
[48] Ibid. p. 313.

democracy.'[49] The strategy of alliance management that allowed Labor to temporarily neuter this intractable issue for the purposes of the 1972 election was thus:

> 'A tacit compromise developed which allowed the pro-alliance majority within the Party to pursue their policies with certain limitations on the costs that might be supported in the maintenance of the alliance.'[50]

It was these lessons on the alliance from Labor's last electoral victory that Beazley took into his time holding the Defence portfolio, and can explain the differences between his and Hawke's willingness to invoke Western ideological unity in reference to Australian security.

In his push to develop a self-reliant capacity for the Australian Defence Force, it was the practical benefits of the ANZUS alliance that Beazley sought to centre the debate on. Halfway through his first year as Defence Minister, Beazley explained the directions that he wanted to take Australian defence policy in to the National Press club. Differentiating himself from what he saw as the previous policy, he stated that he did not intend 'to prepare the Australian defence force to act as a part of an allied force in a distant theatre, but to meet the strategic requirements for the defence of Australia.'[51] As it was in the Government's 1983 review, Beazley understood ANZUS to be a statement of 'shared perspectives' which were the outcome of 'independently determined policy stances.'[52] It was a conception devoid of the inviolability the treaty had been afforded by previous Prime Ministers and Defence Ministers because of its cultural underpinnings, and put its value firmly in the usefulness that it rendered to an independently determined Australian strategic interest.

His approach afforded two departures from two long standing problems in Australian defensive strategy. The first was a re-locating of a debate almost as old as the treaty itself that had obsessed over the extraction of a guarantee from American administrations to defend Australia under the treaty. Following a line taken by the Government in its 1983 review, ANZUS' ambiguity on the question of how the Americans would take part in Australia's defence offered a significant enough deterrent to any would be attacker that previous debates were rendered moot.[53] The ANZUS alliance would provide a solution to an older question of Australian defensive strategy in how the relatively small Australian population could mount a defence of its vast continent. The American alliance was seen to significantly ease the acquiring of a 'technical fix' to this problem, providing

[49] Ibid. p. 315.
[50] Ibid. p. 339.
[51] Beazley, 'Selected Speeches 1985 - 1989 by the Hon Kim C Beazley MP, Minister for Defence, February 1989 [Typed Bound Copy]'. p. 24.
[52] Ibid. p. 25.
[53] Ibid. p. 25.

'weapons systems… surveillance systems… and range extenders' that would allow for an efficient defence of the 'air-sea gap' between Australia and its neighbours.[54] It was a formula most clearly explained by Beazley during his keynote address to the Australian Institute of International Affair's 'Pacific Conference' just prior to the release of the Dibb report:

> 'The demands of modern military technology are such that America's scientists and engineers are now just as important to us as their GIs. We look to the US to help us find the technology which will enable our 15 million people – only half a per cent of the world's population – to look after some 12% of the globe's surface.'[55]

Whilst noting the softer elements of the American alliance, Beazley found much in ANZUS that would benefit the hard considerations of Australian defence policy. This is not to say that Beazley did not think that a shared democratic tradition and cultural heritage with the United States was not an important consideration. The more tangible benefits did, however, receive the lion's share of emphasis, and appropriately so as well. He was, after all, embarking on a major restructure and retooling of the Australian defence force so that it could credibly meet a threat to the Australian mainland independently of allied troops.

The Dibb report, as the blueprint of this restructure, would similarly espouse these practical benefits of ANZUS. In his letter to Beazley accompanying the report on 'Australian Defence Capacities', Dibb outlined that it focussed on force structure, with the view to providing a 'credible level of defence' for Australia.[56] Australian 'self-reliance' would continue to be dependent on the ANZUS alliance, in what Dibb acknowledged was an 'apparent contradiction.'[57] The dependency was put down to being a base level calculation of practical prudence, derived from having access to the United States as the best provider of, 'intelligence, surveillance, defence science, weapons and logistic support arrangements.'[58]

In developing a strategy under which Australia could be self-reliant, Dibb posited a 'strategy of denial' – using Australia's geographical isolation, the 'air and sea gap' that encircles the island continent, and its generally inhospitable northern interior as natural defences to any would be attacker. Australia's military forces would be structured on this basis, to deny any potential enemy the ability acquire a foothold on Australian soil by defending the 'air and sea gap' whilst maintaining mobile land forces that could meet any 'lesser enemy forces' that had managed to

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[54] Ibid. p. 22.
[55] Ibid. p. 46.
[56] Paul Dibb, 'Review of Australia's Defence Capabilities: Report to the Minister for Defence' (Australian Government Publishing Service, March 1986). p. v.
[57] Ibid. p. vi.
[58] Ibid. p. vi.

land.[59] It was only ever intended to provide defence for a minor conventional attack. No country outside of the superpowers was perceived to be able to mount a major attack on Australia, and those that could were assumed to be 10 years away from doing so if even inclined, giving more time to prepare a more specific defence.

Dibb placed his report within a history of Australian defence policy that had undergone significant changes in the late 1960s, hinging on the British withdrawal 'east of Suez', Nixon's Guam doctrine, and willingness to act more independently in the region. Until this time, Australian military forces were structured in order to operate in close conjunction with allies 'well forward of the continent.' The withdrawal of the British and Nixon's announcement meant that neither Britain nor the United States could be relied on to mount a conventional defence of the Australian continent. Australia did remain under the defence of the American nuclear umbrella, however. The 'new sense of nationalism' and a recognition that Australia's 'future security was bound up with the newly independent states of South East Asia' further drove Australian defence policy to reckon with its own defence in the region on independent terms.[60] Dibb's report that espoused Australian self-reliance was positioned as a natural successor in the lineage of Australian strategic postures appropriate for a nation ready to conduct military operations deemed to be in its own interests without the need for a British or American operational and logistical backbone. The 1976 white paper had made some gestures in this direction, but was ultimately hamstrung by the continued tensions between 'traditional alliance and global considerations on the one hand and the new national and regional emphasis on the other.'[61]

The report would attempt to realise an Australian strategy oriented toward the latter. It made specific recommendations as to how Australia should regard its obligations under the American alliance and in a global conflict. The highest priority was given to independence in the defence of the Australian continent. The 'close relationship' with the United States was important for Australia's security and the development of Australia's 'defence capability', an understanding of the alliance constrained to national self-interest and development. Dibb differentiated between 'general Western interest[s]' and Australia's own defence priorities, stating that Australian forces would not be made freely available should the United States invoke the former. ANZUS was also understood to be an 'expression of our membership of the Western strategic community.'[62] Much of it cautiously approached collective contingency planning and the maintenance of

[59] Ibid. p. 5.
[60] Ibid. p. 23.
[61] Ibid. pp. 23-24.
[62] Ibid. p. 46.

interoperability with the United States as if it would become a distraction from the proper business of an Australian defence force – the defence of the continent. There was,

> 'no requirement for Australia to become involved in ANZUS contingency planning for global war. Neither this possibility, nor other remote possibilities for calls of assistance under ANZUS, should influence the structure and equipment of the ADF – apart from the need to maintain a degree of interoperability in key areas such as common communications.'[63]

It displayed a high sensitivity to potential dangers to Australian defence when American and Australian strategic priorities did not overlap.

The report further distanced Australian strategic interests from global contingency plans by limiting the importance of the Radford-Collins agreement. The agreement, made between the United States Navy and the Royal Australian Navy as a representative of the British Commonwealth, pre-dated ANZUS by six months, and was a statement of responsibility for the protection of allied shipping in naval zones in the event of global war. Australia's zone of responsibility extended more than 2000 nautical miles west of Australia into the Indian Ocean, something that Dibb saw as a 'disproportionate commitment of scarce resources to activities which may be only marginally related to our national interest and capabilities.' It was, as Dibb pointed out, not technically a 'treaty' with no 'binding rights and obligations' and the Australian Chiefs of Staff had advised Dibb that they had already ruled out making the implementation of this agreement the determinant of naval force structure.[64] Considering that the possibility of global war in 1986 was felt to be unlikely, compared to when the agreement was signed in 1951, the recommendation that the agreement not be taken as a priority in determining Australian force structure was a fair one, but his justifications were potentially politically and diplomatically unwise. Dibb had stated in effect that an existing agreement with the United States could potentially be contrary to Australia's interests in the zero-sum formulations of Australian defence capability. This apparent unilateral rejection of an agreement with the United States prior to consultation would not be echoed by Beazley.

This final point represented a divergence in Beazley's and Dibb's understanding of Australia's strategic obligations. When the report was tabled in parliament by the Defence Minister Kim Beazley, he covered similar terrain to the Dibb report but with a different objective in view. While Beazley affirmed the importance of 'self-reliance' in defence, it was devoid of Dibb's fear that

[63] Ibid. p. 47.
[64] Ibid. p. 47.

Australian and American strategic interests would not necessarily overlap. His understanding of the American alliance and Australia's connection with the West more broadly was entirely different to Dibb's. Beazley articulated a view of Australian strategic obligations that placed an emphasis on self-reliance in defence, not so that Australia could be insulated against a divergence in its interests with those of its allies, but so that it could pull its weight as a part of the Western world. It was a notable shift from his previous emphasis solely on the Alliance's practical usefulness.

Beazley agreed that there were three essential elements of Australian defence requirements, with those being self-reliance, a realistic budget, and the recognition that a minor threat to Australia could emerge quickly. But there was a subtle difference in how Beazley understood the Guam doctrine to have impacted Australian defence policy and strategy. Dibb had fairly described the Guam doctrine as 'caution about further military involvements' that had pushed Australia to develop a more independent defence capacity. Without actually mentioning the Guam doctrine but in a clear reference to it, Beazley defended the policy of self-reliance by saying that it had been 'required by our principle ally, the United States of America, since the early 1970s.'[65] Australia had been driven to self-reliance in defence in both understandings, but one was out of necessity as the result of the United States' limitations, the other was in order to adequately meet the requirements it had of its allies.

Self-reliance and the ability of a country to defend itself was thus recast by Beazley as 'the absolute minimum that any self-respecting country should contribute to an alliance.' The 1976 defence white paper had said that self-reliance, whilst according with Australian national interests and responsibilities, also allowed for a contribution to the 'alliance relationship and to the US Global effort.'[66] When pushed by the opposition that the Dibb report amounted to a 'retreat – right into a shell', Beazley responded by stating that the demarcation of Australia's area of 'direct military interest' did not 'preclude the possibility of Australian forces being sent further afield.'[67] This possibility had been dismissed by Dibb. It was important secondly, because of the indication that what had been described as the US global effort in 1976 had been enfolded into the broader category of defending 'Western interests.'

It was on the point of Australian contributions to global peace through ANZUS as a member of the Western alliance that the opposition picked up in their criticism of the Dibb report. To the

[65] 34. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 3 June 1986. p. 4420.
[66] Ibid. p. 4420.
[67] Ibid. p. 4423.

Leader of the National Party Ian Sinclair, the 'fundamental problem' with the report was that Australia was abrogating its role as a contributor to 'world peace':

> 'No longer will Australia be able to look at that wider horizon and work within the ANZUS embrace towards ensuring some reasonable peace in the world.'[68]

Sinclair mentioned other deficiencies in the report, that it had in his view failed to address an exodus of middle and senior executive officers in the defence force, and that Dibb had changed his tune quite quickly on the efficacy of planning for a major attack with a 10-year lead time, based on his comments a few years earlier. But what worried Sinclair, 'even more' was the, 'interpretation that had been applied by Mr Dibb to our responsibilities within the Western alliance.' At the prompting of an interjection from Andrew Peacock, Sinclair concluded that Dibb had 'written off' what he felt to be Australia's 'wider responsibilities' within the West.[69]

'The vital intersection of international economics and international strategy.'[70]

Dibb, however, was far from being the biggest threat to Australia's role in the Western alliance at this time. Trade concerns, sparked by American agricultural subsidies, caused some on both sides of parliament to question the comparative value of U.S. joint facilities with Australian wheat sales. It was at this time that the rhetoric of 'free trade' entered the strategic imagination as one of its imperatives. Linked with Australia's Western identity, free trade in of itself became to be seen as an important strategic objective. Hawke would reflect later that:

> 'free trade was more than good economics. It was a pre-condition to ensuring a more peaceful world. A world sunk in protectionism and economic autarky is a world much closer to war… shaping the issues and process likely to lead to a freer trading environment was integral to our wider foreign policy objectives.'[71]

Balancing these objectives, however, would prove difficult.

A memorandum from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) revealed that the United States were also unenthusiastic about the presentation of ANZUS in the Dibb report, but this was not

[68] Ibid. p. 4427.
[69] Ibid. p. 4429.
[70] Hawke, 'Speech by the Prime Minister of Australia to the Joint Meeting of the United States Congress, Washington'. p. 7.
[71] Hawke, *The Hawke Memoirs*. p. 233.

their most important consideration at the time.[72] As parliament debated how the idea of a common Western effort should determine Australia's obligations in defence, the relationship itself was put under strain by a trade war on agricultural products conducted between the European Community and the United States. Since the early 1970s, the European 'Common Agricultural Policy' (CAP) had attempted to solve the problem of food security by increasing domestic agricultural production. By 1983, the policy had worked so well that Europe soon produced large surpluses of major agricultural products with sugar and wheat reaching 144% and 125% of domestic requirements respectively. The surpluses had been subsidised for export, contributing to an 156% increase in the value of Europe's agricultural lobbyists between 1976 and 1982. The United States government responded to the protests of its powerful agricultural sector by introducing the Export Enhancement Program (EEP), an institutionalisation of export subsidies following the subsidised sale of one million tons of wheat flour to Egypt – a traditional European market – in January of 1983.[73] The first full year of the EEP was 1986.[74]

Australian farmers already hurt by European policies were understandably not pleased with the further depressive effect that the EEP would have on the price of wheat. The Australian Democrats, propelled by their general suspicion of the U.S. alliance, were among the first to link the issue of American agricultural subsidies to Australia's defence. After a significant American sale of subsidised wheat to Sri Lanka and Yemen, Australian Senator Michael Macklin urged that Australia threaten to withdraw from major defence contracts with US firms.[75]

The United States were aware of the growing disquiet in Australia around the subsidies, but were confident that there was still a way to go before a major rupture in the relationship was on the cards. The CIA, however, saw it differently, recognising that the EEP would put Hawke under pressure from Australian wheat farmers to use 'his claimed "special relationship" with the US administration to win them relief.'[76] As the U.S. Congress planned to extend the EEP to the Soviet Union and China, the CIA calculated that Australia could lose as much as $20 million in revenue for the remainder of the 1986 contract year and a further $245 million in 1986/87 due to the drop

[72] Directorate of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, 'Australia: Politics of Wheat Exports to the Soviet Union and China', 25 July 1986, https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/document/cia-rdp90t00114r000800760001-7. p. 5.
[73] Richard A. Higgott and Andrew Fenton Cooper, 'Middle Power Leadership and Coalition Building: Australia, the Cairns Group, and the Uruguay Round of Trade Negotiations', *International Organization* 44, no. 4 (1990). pp. 597-598.
[74] John C. Dorrance, *The Australian-American Alliance Today: An American Assessment of the Strategic/Security, Political and Economic Dimensions*, Working Paper / The Strategic and Defence Studies Centre 204 (Canberra: Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, 1990). p. 18.
[75] 'Action Urged on US Wheat', *Canberra Times*, 7 July 1986. p. 7.
[76] Directorate of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, 'Australia: Politics of Wheat Exports to the Soviet Union and China'. p. 1.

it would cause in global wheat prices alone. This was without considering the possibility that an inclusion of the USSR into the EEP could halve the volume of Australian wheat exports there, which was projected to result in a further loss of $105 million in revenue.[77] The memorandum reached the conclusion that if the proposal on the floor of the U.S. Senate became law it would confirm suspicions amongst farmers that Hawke was:

> 'powerless to win relief from the US government and that Australia's faithfulness to its responsibilities in the ANZUS alliance [was] meaningless to the US administration.'

According to the Memorandum, Hayden had apparently ruled out the possibility of linking Australian security with trade in upcoming talks regarding the EEP in San Francisco. The memorandum did say that other members of the Hawke government 'echoing widespread Australian sentiments' argued that the U.S.-Australian joint facilities be used as a 'bargaining chip' to prevent the Senate proposal. This may have been technically correct regarding Hayden, but the full extent of frustration in the Australian Cabinet was much greater than alluded to. If the writers of the memorandum had checked the Australian press from the day that they released the report, they would have seen that the Australian treasurer, Paul Keating, as well as Hayden, had not by any means ruled out using the joint-facilities as a lever should the Americans extend subsidies to China and the Soviet Union. Keating was reported as saying that Australia 'use whatever influence we can on the US administration, and we will.'[78] Hayden merely quoted a 'number of farmers' that he had visited in North Queensland two weeks earlier who had asked him, 'in a very hostile fashion, "why doesn't the Government use those joint-facilities as leverage?"'[79] Hawke had gone to great pains since those comments were made to hose down reactions to Keating's words in particular, with a spokesperson of the Prime Minister unequivocally refusing to use the joint-facilities in such a way, a view held by Beazley and backed up by anonymous senior government sources.[80]

The 'worst case scenario' that the Memorandum considered was that Australia would refuse to negotiate new deals for the Americans to occupy Pine Gap and North-West Cape as both were to expire within the next two years. Before this became a likely possibility, however, the United States would expect the Government to make more strident linkages between the bases and American wheat subsidies. When U.S. Embassy officials would attempt to win a 'better presentation of the ANZUS alliance' in the forthcoming white paper on its armed forces, 'to be prepared from the much-touted Dibb report of Australia's defence needs', the memorandum counselled that these

[77] Ibid. pp. 3-4.
[78] 'Wheat Deal a Threat to Region: PM', *The Age*, 25 July 1986. p. 1.
[79] 'PM-Keating Rift on US Base "Bargaining Chip"', *The Australian*, 25 July 1986. p. 1.
[80] 'Wheat Deal a Threat to Region: PM'. p. 1., and, 'PM-Keating Rift on US Base "Bargaining Chip"'. p. 1.

may not be received well by the Australians and become a forum for Australian frustration with the EEP.[81]

In early August that year President Reagan announced that four million tonnes of wheat would be sold to the Soviet Union at subsidised prices in a one-off transaction. It was an attempted compromise to those pushing for an official extension of the EEP to China and the Soviet Union. Even this limited action triggered Australian farmers to protest outside the U.S. embassy as well as the European Community delegation and call for the Australian government to apply more pressure on the United States through its defence links.

The Australian press immediately understood the domestic political dimension to Reagan's decision. Both *The Age* and *The Australian* in their reporting and editorials couched the decision as a compromise brokered by the President between the 'anguished protests from such allies as Australia and Canada, hard-nosed advice from his defence, foreign affairs and rational economic advisers' on one side, and 'plaintive cries' from 'the depressed farm states facing tough mid-term election contests' on the other.[82] The Australian claimed a week later that US Secretary of State George Schultz and Secretary of Defence Caspar Weinberger had strongly opposed the sale.[83]

Yet this awareness had no effect on diminishing Australian outrage, particularly amongst the alliance's most faithful constituents. The Grains Council of Australia called for a protest at the US embassy, the National Farmers Federation urged an Australian lobbying delegation in the U.S. to walk out of talks, the National Party called for a boycott of American primary products while the Australian Democrats repeated their call for the joint-facilities be put on the negotiating table.[84] Minister for Primary Industry John Kerin announced from the Australian delegation in the U.S. that the relationship between and Australia and its primary ally was 'going bad', and commented,

> 'when arch conservatives here (in the US) are subsidising Soviet consumers after all the hype of this administration, and when the most conservative forces in Australia are saying put the bases on the line, we have a pretty ironic situation.'[85]

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[81] Directorate of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, 'Australia: Politics of Wheat Exports to the Soviet Union and China'. p. 5

[82] Editorial, 'Let's Hope Reagan Holds the Line', *The Age*, 4 August 1986. p. 13. See also, 'US Grain Deal May Cost $400m: Kerin', *The Age*, 4 August 1986. p. 1., 'Anti-US Protests over Subsidies for Soviet Wheat Deal', *The Australian*, 4 August 1986. p. 1., and, 'Wheat Plan a "Shrewd Compromise"', *The Australian*, 4 August 1986. p. 2.

[83] 'Beazley to Warn the US on Wheat Policies', *The Australian*, 11 August 1986. p. 1.

[84] 'Anti-US Protests over Subsidies for Soviet Wheat Deal'. p. 1.

[85] Ibid. p. 1.

Kerin was the first to realise, however, that this irony would be somewhat lost amidst the bankruptcy and damage to rural communities that the sale was projected to cause.[86]

The actual impact of wheat subsidies on the Australian-American alliance was minimal, despite the claims of these protestations. However much he did not like American or European agricultural protectionism because of the damage it wrought on Australian farmers, Hawke never gave any indication that he would use co-defence arrangements to retaliate or jeopardise American access to the joint-facilities. Rather than deter Hawke or Beazley from their conception of Western interests and Australia's responsibilities in upholding them, the trade war intensified such rhetoric. ANZUS and the joint-facilities were indispensable aspects of the Western connection.

An editorial in *The Australian* displayed the calculus between Australia's concerns about its bilateral relationship with the United States and a conception of larger global groupings. It opined that the wheat deal would 'put strains on the friendship between the US and Australia', but it 'in the long term' it would have 'incalculable consequences on the conduct of the advancement of the strategic interests of democratic nations as against those of the world's oppressive, authoritarian regimes.'[87] This jeremiad may have sounded a touch hyperbolic, but it was an argument also made by Defence Minister Beazley. He refused to consider using the joint-facilities as a bargaining chip, but did stress on the 4th of August that 'Western strategic interests in Australia's region could be undermined if the US continued to pursue trade policies that weakened Australia's economic position.'[88] On the 11th, he promised that he would 'warn that US that protectionist wheat policies [were] damaging to Australia's defence capacity and the entire Western alliance.' Australia was, he claimed, an important supporter of Western security interests in South-East Asia and the South Pacific, and a 'substantial power in regional defence terms.' Any damage done to Australia's economy would have consequences on whether it could play this regional role. This was explained as not only being damaging to 'Australia's defence interests', but also to 'the Western alliance.'[89]

Western security was accompanied by the pursuit of Western ideals as an animating factor in the Australian diplomatic response to the wheat subsidies. In late August 1986, a bloc of agricultural exporting nations met in Cairns to discuss how they would push to include agricultural products under the jurisdiction of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade at the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations that were to begin the following month. Prime Minister Hawke, welcoming the representatives of the diverse set of nations that made up the 'Cairns

86 'US Grain Deal May Cost $400m: Kerin'. p. 1.
87 Editorial, 'Damaging Wheat Subsidy', *The Australian*, 4 August 1986. p. 10.
88 'Another Blow in Wheat War', *The Australian*, 5 August 1986. p. 4.
89 'Beazley to Warn the US on Wheat Policies'. p. 1.

Group', decried the 'distortion of the world agricultural production and trading system' that the Europeans had amplified to 'ludicrous proportions.' American retaliation had caused further pain to 'efficient agricultural exporting countries.'[90] The Cairns Group was a both a natural coalition stemming from a common interest and a strange amalgam of North, South, East and West in geopolitical terms.[91] Its members were Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Columbia, Fiji, Hungary, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand and Uruguay, a representation that Richard Higgot and Andrew Cooper understood to come from 'both sides of the East-West, North-South divides.'[92] What was telling was that Hawke's appeal to this group was a circuitous promotion of Western ideals. The United States had effectively passed on a subsidy to the USSR through the sale of cheap wheat, diminishing 'U.S. integrity' in its leadership of 'Western ideals of liberty – liberty in markets as in the fundamental realm of politics.'[93] That the group had a clear material interest in reducing US and EU subsidies complimented this aspect of Hawke's speech. To the geo-politically diverse Cairns Group, hurt by the actions of the greater Western powers, Hawke paradoxically argued to respond to this problem with a Western solution. The key to international co-prosperity lay in pushing for free trade as an outworking of liberty as a specifically Western value.

As the trade war wore on, Hawke took it upon himself to sound the rallying cry of the Western world. The World Economic Forum held in Davos Switzerland in early 1987 provided him with another opportunity to call on the West to turn back to the old faith in free trade and multilateral negotiations, and put an end to the trade war. The economic consensus established at the end of the Second World War, Hawke noted, had disappeared along with the U.S. leadership that it had been built on.[94] He claimed that Australia had been forced to dismantle its own protectionist policies by virtue of wanting to capitalise on being part of the rapidly growing Asia-Pacific region, and could now extol its benefits to Europe and the U.S.[95] The alternative entailed dire consequences for the global agricultural sector and to Western political unity:

[90] Robert James Lee Hawke, 'Speech by the Prime Minister to the Ministerial Meeting of Fair Traders in Agriculture, Cairns', 25 August 1986. p. 2.
[91] Higgott and Cooper, 'Middle Power Leadership and Coalition Building'. p. 590.
[92] Ibid. pp. 601-602.
[93] Hawke, 'Speech by the Prime Minister to the Ministerial Meeting of Fair Traders in Agriculture, Cairns'. p. 2.
[94] Robert James Lee Hawke, 'Speech by the Prime Minister to the EMF Symposium, Davos', 29 January 1987, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00007090.pdf. p. 3.
[95] Ibid. p. 8.

> 'The problem of protectionism goes to the heart of not just our economic well-being but of our fundamental political relationships. It contains the seeds of turmoil. As leaders we must prevent the germination of these deadly seeds.'[96]

Even though Hawke had just earlier remarked on Australia's region as being the Asia-Pacific, his country remained an unmistakable member of the 'developed democratic nations of the West and the North', that had 'provided the bedrock of our political co-operation and economic leadership' during the post-war era and was now locked in internal dispute.[97]

His speech that had called for an end to the inter-Western trade war concluded with more far ranging comments on what he saw as its threats to the Western security alliance and Australia's place within it. He had hinted in this direction from his opening, linking the 'disintegration of the global economic system' to a 'the threat to world security' as two potential casualties of the trade war.[98] Hawke was cautious to not overegg these warnings and made it clear that he did not think that trade tensions would cause 'the collapse overnight of cordial political relationships in the West.' There were 'deep historical, democratic and strategic links' preventing that. Overtime, however, he feared that festering economic tensions would 'erode Western political and security relationships to the point where they eventually lose their day-to-day vitality.'[99] It had already begun to cause problems in Australia:

> 'My country is part of the Western alliance as a matter not only of treaty obligation but of hard strategic assessment that Western strength and unity of purpose are essential.
> And yet in Australia we have had a taste of the way in which protectionism by our friends can provoke public anger and lead to the questioning of alliance connections hitherto considered almost sacrosanct.'

The 'hard strategic assessment' that he spoke of referenced the Beazley's stance, endorsed further by the Dibb report, that the American alliance was the best way to access modern military technology and protect Australia in the event of a nuclear war. Unlike Dibb, Hawke had made it clear that Australia's ties with the United States and Western Europe went far deeper than a relationship of practical expediency. These ties gave a sense of how Australia sought to fulfil its security obligations to a broader strategic purpose that was now under threat from the trade war:

[96] Ibid. p. 14.
[97] Ibid. p. 14.
[98] Ibid. p. 1.
[99] Ibid. p. 14.

> 'Our capacity to play a role in advancing the interests of the West can only be lessened if our economy is weakened by the short-sighted pursuit of protectionism our Western allies.'

It was the same comment that Beazley had made in the immediate aftermath of the U.S. sale of wheat to the Soviet Union, and served as a reminder that Australia did want to contribute to what it saw as the strategic aims of the West but could be economically hamstrung if its exports were so devalued. The relationship went even deeper than that. It was not promises of co-prosperity, nor common security interests that could explain the intimacy of the Western alliance, the connection once understood as 'sacrosanct' lay in the communion of a common Western people. In the case of the trade war:

> 'if the reaction of Australians… was[sic] anything to go by, the frustration and resentment building up among Americans, Europeans and Japanese about the trading practices of each towards the other must be truly corrosive of long term Western cohesion.'[100]

The Western alliance, according to Hawke, depended not just on common strategic aims in the Cold War defence of liberal democracy, but on the common attitudes of a Western people.

The 1987 Defence White Paper, The Defence of Australia, further reflected the Australian identification with the West and the development of this concept as providing a sense of its strategic obligations. When presenting the White Paper to Cabinet on the 23rd of February 1987, it became clear that Beazley had wanted to clear up some of the 'uninformed comment' regarding the Government's intentions for Australia's strategic posture.[101] The Dibb report had made strong recommendations that Australian self-reliance be the determinant of its defence force structure and capability, but was notably lukewarm on Australia taking part in a co-defence of Western strategic interests with its allies that may not strictly involve the defence of the Australian continent. Beazley had therefore framed the White Paper so that it considered 'the framework for defence capability development, and also the future directions of our co-operative activities with the United States and regional countries.' This was to prevent the Government from being portrayed as 'isolationist.'[102] In the same way as the Defence Minister had during his tabling of the Dibb Report in Parliament a year earlier, The Defence of Australia espoused Beazley's

[100] Ibid. p. 15.
[101] 'Cabinet Submission 4589 - Defence White Paper 1987 - The Defence of Australia - Decision 8975' (16 February 1987), A14039, 4589, National Archives of Australia, https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=31428738. p. 3.
[102] Ibid. p. 2.

predilections for self-reliance in defence as well as his strong commitment to Australia playing its role as a member of the Western community. This was not, according to Beazley, a policy of 'fortress Australia', but of self-reliance with an important focus on co-operation with allies displaying the 'common concern' held amongst the members of the 'Western strategic community' to 'promote Western interests.'[103]

In his preface to the paper, Beazley stated, 'The Australian people expect that Australia shall be able to defend itself.'[104] This was the primary goal, but it did not entail a rejection of Australia's maintenance of a strategic role as a part of the Western community. Defence self-reliance was to be understood as residing amidst Australia's 'alliances and regional association' and as allowing it to 'discharge its responsibilities' in the region.[105] 'Self-respect' in this capacity, according to the White Paper, meant 'self-reliance' in defence as a basis for contributions to an alliance.[106] Thus, self-reliance was to achieve,

> 'the four fundamental objectives of Australia's national and international defence policy. It maintains and develops our capacity for the independent defence of Australia and its interests. It promotes strategic stability and security in our region. It strengthens our ability to meet the mutual obligations we share with our chief allies, the United States and New Zealand. It enhances our ability, as a member of the Western association of nations, to contribute to strategic stability at the global level.'[107]

Without explicitly contradicting Dibb's advice that they had engaged on developing Australian defence policy, the latter two points in this statement – points that were absent from the Dibb report – were included to indicate the Government's different perspective.

Australia was not drawn into the Western alliance, according to the White Paper, due to the protections that the United States could offer from the Soviet Union. It was because it was 'part of the Western community of nations', that Australia supported the 'ability of the United States to retain an effective strategic balance with the Soviet Union.'[108] It being 'Western' was a determinant of how it was aligned globally. This had been portrayed by the opposition as a dismissal of the West's strategic interests, as a casting downward of Australian eyes from the wider horizon in a bid for insularity, and as a retreat from the 'ANZUS embrace'. The White Paper affirmed that

[103] Ibid. p. 3.
[104] Department of Defence, 'The Defence of Australia 1987: Presented to Parliament by the Minister for Defence the Honourable Kim C. Beazley, M.P.' (Australian Government Publishing Service, March 1987), http://www.defence.gov.au/Publications/wpaper1987.pdf. p. vii.
[105] Ibid. p. vii
[106] Ibid. p. 3.
[107] Ibid. p. xi.
[108] Ibid. p. 3.

providing assistance to allies would not be a force structure requirement, but remarked that the proposed force structure allowed for 'substantial capabilities for operations further afield.' In the event of a global conflict, priority would be given to meeting the situation in Australia's 'immediate region', but this, interestingly, included the Radford-Collins Agreement and also signalled a willingness to 'consider contributions further afield.'[109] This careful explanation of self-reliance as a basis for Australia playing its part in the 'enhancement of the general Western security position' was one of the key differences between the 1987 Defence White Paper and the Dibb Report.[110]

In order to make this abundantly clear to those sitting opposite, Beazley's tabling speech to Parliament lead with a statement of Australia's membership in the Western community of nations, and then spoke about the Government's pursuit of defensive self-reliance. Australia's defence situation was 'unique', and required 'unique solutions.'[111] It was only at this point that he entered into a discussion about the content of the White Paper and the development of self-reliant capabilities as this solution. This reinforced the above point made in the White Paper, that Australia's Western orientation came before any questions of strategy, and that an Australian defensive posture needed to find some accord between self-reliance and the defence of Western strategic interests. The title of the White Paper, The Defence of Australia, could have easily been lengthened to include the subtitle, 'in keeping with strategic obligations as a part of the Western World.'

Of the trade war's participants and victims, the only member that Hawke was yet to bring his message to were the Americans. His opportunity to do so came in front of a joint sitting of the United States Congress on the 23rd of June 1988. He begun by commenting on the importance of common values and personal links to the strength of the U.S.-Australian connection. It was the 'guiding precept' of 'democracy' that set them apart from 'most nations', the 'common values' of 'individual liberty, equality before the law and the supremacy of people over the State' which formed 'the enduring basis' of the relationship.[112] The success of the democratic system, Hawke argued, spoke for itself. It alone had delivered to its citizens 'a decent quality of life and a high standard of living', and for that reason he implored that into the next century, 'the Western democracies can lead with self-confidence and have no need of self-doubt.'[113] As he had alluded to in his speech at Davos, the connection at its deepest level was not just one between two states,

[109] Ibid. p. 3.
[110] Ibid. p. 4.
[111] 34. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 19 March 1987. p. 1091.
[112] Hawke, 'Speech by the Prime Minister of Australia to the Joint Meeting of the United States Congress, Washington'. pp. 1-2.
[113] Ibid. p. 1.

but one between two peoples. The 'ease of contact, a readiness of trust and an enjoyment of each other's company' between 'Australians and Americans' provided the connection with a 'special warmth.'[114]

It was from this basis that Hawke made his appeal to the United States to cease their agricultural subsidies, stitching together, as he did so, the threads of Western unity, strategy, and economic leadership that the trade war was threatening to tear asunder. Australia stood as an ally to the United States, not dependent, but carrying its own weight in the partnership. There was 'intimate co-operation… in joint exercises, intelligence exchange, defence science and technology, communications and logistics, and training' substantiated by visiting American ships and aircraft and significant Australian purchases of American military equipment. The joint-facilities hosted by Australia were invaluable in maintaining 'the central strategic balance between the United States and the Soviet Union.' It was a clear example of the way in which a global geo-political focus had not been eclipsed by Australian self-reliance in defence, and that for Hawke the two were cordially resonant.[115] Despite this, Australia had been 'caught in the crossfire of a destructive and counterproductive transatlantic trade war' in which its share of the world wheat market had 'slumped from 20 per cent to 12 per cent.'[116] Australians should therefore not be lead to believe, Hawke argued, 'that while we are first class allies, we are, in trade, second class friends.' In an echo of his statement at Davos, festering differences over trade within the relationship threatened to 'erode' both friendship and alliance.[117] It was foolish, given that some had predicted Western decline, to behave in ways that may have contributed to it, and to Hawke,

> 'Nowhere is this more clear than at the vital intersection of international economics and international strategy. The cost of failure to resolve present economic measurable in the accentuation of destructive differences within the Western alliance.'[118]

In his speech to the Cairns group, it was the United States that had abrogated its leadership of the West in discounting a sale of wheat to the Soviet Union, but he had clearly softened this for his American audience. He focussed instead on the

[114] Ibid. p. 2.
[115] Ibid. p. 3.
[116] Ibid. p. 4.
[117] Ibid. p. 5.
[118] Ibid. p. 7.

> 'unique capability of the United States for leadership whether in managing the pivotal relationship with the Soviet Union, maintaining the health of the Western alliance … or resolving international economic problems.'[119]

And while the United States was unsurpassed in this capacity, it would not be acting alone, but supported by an Australia,

> 'independent to be sure, forthright in defence of our own interests certainly, but also firmly supportive and deeply proud of our rich and enduring relationship.'[120]

These were impassioned – and no doubt calculated – words from a seasoned negotiator, but they were also consistently articulated to the geopolitically diverse Cairns Group, to the European dominated World Economic Forum in Davos, and now to a joint sitting of the United States Congress. Without this consistency to Hawke's pleas touching on; the deep strategic and interpersonal links between Western nations, the importance he placed on Western unity, and the need for Western leadership of the global economic system and multi-lateral trade negotiations, may well have been written off as mere rhetorical window dressing. Australian primary producers were, after all, 'among the most efficient in the world' and stood to benefit greatly from Europe and the United States reducing their agricultural subsidies.[121] But it was something that Hawke clearly held closely. As he had said in 1983 – Australia's alignment with the West was the basic factor in its outlook.

Others, who found themselves either sporadically or wholly opposing Hawke and Beazley in the debates surrounding American subsidies or Australian defence also drew on a conception of the West as motivating their objections.

Hayden professed to not understand why the joint-facilities 'enjoyed isolation from any trade or commercial policy considerations' under Hawke.[122] His refusal to take an 'uncritical view' of United States foreign policy during his time as Minister of Foreign Affairs was despite learning to 'cautiously admire America' and what he claimed it to represent as a 'free, liberal society.'[123] Hayden felt driven in foreign policy to promote Australia's national interests, including aspects that were political, commercial, strategic, and 'additional matters of moral duty', a moral duty informed and

[119] Ibid. p. 9.
[120] Ibid. p. 10.
[121] Ibid. p. 4.
[122] Bill Hayden, *Hayden: An Autobiography* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1996). p. 384.
[123] Ibid. p. 385.

based on what he described as 'Western universalist values.'[124] Despite his opposition to American policies, he had to draw on a conception of the West in order to explain why.

The West had become an important rhetorical theme in terms of describing Australian identity and its outlook in the region and the world. This begun with Hawke's emphasis on a connection with the United States that went beyond a common strategic perspective, centred on democratic Western traditions, leading into his diplomatic pleas amidst the agricultural subsidies stoush between the US and the EU. In Defence, Beazley's explanation of Australia's development of a policy of self-reliance did not initially draw on such themes because they were far from being unanimously held in the A.L.P., and the memory of the damage that they had caused before 1972, and during the Whitlam government was still fresh. Statements that spoke of Western strategic unity did not stay far under the surface, however, and emerged when Dibb appeared to relegate this too far behind Australian strategic considerations. When domestic rumblings, stoked by the European and American agricultural subsidies, looked to threaten fundamental aspects of the alliance such as joint-defence facilities, Beazley responded by invoking the importance of keeping faithful to the West's common strategic purpose. These traditions became a concept so basic to Australian identity that even those who differed to Hawke and Beazley's policy decisions, such as the Minister for Foreign Affairs Bill Hayden, drew on it to some degree.

In terms of charting an Australian outlook during this period, the growing awareness and emphasis on deepening ties with its region was balanced with resolute and impassioned reminders from the Prime Minister and Defence Minister. Both thought of Western unity, its democratic and economic traditions, and common strategic interests to be of immense importance to Australia's strategic concerns. Certain problems with how Australia saw itself in its region had to be navigated. Driven to enmeshment with Asia in search of new markets, Hawke had to defend this move amidst the political aftershocks of a now obsolete strategic imagination and its racial precepts. In terms of developments in defence policy, the emphasis on 'self-reliance' was often balanced with articulations of Australian military obligations as a member of the Western alliance. Tensions between trade and more conventional strategic concerns like the cultivating of alliances that were important for Australia's defensive posture remained unresolved. While the United States continued to subsidise wheat sales in reaction to Europe's own interventions into agricultural trade, there would be continued friction between Australian economic interests and its interests as part of the Western alliance.

[124] Ibid. p. 386.

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Australia, Asia, and the New World Order, 1989-1995

There was no shortage of superlatives, historical or otherwise, when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1989. 'It could be argued' mused Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating five years later, 'that the end of the Cold War has changed the world more profoundly than any other single event since the Napoleonic Wars.'[1] Any claims the Soviet project had of rivalling Western liberal capitalism now lay buried beneath its own rubble. Along with it lay the detritus of the old East/ West strategic bipolarity and any pretence of a nuclear arms race.[2] With no Manichean enemy against which to direct its efforts, how would the Western strategic community sustain itself after the Cold War? Had the West in the wake of the Cold War, as Owen Harries put it in 1993, 'lost much of its definition and raison d'etre', and what effect would this have on Australia?[3]

While it did spell the end for the presence of East/West confrontation and great-power rivalry in Australian strategic calculations, the West, and the United States more specifically, continued to feature significantly in the Australian outlook. Keating's post-Cold War plan was for an increase in Australia's economic and strategic integration with its region. This at least was clear to James Cotton and John Ravenhill, who judged that in the period between 1991 and 1995, 'engagement with Asia was the dominant theme.'[4] Yet this plan was predicated on the capacity of Australia's great and powerful ally, the United States of America, to assist in shaping the region in line with Australian interests.

Keating's 'engagement' was built on Hawke's enmeshment with Asia, and took on a newfound urgency following the end of the Cold War. Keating had been struck by the 'sheer malleability of the world in the early 1990s' as it was freed from the restrictive shackles of superpower bi-polarity.[5] Even though Keating did not come to high office with much experience in foreign affairs or in thinking about Australia's place in the world, here was an environment that he felt he could shape in order to secure Australia's place within its geographic neighbourhood. The APEC economic

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[1] Paul Keating, 'Australia and Asia (2), 26th October 1994', in *Advancing Australia: The Speeches of Paul Keating, Prime Minister* (Sydney, N.S.W: Big Picture Publications, 1995). p. 215.
[2] David Goldsworthy, 'An Overview', in *Seeking Asian Engagement: Australia in World Affairs, 1991-1995*, ed. James Cotton and John Ravenhill (Melbourne: Oxford University Press in association with The Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1997). p. 17.
[3] Owen Harries, 'The Collapse of "the West."', *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 4 (1993). p. 53.
[4] James Cotton and John Ravenhill, eds., *Seeking Asian Engagement: Australia in World Affairs, 1991-1995* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press in association with The Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1997). p. 15.
[5] Paul Keating, *Engagement: Australia Faces the Asia-Pacific.* (Sydney: Macmillan, 2000). p. 24.

dialogue, set in motion by Hawke himself, had given Keating an idea of what the Asia-Pacific community could be, and that it could provide Australia with both an economic and strategic home. Keating was the Australian treasurer who had opened up the Australian economy to the world, floating the Australian dollar, reducing protectionist policies, and permitting the presence of international banks. APEC would be the vehicle through which Keating could open up the region's economy and secure the future of Australian trade. Its strategic benefit would derive from its status as an order of mutual prosperity, reducing the incentive for any one nation to disrupt such an order, and providing the others with a clear stake in maintaining peace.

Another development during the final years of the Hawke government provided Keating with the means by which Australia could achieve this goal. The Gulf War, according to Keating, had 'annealed the US position of undisputed international leadership.'[6] The global pre-eminence of the United States and the inauguration of a so called 'new world order' provided Australia and the wider Western Alliance with a new sense of confidence in international affairs. The Australian contribution of a rotation of naval frigates and supply ships as part of the global response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was one of the first steps in this direction. Keating and his Minister of Foreign Affairs Gareth Evans understood the importance of the American connection in terms of the possibilities it provided in influencing the development of multi-lateral diplomatic, economic, and strategic links with Australia's neighbours. Despite the West's fair share of internal divisions on issues of trade and security, seen in the continued crisis of European and American agricultural subsidies and impotence during the early stages of the conflict in former Yugoslavia, Keating and Evans maintained that the U.S. was central to Australia's future in the region.

Both Keating and Evans had different conceptions of what engagement with Asia would look like, but both assumed that Asia would change in some way to accommodate its culturally alien neighbour. For Evans, this was through the concept of 'convergence', and the gradual acceptance of liberal democratic ideals in Asia. For Keating, it would be in trade liberalisation and the strategic acceptance of Australia in the region. His negotiation of a security agreement with Indonesia is the best example of this. It was an agreement that sought to ease longstanding Australian strategic anxieties, but also provided support to an Asia-Pacific community that included nations with Asian and Western cultural and political backgrounds. Keating was often wrongly accused of trying to make Australia into an 'Asian' country. These accusations were ill-founded, however, and missed his radical nationalist conception of Australian identity that led him to emphasise that Australia could only ever be 'Australian'.

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[6] Ibid. p. 30.

Keating's optimistic approach to constructing regional frameworks within which Australia could attend to its security and prosperity was an important development in the Australian strategic imagination. Hawke had proposed that Australia enmesh itself with Asia, but still carried an acute sense of Australian membership within the Western Alliance. Keating did not diminish this connection, but in light of the end of the Cold War, sought to develop more connections between the West and a more fully realised Asia-Pacific grouping.

Hawke, Keating, and the 'new world order'

It had been 25 years since Lyndon B. Johnson arrived on Australian shores when Air Force One landed in Sydney carrying President George H. W. Bush. Between 20th October 1966 and 31st December 1991, the world had undergone such monumental change that although the West's international strategic frameworks remained intact, the threats that they had been designed to meet were scarcely recognisable.

From an Australian regional perspective, these shifts had begun within the first decade after Johnson's departure. China was soon after recognised as a member of the international community, and American forces in Vietnam, regarded by an earlier generation of Australian strategic minds to be the keystone of their regional security, would not be there for long. In their wake, Australia had sought, tentatively at first, greater economic and strategic integration in the region. Changes to the Cold War strategic picture in Asia had begun with a mere trickle that gradually gathered speed and size over the next two decades. It was but a shallow inlet for Whitlam and Fraser, and a deeper channel for Hawke, who had all attempted to use it to explore greater economic and eventual strategic integration in Asia following a significant withdrawal of the Western powers.

In comparison, the change in Europe was more akin to a flash flood after decades of drought. It was only in the past two years that the Soviet Union had faced internal unrest, that the Warsaw pact had disbanded, and the Berlin Wall fallen. NATO's eastern rivals seemed to be inexorably swept aside by a gushing torrent within these two short years, presided over by Reagan's Vice President and successor George H. W. Bush.

His Australian host, Prime Minister Paul Keating, had also been a senior member of a Western government during final years of the Cold War, but was only elected Prime Minister only 11 days before the visit.

Two issues during the final years of the Hawke government set the stage for this visit and provide a picture of the tensions that characterised Australian perspectives on the American Alliance, and how they were to be dealt with when Bush arrived. The new international order based on an America catapulted to global pre-eminence as the sole remaining superpower was thought to offer great potential for Australian policy makers to shape world events through this close relationship. Australia, in turn, could offer the United States a strong advocate in the world's most dynamic economic region. For this to be realised, however, the alliance needed to be conceived on both sides in more than purely military terms. Intractable differences over America's Economic Enhancement Program (EEP) that hurt Australian agricultural exports contrasted with effortless co-operation during the Gulf War of 1991, and made this re-appraisal a difficult task.

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum had emerged as a piece of regional economic architecture in 1989. This was in large part due to Australian economic concerns with European and American agricultural subsidies and their ongoing negotiations at the Uruguay Round, being the most recent forum for the Global Agreement on Tariffs and Trade agreements. Hawke reminded a business group in Seoul early in 1989 that the rapid development of their country over the past decade was a product of 'a non-discriminatory international trading system' that had flourished, so far, 'under the auspices of the GATT.'[7] Apart from the specific benefits that an open system would have for Australian agricultural exporters, the Hawke government also wanted to ensure that Asia would continue to be an open market for all Australian trade. Hawke told the meeting that he was 'keenly aware that the economic growth and structural change taking place in North East Asia' was going to have 'vital implications' for Australia, its region, and the world.[8] These were well worn themes of Hawke's rhetorical repertoire, yet what he followed with was an major policy announcement.

Concerned by the 'serious cracks appearing in the international trading system' and the 'deadlock' at the most recent GATT negotiations meant to address such issues, Hawke suggested that these could be eased by a multi-lateral regional grouping. The interdependence of the region's economies also pointed toward such a framework.[9] His solution was to create a 'formal intergovernmental vehicle for regional co-operation.' Few serious consultations had taken place with the relevant partners. Similar Japanese and American suggestions had so far come to nought, and the concept was still very much underdeveloped. All Hawke put forward here was to 'assess

[7] Robert James Lee Hawke, 'Speech to the Luncheon of Korean Business Associations, "Regional Co-Operation: Challenges for Korea and Australia"', 31 January 1989. p. 3.
[8] Ibid. p. 2.
[9] Ibid. p. 3.

what the region's attitudes are towards the possibility' of establishing a 'capacity for analysis and consultation on economic and social issues' to 'inform policy development.'[10] It was left to the Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Dick Woolcott, to meet with each proposed member to iron out how the group would function and how to include China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan in the same body.[11]

In the press conference following the speech, Hawke contextualised the proposal as being in the same vein as his words to the European Monetary Forum in Switzerland, a speech delivered two days and two years earlier. Asked whether countries in the region would have to form their own 'protective mechanisms', and if this was part of the present proposal, Hawke reaffirmed that Australia favoured open multilateralism. Chiding a questioning journalist Hawke stated:

> 'I'm not sure that you have the Davos speech I made at the forefront of your mind, you should, it's a very good speech. Economic autarky has always been the precursor to political conflict… So there is a vested interest, a political interest as well as the obvious economic interest in trying to see that the multilateral system prevails.'[12]

There were obvious differences between the two speeches. The speech to the EMF had been an impassioned cry to Australia's Western allies to consider the pain that agricultural subsidies inflicted on Australian farmers and a warning of the dire strategic consequences stemming from such disunity. His speech at Seoul, on the other hand, was a call for regional neighbours to develop consultative architecture in the name of economic self-interest, with the implication that such unity would carry strategic benefits.

The United States of America had not been mentioned as a prospective partner of the group in either the speech or the following press conference. This was a glaring omission given Hawke's warm relationship with the United States and that he was now embarking on a major international policy initiative meant to address the heart of what he saw as Australian and global strategic and economic vulnerabilities. Hawke, Evans and Woolcott are all in agreement, however, that APEC was never intended to exclude the US, or that its original omission was a snub in retaliation for the EEP.[13] This was the basis of the above question put to Hawke regarding the development of regional 'protective mechanisms'. The journalist wondered if Hawke's proposed regional grouping would become its own exclusive economic bloc in response to American and European subsidies.

[10] Ibid. 4-5.
[11] Woolcott, *The Hot Seat*. pp. 233-240.
[12] Robert James Lee Hawke, 'Transcript of Press Conference, Horel Shilla, Seoul.', 31 January 1989. pp. 7-8.
[13] Bob Hawke, *The Hawke Memoirs* (Port Melbourne, Vic: Heinemann Australia, 1994) p. 431.; Gareth J. Evans and Bruce Grant, *Australia's Foreign Relations: In the World of the 1990s* (Carlton, Vic.: Portland, Or: Melbourne University Press; International Specialized Book Services, 1991) p. 121.; Woolcott, *The Hot Seat*. p. 241.

Hawke's testy reminder of the Davos speech provides some evidence that he was not considering America's exclusion at all, but a multi-lateral grouping that would be supportive of the GATT and globalised trade liberalisation. Both he and Woolcott claimed later that the United States was not initially included in discussions because bringing them in too early may have scared off other prospective members wary that the Americans could dominate such a grouping. Cabinet agreed in early March, for example, that 'Australia be open to the inclusion of the United States and Canada… but that they not be included in the initial round of soundings' unless other prospective members were of this same mind.[14]

This cautious approach still clearly irked some in the Bush administration. Evans was to 'canvass' the 'possible inclusion' of the United States when he visited later than month.[15] When he arrived, he was quickly acquainted with the frustrations of an internationally engaged U.S. administration that had been intentionally left out, if only initially, of a significant policy initiative by a close ally. He recalls that Bush's Secretary of State, James Baker, 'laid the real mark of Zorro on me, slash, slash, slash.'[16] When Woolcott arrived two months later, he detected that 'there was still some rancour that Australia, an ANZUS treaty ally, could have launched such a major regional initiative without prior consultations.' Baker eventually came to an understanding of APEC's potential value to the U.S. They were also irritated by European agricultural subsidies and could see the benefits of a group pushing regional and global trade liberalisation. They were convinced to tread carefully in order to not torpedo the grouping before other members had committed.[17]

The development of APEC is also a reminder of the underlying tensions in the U.S.-Australian alliance during this time. The protests of Australian farmers in the mid-80s, and the calls for joint-facilities to be put on the negotiating table were still fresh in the mind in 1989. This held greater significance than merely securing future trading partners for Hawke, and he considered it to be a response to creeping political malaise threatening Western unity. Unfortunately, strategic, cultural, and lingual ties had counted for very little when it came to Australian pleas for respite from European and American economic subsidies. APEC could provide support behind the GATT negotiations, and success at the GATT could restore harmony to the Western alliance. The Australian diplomatic energy behind APEC also showed, however, a growing confidence to seek solutions to global problems on an international scale without first consulting major allies like the

[14] 'Cabinet Memorandum 6276 - Discussion Paper - Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation - Intergovernmental Forum Proposal - Decision 12301' (Canberra, 1 March 1989), A14039, 6276, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=31430529. pp. 2-3.
[15] Ibid. p. 2.
[16] Keith Scott, *Gareth Evans* (St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1999). p. 272.
[17] Woolcott, *The Hot Seat.* p. 241.

United States. Yet the bonds of the Western alliance still held strong. The group that became known as APEC was never intended to be an economic counterbalance to Europe or to exclude the United States, but was according to Hawke, done in a spirit of openness and to undergird the GATT as a new international economic accord that would preserve the West's strategic unity.

The other major international event that would colour Bush's visit in 1991-1992 was the Gulf War. It had underlined the strategic unity of the Western alliance as well as the newfound American capacity to dominate international bodies, given the flagging energies of the Soviet Union as a power of influence on the world stage.

The first Iraqi tank crossed the Kuwaiti border on the 2nd of August, and just over a week later, Australia announced it would contribute to a UN sanctioned naval blockade of the Persian Gulf. The networks of the Western alliance had been well used in this time to gather support and participants for said intervention. An informal request was sent out to NATO, Japan and Australia from the United States on the morning of the 9th of August, asking what these different countries could contribute to a potential coalition.[18] Hawke conferred with senior cabinet members during a lunchtime meeting on that day including then Treasurer Paul Keating, and the acting Foreign minister Michael Duffy, as well as speaking with the Senate Leader John Button, Minister for Defence Robert Ray, and Evans over the phone.[19] Although Button showed some reluctance, the six agreed that Australia would commit three ships to the blockade. Cabinet was not directly consulted, but there is evidence to suggest that Hawke had expected they would assent to the commitment, given their willingness to support UN economic sanctions three days earlier.[20] The Washington bound cable detailing this decision noted that Australia expected the 'force to include a number of West European countries and Canada.'[21] Hawke and Bush officially discussed Australia's contribution on the morning of the 10th and the announcement that three Australian ships would sail for the Gulf on the 13th was made just hours later.[22]

This commitment appeared to be in direct contradiction to the 1987 Defence White Paper and the claims that it had heralded a new era of self-reliance in defence. It was, almost to the letter, a force anticipated by a short but important section of the 1987 Defence White Paper. As one of the few parts of the report that envisaged Australian involvement in expeditionary intervention

[18] D. M. Horner, *Australia and the 'New World Order': From Peacekeeping to Peace Enforcement: 1988-1991*, Official History of Australian Peacekeeping, Humanitarian and Post-Cold War Operations, v. 2 (Port Melbourne, Vic: Cambridge University Press, 2011). p. 297.
[19] Ibid. p. 298.
[20] Ibid. p. 291, 299.
[21] Ibid. p. 299.
[22] Ibid. p. 301.

had suggested that this be done by the Royal Australian Navy's guided missile frigates, as these were capable of operating in a United States' battle group, 'well distant from Australia's shores.'[23] For all of the previous minister of Defence's fanfare regarding an Australian military strategy for Australia's immediate region, and a force structure predicated on self-reliance, the ADF's first major military action after the White Paper was expeditionary.

Hawke was happy, however, to contribute to the American led military coalition, rubber stamped, as it were, by the United Nations Security Council (U.N.S.C). This was the general impression of the relationship between the U.S. and the U.N.S.C. from an Australian perspective during the Gulf War. The United States and the West provided much of the willpower and manpower that brought about the eventual liberation of Kuwait, and the Security Council in turn provided the legal legitimacy to do so. The deadlock that plagued the Security council as a decision-making body throughout the Cold War seemed to have loosened. Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev had made his own attempt to resolve the issue early on in the crisis with Iraq, its long-time middle-eastern partner, yet, according to French Prime Minister Michel Rocard, showed deference to U.N.S.C resolutions and sensitivity to American objectives.[24] Gorbachev's intervention did not amount to anything in the end, and the Americans pressed ahead with their intentions to bring about a quick military solution to the issue. Bush called Hawke on the 24th of February 1991 to inform him that he would be moving ahead with the liberation of Kuwait that evening if Iraqi forces had not begun to withdraw. He mentioned that he had spoken to Gorbachev earlier that day, who had showed some understanding of the American position, and considered the Soviets to have been co-operative in the Security Council.[25] When the Australian ambassador to the United Nations, Dr Peter Wilenski, met with Hawke a few months later he gave little indication that the U.S. had faced any opposition in the security council during this period. Wilenski remarked that during the period leading up to the 24th of February, the 'US worked the [Security] Council superbly well.'[26] While Hawke may have justified the Australian commitment as

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[23] Department of Defence, 'The Defence of Australia 1987: Presented to Parliament by the Minister for Defence the Honourable Kim C. Beazley, M.P.' p. 3.

[24] 'Record of Conversation between the Prime Minister and the French Prime Minister Rocard, Personal Papers of Prime Minister Hawke - Briefing Papers Include: Gulf War; Mandela 23/10/1990; New Caledonia', PAPER FILES AND DOCUMENTS (allocated at series level), 20 February 1991, M3571, 344 PART 1, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=31870359. p. 1.

[25] 'Transcript of Conversation with President George Bush, Personal Papers of Prime Minister Hawke International Leaders - President Bush, USA September 1990 to February 1991', PAPER FILES AND DOCUMENTS (allocated at series level), 24 February 1991, M3571, 189, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=12255720. p. 1.

[26] 'Record of Conversation Between the Prime Minister and Dr Peter Wilenski, Ambassador and Permanent Representatives to the United Nations, New York. Personal Papers of Prime Minister Hawke - Briefing Papers Include: 1987 PS [Public Service] Reform; Commonwealth/State Relations - Codd 1987; Bush Letter 1990; Mahathir-Hawke October 1991; Gulf Navies', PAPER FILES AND DOCUMENTS (allocated at series level), 13

being supportive of the United Nations, American pre-eminence in the body on this issue made the distinction between liberal internationalism and alliance obligations practically moot.

The tensions between APEC and the Gulf War represented for Australia two different aspects of the asymmetric alliance, in relative power terms, with the United States of America and provide important context for Bush's Presidential visit in 1991-1992. APEC had been an Australian response to undesired economic trends and the breakdown of international agreements that would, in Hawke's eyes, threaten regional prosperity and global security. The United States had contributed to this problem with their own unilateral response to European subsidies, but were happy to join the Australian multi-lateral initiative once its objectives became known. The Gulf War, on the other hand, had been an American lead military response to a clear case of aggression towards one member of the United Nations from another. Australia needed little persuasion to join the coalition, being one of the first nations to do so, and had diverged from the aims of the previous white paper on defence as a result. There they had witnessed American capability to influence the shape of international affairs when it had the determination to do so as the only remaining superpower. Could this power now be put towards Australia's vision of future prosperity in the region through more open trade?

The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet was obviously aware of this new American potency in world affairs, yet they had questions as to whether the United States and the Alliance had fully adjusted to the former's supposed pre-eminence. They hoped that the Bush visit would provide an opportunity to clarify 'the role of the United States and the Alliance in the "new world order."' There was also the feeling that Australia had not been treated as an ally should be in economic terms despite being more than forthcoming in military contributions to American objectives for international peace:

> 'The Alliance goes wider than military mateship and shared world outlooks… it has implications for how we deal with each other in world markets – the idea that economic development and stability are intrinsic parts of any comprehensive approach to national security. Privately, we should not be shy about disputes over [the] EEP.'

From this perspective, however, the sting of the EEP was just one symptom of an American conception of the Alliance that was inadequately one dimensional. Australia as an ally could offer the United States more than just moral and personnel support for far off wars, and act as both a

May 1991, M3571, 344 PART 2, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=31870360. p. 7.

foothold and a dealmaker – as they had with APEC – in the world's most economically dynamic region:

> 'Overall, the visit must be a success and demonstrate that we are a serious and worthwhile ally with influence in this region; that we are worth doing business with and, most importantly, that we should not be taken for granted.

The Alliance was to be the engine room of Australian post-Cold War diplomacy, bringing the unrivalled weight of the United States behind Australian goals in exchange for augmenting the American and Western presence in the Asia-Pacific region. This plan would, finally, require distortions of the alliance that had crept into the minds of the Australian public to be addressed:

> The visit must also help maintain and build acceptance of the United States and the Alliance within the Australian community, showing that the relationship has substance beyond military cooperation in far off places.'[27]

Co-operation in the Gulf and conflict over the EEP had unduly prioritised the martial aspects of the Alliance. This required correction if Australia were to reap the significant potential that could be derived from a relationship with the U.S. The U.S. in turn needed to fully realise their role in the 'new world order.'

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Gareth Evans would also voice his awareness of the benefits of the American Alliance to Australia provided that it was viewed in a more multi-dimensional way. Between the Gulf War in early 1991 and Bush's visit over the new year period of 1991 and 1992, Evans and the veteran journalist of foreign affairs Bruce Grant published *Australia's Foreign Relations: In the world of the 1990s*. It was unprecedented effort from a current Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs in terms of its depth and breadth of engagement with many international issues.[28] In the words of one reviewer, 'amid an extraordinarily busy life', the 'Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade somehow performed the feat of co-writing a book.'[29] Having held this portfolio in Hawke's cabinet since 1988, this publication was an attempt by Evans to come to grips with Australia's place in the world in light of the end of the Cold War, and to outline his agenda for the new decade. Among its deficiencies was a narrowly conceived idea of Australian independence in foreign affairs and defence, and the incredulous claim that Australia had only

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[27] Adrienne Jackson, 'Bush Visit. Personal Papers of Prime Minister Hawke - Briefing Papers Include: 1987 PS [Public Service] Reform; Commonwealth/State Relations - Codd 1987; Bush Letter 1990; Mahathir-Hawke October 1991; Gulf Navies', PAPER FILES AND DOCUMENTS (allocated at series level), 22 February 1991, M3571, 344 PART 2, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=31870360. p. 2.
[28] Evans and Grant, *Australia's Foreign Relations*, 1991.
[29] Stewart Firth, 'Problems in Australian Foreign Policy, July 1991-June 1992', *Australian Journal of Politics & History* 39, no. 1 (1 April 1993): 1–13, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8497.1993.tb00046.x. p. 11.

realised true independence following the 1987 White Paper on Defence. Yet it offers a great deal of explanation as to how Evans imagined Australia's role in Asia into the new decade and the next millennium, and how the United States would figure in this.

The two key areas in which Australia needed to make its mark on the world stage, according to *Australia's Foreign Relations*, was in the apparent emergence of a 'new internationalism' and 'Asia Pacific dynamism.' Understood alongside the continuing nuclear bi-polarity that had not been superseded by the substantial improvements to East-West relations, the above two developments were to Evans two freshly laid cornerstones of Australia's strategic future.

The end of the Cold War had given international institutions such as the United Nations a new vitality and potency in resolving global issues. The U.N.'s effective role in the Second Gulf War was one example of this. While Evans remained agnostic on the question over whether this pattern of great-power co-operation would continue, he was nonetheless optimistic that the U.N.'s newfound power in resolving security disputes would continue.[30] There are important queries here as to how much U.N. resolutions on Iraqi aggression in Kuwait were truly 'internationalist solutions', or the result of Western energies through international organs unopposed by a much depleted Russian government pre-occupied by its own internal problems. Yet this faith in a new internationalist order formed part of Evan's view of the global structure in which Australia existed.

'Asia Pacific dynamism' in a primarily economic sense was the other global force of the times that Australia could harness for its own prosperity and security. Evans hoped that Australia's neighbours would consider 'economic development' to be 'more important than building military strength' and that this would ensure the development of prosperity and security.[31]

In an attempt to underscore the apparently newfound independence in Australian foreign policy, Evans relegates the section in which he deals directly with Australian-US relations to almost the end of the book. It was a feigned disinterest, however. The importance of the United States to Australia's post-Cold War program lay in the similarities of the two nations' political values and the vast weight that could bring to bear on international negotiations. Australia had with the U.S.:

> 'not just a military alliance, but a relationship of substance, embracing ties of history, commerce and culture, and a profound mutual interest in maintaining a strong American presence globally and in our region',

The benefits of the Alliance to Australia were manifold:

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[30] Evans and Grant, *Australia's Foreign Relations*, 1991. pp. 8-10.
[31] Ibid. pp. 12-14.

> 'Beyond immediate security and economic matters, the United States is important to Australia because of the crucial influence it is able to exert across a range of multilateral issues vital to Australia's long-term security and prosperity.'

Transactional approaches to the alliance, such as those that suggested, say, that Australia 'threaten to close the joint facilities in order to secure better wheat deals' profoundly misunderstood its true benefits. They would, according to Evans, unduly upset a friendly nation with unrivalled power to shape global circumstances in Australia's interests.[32]

The world had changed between the mid-60s and the early-90s and Evans had attempted to adapt to new events accordingly. But the US-Australian relationship appeared to be remarkably similar in one important way. Australian leaders still looked to the strength of their cultural cousins to shape the region to be more in line with Australia's interests at the time. Just as Hasluck had looked anxiously to America in 1965 intervene in Vietnam and stop the southern spread of communism, Evans looked in the same direction, albeit far more optimistically, for the influence to shape Australia's region into a more secure and prosperous neighbourhood. Evans correctly describes the difference in how Australia's region has been imagined between himself and Hasluck for example, as between a place from which 'we sought in the past to protect ourselves' to one which now 'offers Australia the most.'[33] Yet the similarities in both approaches are unmistakable.

This emerging conception of the American alliance seemed to have had little impact on the Australian public by the time the second Presidential incumbent to visit the antipodes arrived on Australian shores. Bush's lukewarm public reception contrasted starkly to the 'Cold War "Love Feast"' and alliance euphoria that had coloured Johnson's visit. Australian strategic anxieties about Asia had nowhere near the same grip on the imagination in 1991 as they did in the mid-60s, and yet with Australian ships still patrolling the Persian Gulf, the American alliance seemed to be calibrated toward common military endeavours.[34] The visit was only mentioned by Stewart Firth in his analysis of Australian Foreign Policy between July '91 and June '92 in the context of American agricultural subsidies and their continuing harm to Australia's wheat exports.[35] Australian security in its region was clearly not a pressing concern of the Australian public. Questions about the U.S.'s Economic Enhancement Program and consultations with Australian farmers dominated Bush and Keating's press conference in Canberra. Only two questions on the ANZUS treaty were offered, and both raised doubts about its ongoing vitality given that New

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[32] Ibid. pp. 304-307.
[33] Ibid. p. 326.
[34] James Curran, 'Cold War "Love Feast": The First US Presidential Visit to Australia, October 1966', in *Australia and the World: A Festschrift for Neville Meaney*, ed. Joan Beaumont and Matthew Jordan, 2013. p. 233.
[35] Firth, 'Problems in Australian Foreign Policy, July 1991-June 1992'.

Zealand was no longer a member and that an American military base in the Philippines had been recently closed.[36] Both Keating and Bush rebuffed these suggestions, claiming that the alliance remained important to both countries. The clear lack of press interest, however, imbued these responses with an undeniable emptiness. It was as if the alliance's strategic dimensions had lost a great deal of immediate relevancy in the wake of the fall of the USSR, the West's decisiveness in the Persian Gulf and, given its lack of economic dimensions, could do little to win respite for Australian farmers.[37]

The two leaders had met a day earlier at Kirribilli House, Sydney, during which Keating made his own bid to shape American policy. His proposal was for a new set of 'Bretton Woods arrangements' that would shape the next generation of global economic development. This would be undergirded in Asia and the Pacific by an upgraded notion of APEC, which would become the premier institution in the region in an economic and strategic sense.[38] The man that had made fundamental changes to the structure of the Australian economy in the decade prior had now set his sights on doing the same for the regional economy, but he could not do it alone. Keating later explained his motivations behind this in terms that would have been similar to those used by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet in early 1991 and Evans in *Australia's Foreign Relations*. He wanted the Alliance and the broader relationship with the United States to be more than a security pact, and for Australia to use it to make the most out of the malleability of international structures in the post-Cold War moment:

> 'I was determined that this would be the moment where Australia re-pointed itself in the new post-Cold War world, where we would enter the game in a more independent way. Useful to the United States but clear in what we wanted for ourselves. I was not going to waste the opportunity.'[39]

His vision for the region's economy was to re-make it in the West's image, a task that would require American involvement:

[36] 'Transcript of Press Conference Conducted by the Hon George Bush, President of the United States and the Hon Paul Keating MP Prime Minister of Australia', 2 January 1992, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00008374.pdf. pp. 11-12.
[37] Ibid. p. 12.
[38] Paul Kelly, *The March of Patriots: The Struggle for Modern Australia* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 2011). p. 162.
[39] Keating, *Engagement*. p. 28.

> 'Australia wanted the United States to remain strongly engaged in the Asia-Pacific region so that the liberal democratic views and support for open economies which we both espoused would be reflected in the region's key institutions.'[40]

It was a bold approach, yet there were unfortunate signs that the U.S. would take some persuading, and had not considered the Alliance to go beyond military considerations. There were, for example, only two other men in that room in Kirribilli. Keating had brought with him Ashton Calvert, an advisor with experience in DFAT who would soon become ambassador to Japan and later secretary of the department. Bush had brought Brent Scowcroft, a decorated three-star general who served as both his national security advisor and had done so earlier for President Gerald Ford. Scowcroft was a revealing choice. The American administration had probably expected some discussion about the EEP, but were clearly unwilling to expend any energy in negotiation on that topic and hoped instead to discuss strategic matters. They were understandably blindsided by Keating's proposal for new regional economic institutions to rival Bretton Woods. Keating recalls that when Bush excused himself to go to the bathroom, Scowcroft said to him that he had 'articulated a policy for the United States that we haven't articulated for ourselves.'[41]

Yet there were some positive indications during the visit that the administration had begun to understand what Keating had proposed. Parliament was recalled for a special sitting on the 2nd of January for the sole purpose of hearing an address from President Bush. The visit was the first stop of a longer Pacific tour for the President, to emphasise his intention for American to remain engaged in the region and in Asia after the Cold War.[42]

In Australia, he touched on this largely in reference to security matters. Having, from his perspective, faithfully undertaken its duty as the leader of the West and seeing it to victory, Bush signalled that the US was not about to abrogate its responsibilities as the only remaining superpower and turn inward. The ANZUS alliance, he claimed, was 'fundamental to the stability of the Asia-Pacific region' and he spent the majority of the address reaffirming the intimacy between Australia and the United States and their common purpose in a shared geographic neighbourhood.[43] With a 'warm kinship' underpinned by 'common ancestries and shared ideals' Bush reflected on the history of Australian and U.S. martial valour in the Pacific War, in Korea, in Vietnam and most recently in the Persian Gulf.

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[40] Ibid. p. 30.
[41] Kerry O'Brien, *Keating.* (Place of publication not identified: Allen & Unwin, 2016). p. 480.
[42] 36. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 2 January 1992. p. 4.
[43] Ibid. p. 3.

Mixed in with this rhetoric were some gestures towards Keating's vision. He looked forward to the two nations shaping a 'shared destiny' after the Cold War by partnering in economic growth, through meeting residual security challenges such as the proliferation of 'weapons of mass destruction', and also in 'fostering the remarkable momentum of democracy.'[44] Bush praised Australian economic leadership in the establishment of APEC and in opposing agricultural subsidies at the Uruguay Round of the GATT discussions. The only tense moment in his address was when he noted that Australian farmers were 'not alone' in being harmed by European subsidies while downplaying America's retaliation as a mere cause of 'concern'.[45] Bush too would state his desire to promote Western values. He hoped that 'the far-flung kinsmen of Australia and America and for all who share those fundamental ideals that we hold dear' would work together to 'break new ground for freedom, cooperation and economic progress.'[46] Yet this was a statement of intent without a concrete proposal, and could not match the scale of Keating's vision.

The Australian Prime Minister's chance to respond came later that evening at a Parliamentary Dinner, during which he sketched out his concept for American and Australian co-operation in the Pacific in the post-Cold War world. The Asia-Pacific was now, according to Keating, a 'region of peace', opening up the possibility to 'take stock and plan for the future.' He praised the President for 'having triumphed over the West's opponents' and who wanted to now 'make the world a bigger and better place for everybody.' At the centre of this better world was a more open world trading system. It was, according to Keating, the West's 'economic superiority' that 'defeated Soviet Communism.' This needed to be 'expanded and buttressed' in light of its victory so that all could share in the spoils of war. The key to this in practical terms was the success of the current GATT negotiations.[47] In pursuing these changes to the global economic structure that would apparently be of benefit to the whole world, Keating viewed the United States to be of central importance to such a program:

> 'We want the US straddling an open system in both oceans for the benefit of all. That means we need GATT and we need an US economic involvement in the Pacific.'

For Australia, this entailed 'keeping and strengthening bilateral links with the United States', but also developing other relationships in the region independently. Keating had no specific relationship in mind here, but having signalling to the American President how he would approach Australia's relations with the United States, was now outlining how it would approach other

[44] Ibid. p. 2.
[45] Ibid. p. 3.
[46] Ibid. p. 5.
[47] Paul Keating, 'Transcript of the Hon Paul Keating MP, Prime Minister, Address to Parliamentary Dinner', 2 January 1992, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00008373.pdf. p. 3.

relationships in the region. Australia would be continuing to try to bring about a realisation of the West's core economic doctrines in light of its victory over the Marxist powers as another Western hub in the region. This meant trade liberalisation through multi-lateral agreements such as the GATT. Australia would also attempt to strengthen trans-Pacific relationships through bilateral connections with the United States, and through bilateral connections with Australia's neighbours independently. Keating here was staking out space for his own independent foreign policy initiatives, making sure that Bush knew that these were not inimical to American interests, but would duly proselytise the West's economic verities.

Keating was not a pan-Western patriot, but the policy of global trade liberalisation would have clear benefit to Australia, as the reduction of transatlantic agricultural subsidies, as just one example, would greatly buoy Australian wheat exports. Yet while Keating had effectively proclaimed that Australia would pursue its own interests and relationships, it would do so as a committed member of the West.

This new Australian Prime Minister, like his predecessor, did not hold the process of deepening economic and diplomatic ties with its region to be in conflict with its Western identity, and it undertook this process as a professing member of the West. Even though the end of the Cold War had raised public questions as to the strategic relevance of the ANZUS treaty, other aspects of the American Alliance took on increased significance, and for Keating this included pursuing their shared Western objective of global free-trade. The next stage in his plan, mobilised in April was to propose that APEC become a meeting of leaders rather than just trade ministers. The Bush administration struggled, however, to grapple with the multi-lateral nature of Keating's proposal and it was not until President Bill Clinton's election in 1993 that the idea gathered any momentum.[48]

Two vexing strands of Australia's strategic situation, the economic imperative to open up regional trade, and a relationship with the U.S. that was thought to lean too heavily into common military action had coloured Australia's initial experience of the post-Cold War world. Keating's solution would build on his own work as treasurer in opening up the Australian economy to develop a system in which Australia and the U.S. could work together to open up the region's economy. This was firmly rooted in an Australian desire to be viewed by the United States as more than just a junior partner for military expeditions, and Hawke's linking of a rules based economic system with strategic stability. Finally, it drew on Evans' conception of the American alliance as providing an open door to the corridors of power through which Australia could augment its

[48] Kelly, *The March of Patriots*. pp. 163-165.

influence on global structures. His proposal amounted to a new magnitude of engagement in the region strategically and economically, but was also clearly an attempt to shape the region, in its pliable post-Cold War state, into the likeness of the West.

Gareth Evans and 'the End of History'

Keating and Evans had different ideas as to how Australian engagement with the region would occur along the above lines, and what changes would need to occur to foster the newfound closeness between nations of different cultures, language and politics. Evans claimed that for Australia to take advantage of the newfound strength in international organisations, and of the security and prosperity offered in the region, this would necessarily require the development of 'a new Australian identity.'[49] On balance, however, there is evidence to suggest that Evans expected the region to change just as much to accommodate Australia's acceptance, even if this was as 'the oddest man in.'[50] This was while maintaining that Australia need not give up the 'values which are at the core of our sense of national identity and worth.'[51] It was through the process of 'convergence', a term Evans would use to describe the development of democracy and the smoothing over of cultural demarcations in Asia and the South Pacific, that Australia could seek security and prosperity in its region.

Much of this view was influenced by Francis Fukuyama, a deputy director in policy planning at the United States' State Department in the Reagan administration. In 1989, he penned a popular and controversial theory regarding the new structure of international relations that would follow the Cold War's bipolarity. Writing in the foreign affairs magazine *The National Interest*, Fukuyama claimed that with the fall of Soviet Communism, liberal democracy had emerged as the only tenable ideology and governing principle on which to base politics, society and economics. He was under no illusions at the time of writing, that the world still contained national governments that were thoroughly 'undemocratic' such as post-Soviet Russia or China.[52] His point was that the break-up of the USSR had not meant 'that all societies become successful liberal societies, merely that they end their ideological pretensions of representing different and higher forms of human society.'[53] In Asia, Japan and South Korea were the strongest examples of this. Fukuyama argued that

[49] Evans and Grant, *Australia's Foreign Relations*, 1991. p. 322.
[50] Ibid. p. 327.
[51] Ibid. p. 329.
[52] Francis Fukuyama, 'The End of History?', *The National Interest*, no. 16 (1989). p. 15.
[53] Ibid. p. 13.

'political liberalism' would follow the development of 'economic liberalism… with seeming inevitability.'[54] The 'power of the liberal idea' had even 'infected' China, as it made limited moves to a marketisation of its economy, and the education of its future elite was undertaken in Western institutions. He found it hard to believe that these future leaders reared in the democratic West would allow China 'to be the only country in Asia unaffected by the larger democratising trend.'[55]

This view would be immensely influential on Evans. When looking at Australian engagement with Asia, Evans was happy to acknowledge some of the underlying tensions stemming from their different histories. Speaking to the Australia-Asia institute in October 1991, Evans remarked, 'Australia being an "Asia Pacific" nation is easier to manage, conceptually and psychologically, than us being an "Asian" one.' This was because Australia had thought of itself as an 'Anglophonic and Anglophilic outpost, tied by history, language, culture, economics and emotion to Europe and North America.'[56] Yet according to Evans, Australia's rightful place in the world was prescribed by the verities of geography and conceived of at different points as either the Asia-Pacific region, or later as the 'East-Asian hemisphere.'[57]

Evan's biographer Keith Scott provides a good explanation of Fukuyama's impact on this minister's understanding of Asia's political future.[58] The future dimension of Evans' image of Australia and Asia can resolve some of the tensions in Evans' thought between his 'liberal internationalism' and his 'realist' approach to international relations. Many have noticed this apparent contradiction and sat with it in different ways. Scott claims that his subject's focus on multi-lateral relationships, his emphasis on good international citizenship, and 'acceptance of realpolitik' resulted in Evans' potentially contradictory term, 'civilised realism.'[59] David Goldsworthy has a related discussion on Evans' attempt to mix 'realism' and 'idealism', resolving that he often spoke about 'realism' in a broader sense than the specific International Relations theory, and used it to refer to his pursuit of 'idealistic' ends in a 'realistic' or 'pragmatic' way.[60] Lorraine Elliot makes the broader point that the Australian Labor Party's 'idealism' had 'always been tempered by realism and its internationalism always mediated through the national interest, giving rise to a tradition of "idealistic pragmatism"', the latter being another phrase that Evans

[54] Ibid. p. 10.
[55] Ibid. p. 11.
[56] Gareth Evans, 'Managing Australia's Asian Future', 3 October 1991, https://www.gevans.org/speeches/old/1991/031091_fm_managingaustraliasfuture.pdf. p. 1.
[57] Scott, *Gareth Evans*. p. 292.
[58] Ibid. pp. 217, 305-306.
[59] Ibid. pp. 218-222.
[60] David Goldsworthy, 'Australia and Good International Citizenship', in *The New Agenda for Global Security: Cooperating for Peace and Beyond*, ed. Stephanie Lawson, Studies in World Affairs, x (Canberra, ACT: Allen & Unwin in association with the Dept. of International Relations, RSPAS, ANU, 1995). pp. 179-180.

used himself.[61] Her conclusion was that there was a 'fundamental tension' between the two.[62] Both Goldsworthy and Elliot are correct when they note in different ways that a realpolitik approach would in theory rarely allow for a sacrifice of the national interest in pursuit of liberal democratic or idealist change.

In Evans own mind, however, this can be resolved partly by noticing the resonance between realism and idealism when they intersect with his optimistic conception of Asian democratic development. Asia was, he thought, on the path to liberal democracy. The West was responsible, in an 'idealistic' or 'liberal international' sense, for encouraging that democratic development. This idealistic end had benefits for the 'realists' as well, considering his understanding that democracies rarely, if ever, declared war on each other.

This had significant consequences for how Evans thought Australia would become more of a part of its region, placing great emphasis on the importance of democratic values as it sought greater integration in Asia. These needed to be strictly adhered to, but as something that would only enrich those regional relationships. Liberal democracy was a positive attribute that Australia need not hold in contrast to its neighbours. It could provide common ground on which to base foreign relationships as more and more nations liberalised. Evans' understanding of the American Alliance provides one example of this. In the post-Cold War setting, Evans envisaged a movement toward 'common security' in Asia. The future of security lay not in mutual distrust and the stockpiling of armaments,

> 'but in a commitment to joint survival, to taking into account the legitimate security anxieties of others, to building step-by-step military confidence between nations, to working to maximise the degree of interdependence between nations.'[63]

The American military presence in Asia provided a 'balancing wheel' during this transition and its network of alliances with Japan and Australia as formed the 'northern and southern anchors' of this.[64] As has been mentioned previously, Evans understood the 1987 White Paper on defence to have opened up the opportunity for a truly independent Australian foreign policy. He thus resisted discussing the American connection as a 'special relationship', as this may have implied

[61] Lorraine Elliott, 'Social Justice in Labor's Foreign Policy: "Falls the Shadow"', in *Evatt to Evans: The Labor Tradition in Australian Foreign Policy*, ed. David Lee and Christopher Waters, Studies in World Affairs, no. 14 (Canberra, ACT: Dept. of International Relations, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, 1997). p. 184.
[62] Ibid. pp. 194-195.
[63] Gareth Evans, 'Alliances and Change', 9 October 1990, https://www.gevans.org/speeches/old/1990/091090_fm_allianceandchange.pdf. p. 5.
[64] Ibid. 10.

'free rides'.[65] There were regardless multiple benefits to ANZUS and the U.S. relationship more broadly, including mutual security interests, and economic ties.[66] Evans' conception of the role of the United States as the chief guarantor of geo-strategic stability in Asia, 'anchored' as it were, by Australia and Japan, went hand in hand with his view that the end of the Cold War had provided an opportunity for the establishment of a 'new world order.' It was his hope that the international community could come together to guarantee 'peace and security', to 'seek economic progress', and to tackle 'urgent global problems' such as 'hunger, disease and environmental degradation.'[67] This new world order would be one that continually edged 'closer to the values which lie at the basis of both Australian and American society - democracy, human rights and the rule of law.' These values, derived from 'the political experience of liberal democracies', were for 'international application' and already at the core of the UN charter.[68]

Liberal democratic values were the hallmark of Western political systems, and Evans saw nations like the United States and Australia as having a role to play in encouraging their adoption in Asia. Most Asian political systems, according to the foreign minister, only needed a gentle push in this direction anyway as 'the spread of democratic rights' through the continent was 'well and truly underway.' South Korea and Taiwan, for example, had shown strong development of democratic and representative government, and India stood as an example of how democratic norms could endure challenges from 'ethnic, religious and social divisions.'[69] All that stood in China's way was its 'present corps of ageing leaders', and their passing would surely give way to 'an affirmation of the democratic impulse.'[70] This democratic change in Asia provided the context for future Australian geo-political security. In a speech to the Asia Society in New York, Evans made explicit links between a triumphant liberal democratic ascendancy and Australia's national security, justifying the promotion of these values with realpolitik arguments. The central tenant of this was his claim that with only a few exceptions, 'democratic governments just do not go to war with each other.' Riffing off of Woodrow Wilson's famous proclamation that the world 'be made safe for democracy', Evans quipped that it was more the case that democracy was 'making the world safe.'[71] It was also 'extremely helpful in achieving economic development' that would in turn encourage adherence to democratic values in Australia.

[65] Ibid. pp. 11-12.
[66] Ibid. p. 13.
[67] Gareth Evans, 'Australia and the United States in the New World Order', 4 February 1991, https://www.gevans.org/speeches/old/1991/040291_fm_australiaandtheus.pdf. pp. 5-7.
[68] Ibid. pp. 7-8.
[69] Gareth Evans, 'Dealing with Asia: National Interests and Democratic Rights', 25 September 1991, https://www.gevans.org/speeches/old/1991/250991_fm_dealingwithnational.pdf. p. 1.
[70] Ibid. p. 2.
[71] Ibid. p. 2.

A pressing question in this transition was how to promote human and liberal democratic rights in Asia? The Tiananmen Square Massacre in China, 1989, had brought this question into the public purview with shocking and unsettling clarity.[72] It was a difficult one to answer when such promotion entailed criticising foreign governments.[73] The common response to such a charge was that liberal democracy was a Western value, derived from a specific cultural and historical background and therefore not applicable in Asia. Speaking to this, Evans appealed to the fact that the international community had 'overwhelmingly endorsed' the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights among other international covenants replete with liberal democratic tenants.[74] These rights were universal and should be treated as such by all governments.

Another problem centred on how exactly these rights should be promoted. Instead of slapping economic and political sanctions on states that were seen to infringe on their citizen's human rights, as the United States had done in responding to the Tiananmen Square massacre, Evans called for open dialogue. An Australian delegation to China had claimed success in such a venture, calling their hosts to account based on UN principles 'to which China had subscribed.'[75] It was through this kind of frank discussion and partnership that liberal democratic countries were to encourage the spread of democracy and human rights in Asia, and in doing so, safeguard Australia's future geo-political security in Asia. Making this a direct link at the conclusion of this address, Evans said, 'I am absolutely persuaded that our national interests', as well as the national interests of those developing democracies, 'are thoroughly well served by making these efforts.'[76]

Evans differed from Fukuyama in two ways. Firstly, in his article 'The end of History', Fukuyama often referred to 'Western liberalism' as the 'Western idea' and its ascendency as being a 'Western triumph.'[77] Evans attempted to distance liberal democratic values from solely being the preserve of the West, reflecting his genuine belief that these values should be universal and that he would need to be among its advocates to non-Western states. Secondly, Fukuyama and Evans diverged in their stance on realist theories of international relations. Realpolitik was a central consideration for Evans, so much so that he felt he needed to provide a justification for his promotion of democratic and human rights in realist terms. Fukuyama, on the other hand, rejected the view that at the core of international relations lay 'a substratum of permanent great power interest.' Those that Fukuyama had in mind here were realists with harder heads than those of

[72] Evans and Grant, *Australia's Foreign Relations*, 1991. p. 5.
[73] Evans, 'Dealing with Asia: National Interests and Democratic Rights'. p. 3.
[74] Ibid. pp. 3-4.
[75] Ibid. pp. 7-8.
[76] Ibid. p. 9.
[77] Fukuyama, 'The End of History?' p. 3.

Evans' ilk. But the point remains that Fukuyama understood a nation's interests to have a 'prior ideological basis', whereas Evans felt as if he had to couch the promotion of democratic ideology in 'good national-interest reasons.'[78]

Evans vision to seek common security in Asia was an innovation in the Australian strategic imagination and another step away from imagining Asia as the source of the nation's geo-political anxieties. A democratised and developed Asia would create a geo-strategically benign region. The Hawke government had laid the groundwork for this through its emphasis on enmeshment in Asia and in moving to develop self-reliance in defence. The claim that appears in Evans' article 'Australia in East Asia and the Asia-Pacific', that his approach was the result of a 'fundamental rethinking' of Australia's place in the world, that which 'few other countries' could claim to have been through, glosses over important continuities.[79] The process of, 'Convergence', was most strongly articulated in this article. It entailed the 'urge for genuine democracy' in Asia that cut 'across traditional cultural boundaries', as well as the creation in the Asia-Pacific of a "'cross-fertilised" civilisation' and a 'fusion of Western and East Asian cultures.'[80] Evans' image of Asia in which he sought Australian security was one that was being irresistibly pulled toward liberal democratic reform. In Evans' mind, Australia seeking security with Asia was the same as seeking security in a liberal democratic 'new world order', despite him eventually dropping that title. Jim George, in his analysis of approaches to International politics after the fall of the Soviet Union, finds the concern 'for freedom, human rights and the individual' to have been 'predicated upon a particular kind of global order being in place – that instigated by the United States and underpinned by "Western" values and institutional structures.' This amalgam of 'realist' and 'liberal' approaches to international relations can be clearly seen in the Australian 'foreign policy perspective' of the early 1990s, as evidenced by Evans' contribution to the international security dialogue.[81]

While Evans' fresh image of seeking security in Asia rather than from it was relatively new in the Australian strategic imagination, this was not a wholly paradigmatic shift. Older patterns of thinking still prevailed. Even in the heady days of the post-Cold War era, Asia still required some outside mediating force for Australia to feel safe within it. This was achieved by the ties of the

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[78] Ibid. p. 16. And, Evans, 'Dealing with Asia: National Interests and Democratic Rights'. p. 2.
[79] Gareth Evans, 'Australia in East Asia and the Asia-Pacific: Beyond the Looking Glass', *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 49, no. 1 (1995): 99–113, https://doi.org/10.1080/10357719508445148. p. 113.
[80] Ibid. pp. 109-110. Evans quoted Yoichi Funabashi, 'The Asianization of Asia', *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 5 (1993): https://doi.org/10.2307/20045815. p. 85., and Kishore Mahbubani, 'The Pacific Way. (Asia-Pacific Region)', *Foreign Affairs* 74, no. 1 (1995): https://doi.org/10.2307/20047022. p. 102, even though the latter was critical of liberal triumphalism as put forward by Fukuyama.
[81] Jim George, 'Quo Vadis Australia? Framing the Defence and Security Debate Beyond the Cold War', in *Discourses of Danger & Dread Frontiers: Australian Defence and Security Thinking after the Cold War*, ed. Graeme Cheeseman and Robert H. Bruce, Studies in World Affairs 11 (Canberra, ACT: Allen & Unwin in association with the Department of International Relations and the Peace Research Centre, 1996). pp. 14-15.

Western military alliance during the Cold War, and by the pre-eminence of the Western political system when the Cold War had been won. In this new era, Evans looked to the United Nations, and the spread of liberal democratic values and human rights to make the region safe for Australia to be in. Asian nations themselves would, Evans thought, adhere to the principles of the UN charter more and more as time went on, spurred by the encouragement of the West and with the United States' strategic weight providing much needed ballast for the journey ahead. It was in this environment that Australia could enjoy geo-strategic safety.

Keating, Australia and Asia: Engagement or torn country in reverse?

For the entirety of Keating's time as Prime Minister, Australia's British history represented a perennial nuisance that had prevented Australia from arriving at a 'true' sense of its national character. Keating's push for engagement with Asia, 'went hand in hand with the imperative of a changing Australian identity.'[82] Casting off a British history that had so far thwarted the flourishing of an unambiguously Australian national identity meant adopting a new way in which to view the outside world and cultivating a new image of Australia. In an address at a reception for the Queen during her visit to Australia in 1992, Keating felt it necessary to declare that the outlooks of Britain and Australia were 'necessarily independent.' This was an articulation of where Australia belonged in the world. The days since the monarch's first visit 40 years ago had passed, as had those in Australia who according to Keating still 'saw the world through imperial eyes.' Since then, as the British people had pursued membership in the European Community and its geographic region, so to was Australia, according to the Prime Minister, now pursuing 'partnerships with countries in our own region.'[83] Months later, he stated,

> 'without the slightest disrespect to a country for which I have the greatest admiration, and to whose language and institutions I am a very grateful heir, I want to see us leave home.'[84]

These 'old sentiments' needed to be replaced with 'unequivocally Australian ones'.

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[82] Curran, *The Power of Speech*. p. 224.
[83] Paul Keating, 'Facing Regional Realities, 24th February 1992', in *Advancing Australia: The Speeches of Paul Keating, Prime Minister* (Sydney, N.S.W: Big Picture Publications, 1995). p. 151.
[84] Paul Keating, 'Projecting Our Identity, 26th June 1992', in *Advancing Australia: The Speeches of Paul Keating, Prime Minister* (Sydney, N.S.W: Big Picture Publications, 1995). p. 41.

There was a degree of incompatibility with his Asian economic vision and what he saw as Australia's sentimental ties to Britain. In an address to the Australia-Asia institute in Sydney, Keating presented Australia's 'national culture', its 'economic future' and 'destiny in Asia and the Pacific' all in harmonious symbiosis, threatened by a latent Britishness. Cropping up in Keating's rhetoric as parasitic and an inhibitor, Britishness exerted a 'subliminal influence' on the Australian mind.[85]

There was one aspect of British heritage that would not be jettisoned, however. Keating reaffirmed the central importance of 'traditions of Australian liberal democracy.' These 'democratic institutions' were 'non-negotiable', claiming:

> 'we don't go to Asia cap in hand, any more than we go, like Menzies went London, pleading family ties. We go as we are. Not with the ghost of empire about us. Not as a vicar of Europe, or as a US deputy. But unambivalently. Sure of who we are and what we stand for.'

Going 'to Asia' as Keating explained it here, was a psychological, political, strategic and economic pilgrimage, but it need not be a physical one. Australians could already make a claim to be a part of Asia on the basis of geography. 'Geophysically speaking', he claimed,

> 'this continent is old Asia… it's certainly not going to move, and after two hundred years it should be pretty plain that we're not going to, either. In 1992, we shouldn't think that we're anything less than a rightful presence in the region.'[86]

Deepening Australian ties with its geographical neighbours would require 'cultural reform' a change in 'outlook' and perhaps a greater emphasis on Australia as a multi-cultural society. Yet, echoing his words during the Bush visit, Keating also hoped that the region would adopt what he had described as Western economic practices in response to more forthright Australian engagement.

His conception of regional security was in keeping with his multi-lateral vision of economic openness. This included a re-couching of Australian perception of the role of the United States' contribution to regional security. Rather than fixating on the bilateral connection, the ANZUS treaty, Keating instead focussed on strengthening 'US strategic engagement in the western Pacific' as this was a 'vital contribution to regional stability'. It was with this wider regional vision that Keating would emphasise the U.S.'s 'close security relationship' with Japan to be 'especially

[85] Paul Keating, 'Australia and Asia (1), 7th April 1992', in *Advancing Australia: The Speeches of Paul Keating, Prime Minister* (Sydney, N.S.W: Big Picture Publications, 1995). p. 188.
[86] Keating, 'Australia and Asia (1), 7th April 1992'. p. 190.

important.'[87] The omission of ANZUS here was not a relegation of the United States in security terms, but the promotion of regional security concerns. APEC, with the United States as an active and member, would provide the foundations of the new strategic community that Keating wanted to construct for Australia. Having found Bill Clinton a more receptive interlocutor to such proposals than his predecessor, Clinton would host the first APEC leader's meeting in November of 1993. It was this grouping, according to Keating, that would have 'a lasting strategic impact on the Asia-Pacific region' and change 'fundamentally the way in which the countries of this part of the world interact.'[88]

The nuances of Keating's approach were unfortunately lost on two prominent scholars in the field of International Relations. Owen Harries, the editor and main contributor of the now 14-year-old *Australia and the Third World* report, harshly criticised Keating's push to have Australia become economically and psychologically a part of Asia. Having seen a draft of the controversial 'Clash of Civilisations' thesis put forward by International Relations Scholar Samuel Huntington, Harries thought of the implications that it would have for Australia, should it bear true. Huntington's thesis postulated that the post-Cold War world would be divided into civilizational blocs, and that these cultural splits would provide the source of major conflicts into the new millennium.[89] Australia, at Harries' suggestion, had the status of a 'torn country in reverse.' As other nations with non-Western cultures strained against their civilizational moorings to join the ascendant West, Australia was courting membership in Asia in apparent attempt to 'defect from the West.'[90]

Harries' public comments, which predated Huntington's published article by a few months, were laid out in *The Weekend Australian.* There was a great deal of similarity between this and *Australia and the Third World*, with some findings having been updated in light of the end of the Cold-War and in line with the core tenants of 'The Clash of Civilisations.' Harries still considered Australia to be, along with New Zealand, 'the most isolated fragment of Western civilisation in the world.'[91] 14 years earlier, Harries had cautioned that Australia not make too much of its links with the Third World or seek to become a bridge between it and the West. In 1993, he warned that Asia was reacting strongly to a world under Western domination, and would therefore not accept Australia in its midst as there was no common cultural values or traditions on which to build a

[87] Ibid. p. 192.
[88] Paul Keating, 'Present at the Creation of APEC, 17th November 1993', in *Advancing Australia: The Speeches of Paul Keating, Prime Minister* (Sydney, N.S.W: Big Picture Publications, 1995). pp. 197-200.
[89] Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilisations? (Summer 1993)', in *The Clash of Civilizations? The Debate* (New York: Foreign Affairs, 1996). p. 1.
[90] Ibid. pp. 19-21.
[91] Owen Harries, 'Clash of Civilisations', *The Weekend Australian*, 3 April 1993. p. 19.

community on. Becoming part of Asia would leave Australia isolated and without its natural allies. Australia's only choice was to graft themselves more wholeheartedly onto either the 'European' or 'North American' branches of 'Western civilisation.'[92] Under Harries' application of Huntington's thesis, all that had changed in terms of Australia's geo-strategic situation in the past 14 years was that the fall of the USSR had meant that culture had replaced ideology as the chief cause of international tensions, and that Australia was now potentially more vulnerable in this context that it was during the Cold War.

Given that Harries' summary of the 'Clash of Civilisations' thesis predated the article's publication by a few months, Greg Sheridan, the foreign editor of *The Australian* may have been among the first in the world to publically present his misgivings about it. He was certainly not one of its first supporters. 'Epic tosh', was one way that he described it, arguing that it was a product of 'post-cold war stress syndrome' and 'the academic desire to impose a simple pattern where no simple pattern exists.'[93] His critique of the thesis fell down two lines. Firstly, that Huntington's civilizational blocs contained within them a myriad of cultural diversity and were not the homogenous entities that he made them out to be, and secondly that because of this, they could not be expected to act as a cohesive bloc in contravention of individual national interests.

Once it was published in the prominent international relations magazine, *Foreign Affairs,* Huntington's thesis achieved a great degree of controversy as many other eminent international relations scholars and observers weighed in on the debate that it sparked. Much of this criticism was similar to Sheridan's. Fouad Ajami, writing from the School of Advanced International Studies at John Hopkins university, argued that Huntington's civilizational blocs were more theoretically watertight than their real-world counterparts. National self-interest, the force that Ajami suggested to be the true basis of international conflict, often put states that were meant to be civilizational allies at odds with each other.[94] Albert Weeks of New York University made a similarly 'realist' objection.[95] Others, not given to look at the world through the lens of national power-politics, merely claimed that Huntington's civilisations were not the homogenous entities that he made them out to be, and were subject to change.[96]

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[92] Ibid. p. 19.
[93] Greg Sheridan, '"Culture Wars" a Product of the Conspiracy Junkies', *The Australian*, 7 April 1993. p. 9.
[94] Fouad Ajami, 'The Summoning: "But They Said, We Will Not Hearken." (September/ October 1993)', in *The Clash of Civilizations? The Debate* (New York: Foreign Affairs, 1996). pp. 26-35.
[95] Albert Weeks, 'Do Civilisations Hold? (September/ October 1993)', in *The Clash of Civilisations? The Debate* (New York: Foreign Affairs, 1996). pp. 53-54.
[96] Liu Binyan, 'Civilisation Grafting (September/ October 1993)', in *The Clash of Civilizations? The Debate* (New York: Foreign Affairs, 1996). pp. 46-49., and Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, 'The Modernizing Imperative (September/ October 1993)', in *The Clash of Civilizations? The Debate* (New York: Foreign Affairs, 1996). pp. 50-53.

Citing Huntington's thesis, Keating responded the charge of seeming betrayal to the West by a reassertion of Australian cultural independence. He claimed 'we do not, and cannot, aim to be "Asian" or European or anything else but Australians.' Keating's vision for the Australian people was that they were to be united under Australian nationalism. Australia could take 'justifiable pride' in its multicultural society, its democratic system, and the protection of individual rights against the 'demands of the state.'[97] He could thus hardly be accused of breaking with the Western community. Keating rejected outright Huntington's predictions of inevitable cultural conflict, claiming that that Australia was itself the best 'evidence that cultures can coexist.'[98] Huntington and Harries for their part had fundamentally misunderstood Keating's goals for Australian engagement with Asia, and neglected to mention the very high price that he put on American engagement in the region as well. Harries, at least, was operating under the assumption that Australian culture and Western orientation sat in perpetual tension with its geographic location, and that crossing this boundary would leave Australia strategically vulnerable and without its natural Western allies. Keating recognised that this had been a tension in the Australian strategic imagination, but viewed it as a problem to be solved rather than an unchangeable fact of life.

The APEC leader's meeting as a multi-lateral regional framework, inclusive of an engaged United States, was the chief vehicle through which Keating was to smooth over the tensions between Australia and its geography. But Keating had also signalled, in his speech during Bush's visit, that this could also be achieved by deepening bilateral relationships with Asian nations. These would both be made independently of other nations and prioritise Australian interests, yet would be conscious of other national interests and reinforce the region's multi-lateral architecture.

Defence had identified one relationship in particular as a clear candidate for such an effort in December 1993. Attempting to develop 'a sound strategic relationship with Indonesia' would do the 'most for Australia's security.'[99] The strained history between the two nations, and Indonesia's strategic relevance due to its 'proximity, size, economic potential and population' made it especially salient.[100] It was a point that Keating needed no persuasion on. He had made Indonesia his first overseas visit as Prime Minister, and following the report begun to consider more thoroughly how to deepen the strategic aspects of the relationship with Indonesia. In March of 1994 he emphatically claimed, 'no country is more important to Australia than Indonesia.'[101] Keating's

[97] Keating, 'Australia and Asia (2), 26th October 1994'. p. 216.
[98] Ibid. p. 217.
[99] Department of Defence, 'Strategic Review 1993', December 1993, https://www.defence.gov.au/SPI/publications/stratreview/1993/1993.pdf. p. 24.
[100] Ibid. p. 12.
[101] Paul Keating, 'Australia and Indonesia, 16th March 1994', in *Advancing Australia: The Speeches of Paul Keating, Prime Minister* (Sydney, N.S.W: Big Picture Publications, 1995). p. 201.

proposal was that Australia pursue a 'strategic partnership' with Indonesia, a word that conveyed a connection of more formality than was perhaps initially intended by the Department of Defence. Such a partnership would also further undergird his current approach to the region, strengthening Australia's claim to be a member of it, and pioneering the development of substantial cross cultural relationships between Western and Asian nations. If Australia was to seek security 'in and with Asia, instead of against Asia', then 'Indonesia is the most important place it will have to be done.'[102] As an important corollary, the agreement would support trans-pacific partnership and:

> 'stand as a model for co-operation between developed and developing countries, between countries based on Western structures and values and those based on Asian models.'[103]

He did not expect this to be straightforward, and for good reason. Indonesia, because of its size, history, and strategic location, had been viewed for the second half of the 20th century as either capable of posing a threat to Australia and its interests, or being the most likely location from which such a threat would emerge.

Indonesia had been granted independence from the Dutch in 1949 and subsequently admitted into the United Nations. These developments had been supported and co-sponsored respectively by the Chifley government. But it was only soon after this that Australia began to become anxious about its northern neighbour. Indonesian designs on the Dutch colony in West New Guinea had been opposed by the Menzies government and its Minister for External Affairs, Percy Spender in 1950. Having just witnessed the fall of China to communism, Spender feared that the as yet untested Indonesian regime could prevent similar communist uprisings. The Dutch, by contrast, were considered to be reliable on such matters.[104] Differences over West New Guinea plagued the relationship for the entirety of the decade. The 1959 Strategic Basis Paper, for example, spoke of Indonesia's unaided potential to pose a threat to West New Guinea and Northern Australia. It could also be the location from which 'external Communist forces could operate against Australia'.[105] Garfield Barwick had obtained the External Affairs portfolio in 1961. Having been convinced that the Dutch claim was a lost cause and not viewed as especially important by either Britain or the United States, he withdrew Australia's backing.[106] He would reflect on the

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[102] Ibid. p. 203.
[103] Ibid. p. 204.
[104] Peter Gifford, 'The Cold War across Asia', in *Facing North: A Century of Australian Engagement with Asia*, ed. David Goldsworthy ([Canberra]: Carlton South, Vic: Dept. of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Melbourne University Press, 2001). p. 211.
[105] Australia. Department of Defence, 'Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy January 1959', in *A History of Australian Strategic Policy since 1945*, ed. Stephan Frühling (Canberra: Australian Deptof Defence, 2009). p. 269.
[106] Gifford, 'The Cold War across Asia'. p. 215.

significance of this decision and the broader trend of decolonisation on Australian strategic anxieties:

> 'it came as a tremendous psychological shock to many people in Australia when a land frontier with Indonesia developed… the sudden proximity of the less predictable, I am sure, carried and still carries great concern.'[107]

The high degree of anxiety articulated here is unmistakable. No land frontier had actually developed between Indonesia and Australia, only one between Indonesia and the Australian protectorate of Papua New Guinea. Yet this, regardless, was apparently too close for Australia.

Such uncertainty and general distrust of their nearest neighbour to the north would continue into the 1960s. Australia sent forces to oppose Indonesian 'confrontation' of the newly independent Malaysia throughout the middle of the decade alongside British garrisons there. [108] By the time that a peace agreement was signed between Malaysia and Indonesia in 1966, twenty-three Australians had been killed during the crisis, seven of which had been in skirmishes against Indonesian forces in Borneo.[109] 1975 brought the next significant crisis between the two nations with Indonesia's annexation of East Timor and the killing of five Australian journalists that occurred in the process.[110] Frosty diplomatic relations between Australia and Indonesia belied the general stability of the region and Indonesia's respect for the borders of its neighbours in the years that followed. Even by the late 1980s it was still possible to detect a brittle fragility at the heart of the relationship. The 1987 Defence White Paper, for example, noted that a 'stable Indonesia' was of great importance to Australia's geo-strategic security, and that the relationship be conducted with a mutual understanding of each nation's 'political and social systems.'[111] These were conspicuously uncontroversial statements, and the fact that they needed to be articulated so starkly spoke to the ever-present possibility of misunderstanding between the two countries.

It was on this fraught relationship that Keating set his sights, hoping to construct a formal agreement that would enclose this delicate linkage in a protective carapace. His proposal had few supporters among the ranks of senior cabinet ministers, personal advisors, and in the Department of Defence. This lack of enthusiasm was not unfounded. Indonesia's proud status as a non-aligned

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[107] Garfield Barwick, 'Australia's Foreign Relations', in *Australia's Defence and Foreign Policy*, ed. John Wilkes (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1964). p. 6.
[108] Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*. pp. 280-292, 340-344.
[109] Grey, *A Military History of Australia*. p. 235.
[110] David Goldsworthy et al., 'Reorientation', in *Facing North: A Century of Australian Engagement with Asia*, ed. David Goldsworthy ([Canberra]: Carlton South, Vic: Dept. of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Melbourne University Press, 2001). p. 368.
[111] Department of Defence, 'The Defence of Australia 1987: Presented to Parliament by the Minister for Defence the Honourable Kim C. Beazley, M.P.' pp. 15-16.

nation was thought to be the biggest factor that would prevent them from signing a formal security treaty with Australia, a nation with formal ties to the West.[112] Discussions went ahead regardless, firstly between Keating and Suharto in June 1994, between two envoys selected by both leaders for the remainder of that year, and returning finally to the two leaders towards the end of 1995.[113] The wording of the agreement approved by Cabinet in December 1995 committed both parties to consult on matters 'affecting their common security', 'in the case of adverse challenges', and to promote 'cooperative activities in the security field.'[114] With slight amendments, requested by the Indonesians, the language of the treaty replicated that of ANZUS – an indication of just how influential the American alliance was on Australian strategic thinking, and Keating's heady optimism for the future of the relationship with Indonesia.

Keating explained the importance of the treaty in terms that referred to the familiar Australian strategic anxieties regarding their northern neighbour. It was also importantly in keeping with his overall approach to deepen Australia's place in Asia and the Pacific by developing intra-regional ties. The agreement, according to Keating, would:

> 'provide reassurance that Australia and Indonesia recognise that each has a fundamental interest in the security of the other; commit each to cooperating with the other in ensuring their own security and that of the region; demonstrate that each has confidence in the intentions of each towards the other; and complement the progress that has been made in other areas of the relationship.'[115]

The benefits of this for the security and prosperity of the region, according to Keating, were many. Stable relations between two important members of the emerging Asia-Pacific community could further galvanise other connections within the group and 'shape the regional agenda positively.' The agreement also constituted a formal nexus between the Asian and Western elements of the region, and ensured continued cooperation between the two. Australia, as 'an ally of good standing with the United States' would ensure that it remained 'engaged in the region'. [116] Indonesia, for its part, carried influence within ASEAN and straddled the important geo-strategic position 'between the Indian and Pacific Oceans.'[117] The agreement stands as an excellent example of how Keating considered the pursuit of closer regional ties to also contribute directly to Australian interests.

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[112] Kelly, *The March of Patriots*. pp. 173-174.
[113] Gyngell, *Fear of Abandonment*. pp. 206-207.
[114] Paul Keating, 'Cabinet Submission 2555 - Australia-Indonesia Agreement on Maintaining Security - Decision 4813', PAPER FILES AND DOCUMENTS (allocated at series level), 14 December 1995, A14217, 2555, National Archives of Australia, http://www.naa.gov.au/cgi-bin/Search?O=I&Number=32310390. p. 7.
[115] Ibid. p. 3.
[116] Ibid. p. 4.
[117] Ibid. pp. 4-5.

Keating's radical nationalism dovetailed with an appreciation that Australia's economic and strategic future lay in Asia. While he did 'prove to be more "nationalist" than the "new nationalists" of the Whitlam period', Keating was not the first Prime Minister to articulate a vision of Australian national identity in light of the passing of Britishness.[118] Similarly, Keating was not the first Prime Minister to view Asia as the source of a new cultural energy that could replace what Britain had provided, as Mads Clausen argues, Asia had been a rhetorical symbol of 'a new found national maturity and independence' for Whitlam.[119] Holt had spoken about the promises of trade with Asia too. The newness of Keating's approach, however, lay in the emphasis that he put on the development of multi-lateral and bilateral diplomatic relationships that would provide a sense of the economic and strategic community he desired to integrate Australia within. Australia's geographical location in Asia was an inescapable fact of national existence, yet unlike Harries or Huntington, he did not consider this to be in tension with Australia's Western alignment or political values. Rather, he took it as his responsibility to create the structures that would bridge over these cultural divides and position Australia as the nexus between the Asian and Western sides of the community.

Public reactions

The most provocative commentary on Keating's and Evans' approaches to Asia had been provided by Harries and Huntington, but they weren't the only ones to weigh in on Australia. The debate that followed often conceptually mirrored Huntington's demarcation of exclusivity between different civilisations. Few held that such demarcations were unchangeable or predicted that these would form the battle-lines of the next global conflict. Yet much of the discussion was concerned with the stark differences between Australia's Western character and the wide variety of other neighbouring cultures, and attempted to predict what side would have to change more significantly if Australia was to achieve acceptance. The notion of 'Asianisation', something that neither Keating nor Evans had rarely, if ever spoken of, begun to refer to a process occurring in Asia that would result in Australia's exclusion from the region. It could also refer to a supposed process underway in Australian society that would render it unrecognisable to its current members and more in line with its Asian neighbours.

[118] Curran, *The Power of Speech*. p. 191.
[119] Clausen, 'The Vortex Is Here: Asia and Australian Post-Imperial Nationhood'. p. 187.

The journalist Greg Sheridan, for example foresaw the 'Asianisation' of Australian society, not in a strictly ethnic sense through patterns of immigration, but as a term that encompassed both 'material' economic change and 'spiritual' change in 'the Australian psyche'. This was supposedly sufficiently advanced by 1995 for him to proclaim that, 'an old mental universe has died' and 'a new universe has come into being.'[120] Increased openness to Asia, driven by the imperative to find export markets, would have 'huge cultural and societal consequences' and entail a new generation of Australians undertaking 'serious intellectual effort to come to come to grips with… the great civilisations of East Asia.' Such an effort would usher forth a change in mental paradigm and the type of society Australia was.[121]

Others followed Keating's lead on the importance of a radical nationalist interpretation of Australian national identity to undertake the task of engaging with Asia, but made different conclusions. The attempt to re-cast Australian national character in more stridently Australian terms can be observed in Stephen Fitzgerald's book, *Is Australia an Asian Country?* FitzGerald, Australia's first ambassador to the People's Republic of China, and the then head of the Asia-Australia Institute at the University of New South Wales, argued in 1997 that deep national introspection was required to undertake the necessary work of engagement with Asia. It was now time for a long overdue intellectual reckoning with Asia that previous iterations of Australia's national identity had apparently so far prevented. The pressing need for this public reckoning derived from his understanding that the recent changes in Asia as it was propelled economically to be perhaps the most important region in the world. Australia's future lay in this region, and according to FitzGerald, it would 'not be one in which the United States, or any other power with which we have shared cultural heritage or political philosophies or processes or institutions, [was to be] the determining force.'[122]

He argued that the supposedly 'derivative' nature of Australian identity had, for much of its post-British settlement history, inhibited a true Australian sense of its own identity and made the task of 'coming to terms with Asia' even more difficult than it may have been otherwise.[123] His radical nationalist analysis here is a defining feature of the way he framed the task for Australia in Asia. Australia's Asianisation was just one part of a bigger process of 'Australianisation', one part of 'the coming to terms with history, geography, habitat and future of Australian society.' This was

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[120] Greg Sheridan, 'Australia's Asian Odyssey', in *Living with Dragons: Australia Confronts Its Asian Destiny*, ed. Greg Sheridan (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin in association with Mobil Oil Australia, 1995). p. 3.
[121] Ibid. pp. 15-17.
[122] Stephen FitzGerald, *Is Australia an Asian Country? Can Australia Survive in an East Asian Future?* (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1997). p. 5.
[123] Ibid. p. 55.

not a call to abandon what it meant to be Australian, but to discover what it truly meant to be Australian in a radical nationalist sense.[124] After all, there were 'many kinds of Australian':

> 'the crypto-Brit, aping the manners and accent of upper-class British civil servants; the servant of US interests, sliding around Asia in borrowed garb and protection; the uncultured 'colonial'… But there is an Australian kind of Australian who is a nationalist… who rejoices in a contemporary culture which is more vibrant than almost any other contemporary culture in the Asian region.'[125]

It was this last Australian, who as a product of immigration and intermarriage would have a 'honey coloured' skin pigmentation, but who more importantly would imbibe a cosmopolitan sense of Australian national character, 'truly fitted to be a member of an Asian regional community.'[126] FitzGerald's 'Honey coloured society' was a shorthand way of referring to this future complexion of Australian society, with a specific importance attached to cosmopolitan sentiments and existing Australian democratic values, over whatever it implied about future Australian skin colour. For Fitzgerald, these questions of national identity, in the sense of its 'cultural', 'philosophical', 'moral', and 'ethical' underpinnings, needed decisive answers.[127] As Australian society braced for some changes that went with greater contact with Asian cultures, and the shift, even partially, of the geo-strategic centre of gravity in the region toward China, Australia needed to know what aspects of national character were to be held closely. It needed to know what it stood for before it litigated individual issues with its ascendant neighbour.

Fitzgerald also had misgivings with both the Evans' conception of convergence and Keating's assumption of acceptance as the two models by which Australia would deepen ties in the region. His view was that Asia was undergoing its self-perception, the cultivation of an Asian sense of identity, cultural decolonisation and even, perhaps, 'de-Westernisation.'[128] In this context, Keating's belief that Australia 'would necessarily find acceptance' in Asia by nature of geography was misplaced.[129] Asianisation, as FitzGerald saw it, also created problems for the dominant conceptions of convergence, which were 'overwhelmingly Western', as was 'commonly also the projected end point of the convergence process.'[130] The true form of convergence underway in Asia may have been the opposite of this, and be 'onto a track more Asian than Western.'

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[124] Ibid. p. 63.
[125] Ibid. p. 70.
[126] Ibid. p. 71.
[127] Ibid. p. 160.
[128] Ibid. pp. 42-45.
[129] Ibid. p. 9.
[130] Ibid. p. 40.

FitzGerald thought that Asian societies would 'absorb such things as ways of governance and individual rights' while rejecting Western malaise seen in 'the adversarial dynamic, the erosion of family values, the breakdown of community, and unfettered individual freedom.'[131]

Anthony Milner was in general agreement with this, citing a 'strong element of cultural assertiveness' that went with Asianisation.[132] This included Chinese 'resentment of the West and Western values', and Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahathir Bin Mohamad's assertion that his country 'at no time' conformed 'one hundred percent to Western values.'[133] Nancy Vivani made a similar point. She understood Alan Dupont's thesis of an 'Asian Way of Thinking', including a push for cultural decolonisation, a strengthening of cross-regional solidarity at an elite and popular level, and defence against calls for democratisation and observance of human rights in Asian nations, as 'excluding Australia from being part of South East Asia.'[134]

Milner also argued that similar discourses in Australia had begun to emphasise deep seated differences between Australian and Asian cultures. By 1995, there was an 'increasingly sharp distinction' being made between the '"Asianisation" of Australia' and a 'vigorous and sophisticated Australian engagement with the Asian region.'[135] Perhaps Australia could engage with Asia as Keating had hoped – 'as Australians'. Finding words to describe the nature of Australian society, however, was difficult without grasping for references to its political heritage outside the region. The 'doyen of Australian philosophers, John Passmore', for example argued that Australia was 'fundamentally European.'[136] An academic inquiry titled the *Asian Perceptions Project* concluded that the more Australians became aware of Asian cultures, the more they would become aware of their 'European heritage.'[137] Milner concluded that by the mid-1990s, there was an insistence on 'the essentially liberal European character of Australia.'[138]

Keating and Evans were largely silent on how they thought Australia would negotiate cultural change. Their approaches to Australia's engagement in Asia focussed rather on how the region would respond to the West's ascendancy after the Cold War and how it would accommodate a

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131 Ibid. p. 50.
132 Anthony Milner, 'The Rhetoric of Asia', in *Seeking Asian Engagement: Australia in World Affairs, 1991-1995*, ed. James Cotton and John Ravenhill (Melbourne: Oxford University Press in association with The Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1997), 32–45. p. 38.
133 Ibid. p. 39.
134 Nancy Viviani, 'Australia and Southeast Asia', in *Seeking Asian Engagement: Australia in World Affairs, 1991-1995*, ed. James Cotton and John Ravenhill (Melbourne: Oxford University Press in association with The Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1997). pp. 163-164.
135 Anthony Milner, 'The Rhetoric of Asia', in *Seeking Asian Engagement: Australia in World Affairs, 1991-1995*, ed. James Cotton and John Ravenhill (Melbourne: Oxford University Press in association with The Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1997). p. 44.
136 Ibid. p. 35.
137 Ibid. p. 44.
138 Ibid. p. 45.

more engaged Australia. From his first two weeks in The Lodge, Keating had positioned APEC to be a forum in which Australia alongside the United States could open up trade in the region, thereby securing its future prosperity. With the help of the 'biggest dog on the block', Australia could shape the region according to these interests.[139] Evans, following Fukuyama, had hoped to see a similar change in the region in regard to political values, liberal democracies and adherence to UN defined human rights. Historically, there were parallels with this theory of 'convergence' and previous Australian efforts to render Asia to be more benign with the use of outside influences. In strategic and security terms, Keating's creative approach to regional agreements, both bilateral and multilateral, had similar objectives. These were attempts to recast Australian images of the region and repoint the strategic imagination for a new era of intense intra-regional trade. They were also attempts to repoint the region's diplomatic architecture with forums to negotiate differences and incentivise the maintenance of geo-strategic stability. The fraught relationship with Indonesia was an obvious place to start this. This was both an attempt to sooth one of Australia's historic strategic anxieties, and to erect another supportive buttress to uphold regional stability.

[139] Keating, *Engagement*. p. 25.

Conclusion

This thesis has looked at a number of themes that have shaped Australia's strategic imagination from the mid-nineteenth century down to the late 1990s. As set out in the introduction to this work, the strategic imagination refers to how Australian foreign and defence policymakers have conceived of the nation's geo-strategic and geo-political landscape in relation to its national identity. It provides both the foundations, as well as the limits, for national leaders and policymakers. While Australia's strategic environment and national identity has undergone tectonic change since Federation in 1901, certain patterns of thinking within this strategic psychology have endured.

The years between 1901 and 2020 might then be divided into three broad periods with hazy delineations and considerable overlap between each. Moreover, each period is clearly responsive to the particular structure of global and regional strategic power prevailing at the time. The first, the Imperial period, spanned from the late nineteenth century down to 1967. Australian national identity stemmed from a pride in the British race and its achievements, underpinned by the global reach of the British empire. Their surrounding strategic topography was that of European empires, colonial possessions and colonial subjects until final decolonisation in the 1950s and 1960s. The second period, spanning from the late 1940s to the early 1990s, was that of the Cold War. Strategic rivalry between the Communist powers and the West was largely conceived of in terms of political ideology and affected Australian strategic thinking of the region. Australia had entered the Cold War firmly attached to the British Empire but began to emphasise its 'Western' alignment through its alliance with the United States, especially as British Imperial power waned. Finally, the third period commenced with the end of the Cold War and can be called the era of the 'post-Cold War' period or, to draw on more contemporary parlance, the 'rules based international order'. This period was characterised by American global strategic pre-eminence that upheld increasing rhetoric and commitment to the so-called rules based international order and the Australian economy's deep integration in Asia. If Patrick Porter is to be taken seriously, American pre-eminence was far more consequential in this period than the international communities' inconsistent adherence to liberal ideals.[1] The return of great power rivalry to the region during the beginning in 2008 and escalating through the 2010s looks to challenge the strategic assumptions of this period.

[1] Patrick Porter, 'A World Imagined: Nostalgia and Liberal Order', Cato Institute, 5 June 2018, https://www.cato.org/publications/policy-analysis/world-imagined-nostalgia-liberal-order.

Throughout these periods there have been three general patterns of thinking and behaviour in Australian foreign and defence policy making. Firstly, Australia has carried a robust sense that its settler colonial history and Western political traditions set it apart from its regional neighbours. This was most keenly felt when the international structures of the British empire still upheld a sense of Australian Britishness. A similar impulse endured after the collapse of Britishness, however, with ideas of Australia being a Western country, speaking the English language and standing for particularly Western political ideals were given considerable importance in the strategic imagination. This conception of national identity made certain relationships with Britain or the United States seem more 'natural' than those with Australia's regional neighbours. Despite these ties, Australia has always acted in accordance with how its interests were perceived at any given time. The second recurring theme in the strategic imagination builds on this previous one. Australia, never being a nation of world beating strategic strength, has looked to these 'natural' relationships with greater powers to underwrite its strategic position in its region. This rarely provided complete reassurance, however, and anxieties around how such help would come in a time of crisis have continually nagged. This has been the product of an Australian realisation that the greater power that it is aligned with ultimately had different interests to its own. The third and final theme is a response to the second. Australian prime ministers and policy makers have continually attempted to convince the relevant greater power that it was in its interests to address whatever pressing threat or concern Australia had.

This conclusion looks at how these themes have continued to reverberate from the mid 1990s to mid 2020 during a time of deepening of engagement with the Asia Pacific, an intensifying of the connection with the US and the West, and the return of great power competition to the region.

In 2001, Prime Minister John Howard became the first Australian or American leader to invoke the ANZUS treaty. This was not in regard to a threat within the treaty's originally intended jurisdiction, the Pacific, but in response to the September 11 terrorist attacks that, as Howard argued, constituted an attack on Australian and American values.

Australian engagement with Asia in the new millennium continued to be predicated on Australian assertions that it belonged in the economically dynamic region despite underlying cultural differences, and a pan-Pacific American presence. Howard's sorties into the culture wars of the mid-90s may have vigorously opposed Keating's radical nationalism and republicanism, but did not diverge, in essence, from his predecessor's approach to Asia. The rhetoric of upholding values, and a rules based international order continued to be seen as being in Australia's national

interest. This approach begun to be challenged by the return of great power rivalry in the Pacific between the United States and China from 2008 onwards.

In defence of values: The War on Terror

On the 14th September 2001, Howard became the first leader of any member country of the ANZUS treaty to explicitly trigger one of its articles. Howard had been in Washington days earlier, having witnessed the events of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon from American soil. An Australian response, he claimed, would 'require the invocation of ANZUS.'[2] It was a historic pronouncement for an historic year. The treaty had been ratified by each signatory 49 years prior, and the text itself was only just 50 years old. Howard's decision to invoke the treaty, backed by Cabinet and the leader of the opposition soon after, raised a number of historical questions. The most important in regard to Australia's strategic imagination was how a treaty that spoke overwhelmingly to maintaining peace 'in the Pacific' came to provide the basis for an Australian military expedition to the Middle East.[3]

The shifts within the Australian strategic imagination that had occurred since the mid-20th century found consummation in the decade following the turn of the new millennium under both the Howard and Rudd Governments. A conception of the nation as racially Anglo-Saxon, part of a global British community, and carrying an overriding fear of invasion from the north had given way to a concept of cultural, political, and strategic partnership with the West. At the same time, successive Prime Ministers and policy makers grappled to put words to feelings of Australia's rightful place in its geographic region. Australian commitments to wars in Afghanistan and Iraq entrenched the importance of Western liberal-democratic political values to how the nation saw itself on the world stage and the centrality of the American alliance to Australian security and military obligations. In his incisive summary of the literature interested in Howard's 'unquestioning support' of the United States during this period, David McLean identifies two leading motives. These are, firstly, Howard's 'sense of cultural and ideological affinity with United States' and other Anglo-phone nations such as the United Kingdom, and secondly, the importance he ascribed to

[2] John Winston Howard, 'Press Conference: ANZUS Treaty; Ansett', PM Transcripts: Transcripts from the Prime Ministers of Australia, 14 September 2001, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/release/transcript-12308.
[3] Commonwealth of Australia, 'Appendix B- The ANZUS Treaty', text, Parliament of Australia, 1 September 1951, Australia,
https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Completed_Inquiries/jfadt/usrelations/appendixb.

reciprocity in the interpretation of ANZUS for Australian security.[4] Howard's sense of cultural and ideological affinity with the United States had firm historic foundations in regard to how Australia had viewed its place in the world since the early 1970s. These were only able to feature so prominently because of the absence of any regional threats and Australia's confidence in U.S. might and determination in its post-Cold War guise to uphold Asia's strategic stability.

In Parliament, Howard decried the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon to have represented:

> 'a massive assault on the values not only of the United States of America but also of this country— the values of free men and women and of decent people and decent societies around the world.'[5]

The rest of the speech was replete with similar reflections on the common values held by the United States and Australia. Howard was saying that this was not just an attack on a group of people, it was an attack on their political ideals.

It was the first time that an Australian Prime Minister had effectively declared war in response to an attack on political values. He also clearly felt a sense of national indebtedness to the United States that he sought to mobilise in order to justify such action. ANZUS was written to address regional security at a time when Australia's ties to Britain constituted central importance to its national identity and the source of its political values. Yet neither the memory of the Pacific War, nor Australia and the United States sharing of common values are mentioned in the ANZUS treaty. It does, however, acknowledge both Australia and New Zealand's 'membership of the British Commonwealth of Nations' and requisite military obligations.

Howard's invocation of ANZUS and his conception of the U.S.-Australian connection reflected the broader shifts in the Australian strategic imagination that had taken place over the second half of the 20th century. Before this point, with the exception of the Gulf War and smaller peacekeeping operations, Australia had only gone to war in support of the Empire or to meet what was perceived as a regional threat. In the early years of the Cold War, Australia had notably rejected the ideological basis of conflict between its allies and the Soviet Union, viewing the confrontation in terms of how it would divert attention away from Australia's regional security.[6] After the decline

[4] David McLean, 'Too Much Memory: Writing the History of Australian-American Relations during the Howard Years', in *Australia and the World: A Festschrift for Neville Meaney*, ed. Joan Beaumont and Matthew Jordan, 2013. pp. 254-255.
[5] 39. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 17 September 2001. p. 30739.
[6] Neville Meaney, 'Australia, the Great Powers and the Coming of the Cold War', *Australian Journal of Politics & History* 38, no. 3 (1992): https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8497.1992.tb00678.x. p. 330.

of Britishness and the contractions of empire in the 1960s, the sharing of common political values became the dominant way of articulating Australia's connection with the West. The overlap between these two conceptions is evident in Prime Minister Harold Holt's speech at the opening of the North-West Cape Communication Station. Here he reflected on 'a common heritage of British freedom and of British democratic institutions' as providing the natural ties between Australia and the United States. What would become the prevailing way to express Australia's membership of the West was expressed here in the language of Britishness. It was at this time, however, hardly a reason to go to war. It was not with indebtedness that Holt remembered the battle of the Coral Sea, for example, but with gratitude and a sense of having repaid the United States in full by hosting one of their communication stations. While the sharing of common values made the U.S.-Australian relationship a natural fit, its purpose was more specific. For Holt, the Communication Station exemplified the ANZUS spirit, and ANZUS as 'the greatest single contributing factor to the long-term security' of the Australian nation. Although he did acknowledge the 'principles of freedom and the democratic institutions which were part of our common heritage' as the reason for the closeness of the relationship was in what the United States could provide for Australia's security.

From an Australian point of view, the sharing of common political values with the United States was at this point merely part of the relationship's implicit substrata. Before Whitlam's election, the American alliance was viewed to be valuable insofar as it could assuage Australia's strategic vulnerabilities in the region. This was seen in Gorton's obsession with extracting a more iron clad guarantee from the Americans. The relationship was viewed through the lens of ANZUS and its value in assuaging Australia's regional anxieties. It was also seen in Fraser's maintaining of forward defence. After the Nixon Doctrine, he considered this to be the best way to retain American interest in what he perceived to be the area of Australia's primary strategic concern.

Whilst in office, Whitlam and Fraser both treated the relationship with the United States as more than merely a satin pillow bearing ANZUS as a bejewelled crown. Whitlam had long rejected the premise that Australia faced perpetual regional threats and sought to correct this approach by deepening ties in the region even before he was elected. He held that adherence to ANZUS did not constitute a foreign policy and provided space for other conceptions of the U.S.-Australia relationship to prevail. With this came an awareness of the common political traits that both nations shared. It was a tacit recognition, however, and Whitlam was hardly going to give it too much airtime given his aims to craft a more 'independent' Australia foreign and defence policy. Fraser, on the other hand, began to lay more emphasis on the ideological dimensions of the relationship with the United States and the West more broadly as being an important part of

Australia's outlook. His commissioned report, *Australia and the Third World*, influenced in large part by its chairman Owen Harries had put Australia's Western membership in the starkest possible terms. Both Fraser and Harries had on different occasions stated that they prioritised a realist view of Australia's national interests, over and above one based on the ideological unity of the Western world. Both warned that just because Australia held common political values with its Western allies, this did not mean that its interests were identical. But in Australia's geographic context, both also considered the values and institutions of the Western world to be the primary determinant of what set it apart from its neighbours. This explicit articulation of Australia's status as a liberal democracy shows that it was a significant factor in their outlook.

Hawke spoke about the common values of the West in regards to the U.S. alliance and in the context of European and American subsidies that were harmful to Australia's agricultural exports. There were clear economic motivations for this rhetoric in winning respite for Australian wheat farmers, and the defence relationship was viewed in terms of the manifold of practical benefits it held. But Hawke saw the relationship as going deeper than mere instrumentality. It was to a joint session of the United States Congress in 1988 that Hawke ranked their common political systems as providing the 'enduring basis of the relationship' despite what changes may occur to either countries' interests.[7] This shift, as well as America's unrivalled superpower status at the end of the Cold War, and very real economic interests in the Middle-East, go some way to explain Australia's involvement in operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Hawke claimed that as a 'self-reliant' country, Australia's interests were best served by upholding the principles of the United Nations. It was here, however, that the webs of the Western alliance played a central role in working out what form U.N. sanctions and response to Iraqi aggression took. The West's Cold War victory had provided the U.N. Security Council with an albeit temporary vitality and potency to resolve international issues. Yet the fact that Australia would go to war with its Western allies to uphold certain 'principles' was a significant development, even if these were the principles of the U.N. and it was deemed to be in Australia's interests to defend them.

After Hawke, Evans and Keating would both treat political values as central to Australia's outlook. Evans for example, claimed that liberal-democratic values were 'at the core' of Australia's 'sense of national identity and worth.'[8] Keating sought to base his approach to the region on the Western 'value' of free trade in light of its victory over the Soviet Union and to use the United

[7] Hawke, 'Speech by the Prime Minister of Australia to the Joint Meeting of the United States Congress, Washington'. p.

[8] Evans and Grant, *Australia's Foreign Relations*, 1991. p. 329.

States' position as the 'biggest dog on the block' to realise such an end.[9] In strategic terms, he hoped that his treaty with Indonesia would be a 'model of co-operation' between countries… based on Western structures and values and those based on Asian models.'[10]

Howard's emphasis on 'political values' in regards to Australia's outlook was thus not new, but reflected their growing significance in the strategic imagination over the previous 30 years. What was new was Howard's conviction that they had been allowed to play second fiddle to the imperative of Asian engagement. In the late-1970s, it became the dominant way to refer to Australia's relationships with Western countries and had been discussed as a core tenant of its national identity. This had gradually replaced the previous conception that it was racial and cultural Britishness, and British parliamentary democracy as a corollary, that constituted the national community. A feeling of common Anglo-Saxon-ism lay at the heart of Australia's most significant strategic relationships. The more conspicuous trend of the past 30 years had been the development of Australia's relations with Asia, from a state of constant anxiety to one where it was regarded as economically indispensable. The posture of Australian Defence policy may have changed from 'forward defence' and conducting operations with 'great and powerful friends', to self-reliance. Yet the holding of common ideals with Australia's most important strategic partner had remained a fundamental part of the strategic imagination. This in turn was supported by U.S. strategic pre-eminence.

The 2000 Defence White Paper offers one final clue in explaining Howard's historic invocation of the ANZUS treaty. The White Paper viewed American strategic 'preponderance' as serving the interests of many countries in providing a stable global environment, and a force that would 'promote economic, social and political developments' in the region that would align with Australia's 'interests and values.'[11] Like Keating almost a decade earlier, the White Paper judged American pre-eminence as the most effective force available to shape Australia's strategic environment for its benefit. Australian strategic priorities still lay in the region, however. The White Paper had ranked potential Australian efforts to support the United Nations and the United States to 'uphold' and 'strengthen' the 'global security order behind ensuring Australia's continental

[9] Keating, *Engagement*. p. 25.

[10] Paul Keating, 'Australia and Indonesia, 16th March 1994', in *Advancing Australia: The Speeches of Paul Keating, Prime Minister* (Sydney, N.S.W: Big Picture Publications, 1995). p. 201.

[11] Department of Defence, *Defence 2000: Our Future Defence Force*, Parliamentary Paper / The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, no. 451 of 2000 (Canberra: Defence Publishing Service, 2000). p. 16.

security, and that of its immediate neighbourhood and region.[12] Like most official pronouncements since Hawke was in office, however, regional threats to Australia were deemed to be low.[13]

In parliament, Howard also spoke of the memory of American military action in the Pacific during World War Two, providing emotive weight to the prospect of Australia taking up arms in defence of a threat to the United States:

> 'that great nation which stood between us and tyranny on one critical occasion of our history.'[14]

But this was also a reminder of their present significance to Australia's regional security. If Australia was to benefit from the United States' promotion of values and interests that contributed to security and stability in the region, and given the absence of any foreseen regional threat, it could hardly sit by if this capacity and the values it represented were directly attacked.

Howard, citing the defence of values and the memory of the Pacific War, reinterpreted ANZUS, a treaty designed to meet common threats in the Pacific, in light of one short clause:

> 'In every way, the attack on New York and Washington and the circumstances surrounding it did constitute an attack upon the metropolitan territory of the United States of America within the provisions of articles IV and V of the ANZUS Treaty. If that treaty means anything, if our debt as a nation to the people of the United States in the darkest days of World War II means anything, if the comradeship, the friendship and the common bonds of democracy and a belief in liberty, fraternity and justice mean anything, it means that the ANZUS Treaty applies and that the ANZUS Treaty is properly invoked.'[15]

Such a mechanism triggering an Australian military response was a stretch. Article V, for example, is the only place that the phrase 'an attack on the metropolitan territory' can be found, and even here it is in the context of 'Island territories… armed forces, public vessels or aircraft in the Pacific.'[16] By sheer virtue of its wording, ANZUS would be far more easily applied to attacks on Sydney, Auckland or Los Angeles than it was in regard to New York or Washington. Yet the mere memory of American power in the Pacific, and its present analogue, was relevant enough to justify its invocation.

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[12] Ibid. p. x.
[13] Ibid. p. ix.
[14] 39. Commonwealth, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives. 17 September 2001. p. 30740
[15] Ibid. p. 30742
[16] Commonwealth of Australia, 'Appendix B- The ANZUS Treaty'.

The U.S. Alliance, common action in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the defence of 'values' were the most salient issues in Australia's foreign and Defence policy for the first decade of the new millennium. By September of 2007, Howard was equating the defence of Australia, 'the first obligation of any government' with the defence of 'the values that all of us hold so dear.'[17] Australia's region, inclusive of a committed United States, however, continued to be thought of as the key to a secure and prosperous future. At a press conference marking the end of the 2007 APEC meeting in Sydney, Howard voiced the familiar Australian line on the institution:

> 'It is, for Australia, the premier international gathering by far. It represents the overwhelming bulk of Australia's economic, political and strategic future. It is a gathering that fully engages most of Australia's major trading partners, such as Japan, the United States, China, Korea and many other nations. It also links us in constant dialogue with the leaders of the major economies of the region. Eight out of 10 of Australia's best trading partners are to be found, 60 to 70 per cent of Australia's trade is to be found, in the APEC region. It is therefore of an enormous significance to this country.'[18]

As if to underline how well established the view of Asia's economic and strategic importance to Australia had become, Howard lost the federal election later that year to Kevin Rudd, Australia's first Mandarin speaking Prime Minister.

The rise of China

Not since Whitlam had a Prime Minister come to office more schooled in foreign affairs. Rudd had spent close to a decade in the Department of Foreign Affairs in the 1980s. His stated approach to foreign policy was based on 'three pillars'. The first, the U.S. Alliance, held the place of the 'strategic bedrock' of Australia's 'foreign and security policy.' The United Nations, as a 'the rules based international system' was the second. 'Comprehensive engagement with Asia' was the third. This was not the engagement with Asia of Keating or Howard, however, but one aware of the

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[17] John Winston Howard, 'Address to the RSL National Congress, Sofitel Hotel, Melbourne', PM Transcripts: Transcripts from the Prime Ministers of Australia, 11 September 2007, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/release/transcript-15272.

[18] John Winston Howard, 'APEC Australia 2007 Final Press Conference, International Media Centre, Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Sydney', PM Transcripts: Transcripts from the Prime Ministers of Australia, 9 July 2007, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/release/transcript-15593.

changes to the strategic structure of the region. It was an approach retooled for the so called 'Asia-Pacific century', an engagement that was:

> 'not just a matter of historical recognition of the requirements of geographical proximity. Our engagement with Asia for the future will be about engaging with a region of global significance in its own right.'

It reflected the fact of Asia's growing share of global economic weight, its increasing population, the modernisation of regional military technology and the continued existence of 'potential flashpoints.'[19]

It was a recognition of a major change in the region that was unrivalled in magnitude since European decolonisation. The end of the Cold War had been globally significant, but could not match the impact of decolonisation on Australia's regional calculations. At this stage, Rudd was not alarmed about the increasing global significance of Asia, but cautious of the changes it would mean for Australia's strategic environment. In a meeting with the U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, Rudd styled himself as a 'brutal realist on China', hoping to convince China to play a greater and constructive role, 'all the while also preparing to deploy force if everything goes wrong.'[20] The 2009 Defence White Paper also signalled the 'uncertainty' of global economic and strategic conditions. Australia faced 'new strategic challenges' since the previous White Paper had been published in 2000, including the threat of international terrorism, China's rise in economic, political and military terms, climate change and the current global financial crisis.[21] The white paper also foresaw an end to the United States' global strategic dominance. While no other power was predicted to surpass the United States in military terms, China's rise meant that the most important relationship in the region and the globe would be that between it and the U.S.[22]

A more alarmed tone was struck a year later by Hugh White, Professor of Strategic Studies at the Australian National University. The balance of power in Asia was indeed shifting. The time of 'uncontested American primacy' in Asia looked to be over, a reality all but assured by China's increasing economic and military capacity. White, who had also been a senior advisor in the Hawke government and deputy secretary of the Department of Defence during the Keating and Howard years, argued that such tectonic change would require that Australia:

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[19] Kevin Rudd, 'Address to the Asia Society AustralAsia Centre, Sydney: It's Time to Build an Asia Pacific Community', 4 June 2008, https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/release/transcript-15947.
[20] 'Secretary Clinton's March 24, 2009 Conversation with Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd' (Secretary of State, 28 March 2009), https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09STATE30049_a.html.
[21] Australia and Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030: Defence White Paper 2009* (Canberra: Dept. of Defence, 2009). p. 16.
[22] Ibid. p. 34.

> 'Will have to start thinking about our place in the world all over again from the ground up, and make choices we have never before faced.'

This was because, according to White, Australia foreign policy had viewed either British or American 'domination of Asia's oceans' as one of its 'permanent central pillars.'[23] This now sat in tension with Australia's interests in continuing the economic boom that an industrialising China had been over the past 20 years. It now faced a choice of hard military calculation. Sentiment, and the 'bonds of history, culture and values' would count for little in keeping America engaged in Australia's security in these times. White warned that Australians 'must accept the unwelcome idea that power politics matters again.'[24] His recommendation was that Australia develop military forces to bolster its status as a middle power. It must be able to 'do things that a great power doesn't agree with, or even opposes, without the backing of another great power' and defend, if need be, 'the continent alone against a major Asian power.'[25] As White himself claimed, this was a startling departure from Australian strategic orthodoxy in response to major structural changes in the region.

This was, however, hardly the first time that Australia's interests were considered to not completely coincide with that of its most important strategic ally. White's claim that British or American domination of Asia's oceans had been a central pillar of Australian foreign policy was true in some senses. Australian foreign and defence policy makers had regularly sought for either Britain of the United States to provide for Australia's security by occupying a powerful position in the region. Whether the such a presence was thought to be an adequate showing was another matter entirely.

Alfred Deakin was the first Prime Minister to show concern that Australia's defence could not be completely covered by the Royal Navy. His attempted solution to the problem was to establish an Australian Navy to defend the continent's shores if imperial attention captivated by European contingencies. It was also at the heart of Eggleston's 'two ocean dilemma'. The ties of empire could provide no assurances for Australia's security.

The shift from reliance on British to American power was precisely because the Royal Navy had been found wanting in the Pacific in the early 1940s. Britain still had a part to play in the region, however, and would re-establish a strategic presence in Asia after the Second World War. What followed was one period in Australia's strategic history where it had two of its 'great and

[23] Hugh White, *Power Shift: Australia's Future between Washington and Beijing*, Quarterly Essay, QE 39 (Collingwood, Vic: Black Inc, 2010). pp. 5-6.
[24] Ibid. p. 48.
[25] Ibid. p. 68.

powerful friends' actively engaged in its geographic neighbourhood. At a time when decolonisation stoked deep-set racial fears about the end of European global dominance, the American and British military presence in Asia represented a de-facto imperial continuity and a welcome strategic safety net. Even at this stage, however, Australia's strategic anxieties abounded. Forward Defence would provide for Australia's defence well beyond its shores and with its allies carrying the largest burden of the commitment. It was also a way to entice the greater powers to maintain their presence in the region. Yet this came with it its own uncertainties. ANZUS, while publically lauded, was privately subject to endless scrutiny by Prime Ministers and policy makers. What scenario would reliably trigger an American response, and what would the response be? Would Australian troops in Malaysia fall under its protection?

Britain's announcement that it would significantly withdraw militarily to 'east of Suez' put an end to its role as a strategic player in the region, quashing Australian hopes that it could be convinced to continue to play a stabilising role. President Nixon's seeming suggestion in the late 1960s that America would do that same, but 'West of Hawaii', provided the context for yet more furtive attempts to renew American strategic interest in Asia. Fraser's continuation of forward defence in the early 1970s in order to retain a foothold on the Asian mainland should America need to return was one such effort.

Whitlam was the first and only Australian Prime Minister to be at ease with a minimal American presence in Asia. His attempts to expunge the racial and colonial vestiges of Australian foreign and defence policy were indications that the previous approach was no longer tenable. His verbal assent to a zone of neutrality in South East Asia, free from great power competition and thus also the United States, had never before been seen. Yet this was based of his judgement, one shared by Australian strategic planners, that Australia did not at this time, or indeed for the following decade, face serious geo-strategic threat.

It would not last long, however. With Fraser's election as Prime Minister, Australian regional anxieties begun to be understood more through the prism of the Cold War than through the legacy of colonialism that Whitlam had sought to banish. Deeming the American position in Asia as insufficient to counter Russian activity or interest in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, Fraser warned that the West should heed the lessons of Munich and check the expansion of Russian capabilities. His commissioned report on *Australia and the Third World* articulated an outlook that had renovated colonial strategic architecture to conform to Cold War perceptions. The similarity of sentiment between Australia and its Western allies was understood to be self-evident, yet like White decades

later, Fraser knew that this did not guarantee the mobilisation of Western force necessary for its broader strategic needs, let alone for Australian specific ones.

White's identification of the permanent central pillar of Australian foreign policy – a reliance on American or British geo-strategic primacy in the Pacific and Asian waters, is much easier to observe during the Hawke and Keating governments. Yet the policy initiatives that these two Prime Ministers advanced were often more complicated formulations than a mere working from this first principle. American power was central to Australian purposes, but needed to be massaged so that it met Australian interests. Hawke had stared down the left-wing of his party over the importance of joint-facilities, and defended them from Australian farmers that had been hurt by President Reagan's Export Enhancement Program. He carried concerns regarding what impact these subsidies would have on the Western alliance more broadly, conceiving of that connection in terms of sentiment and common values. But this also stemmed from an assessment of the importance of the Alliance in terms of the access it provided to intelligence and military equipment as Australia pursued its own 'self-reliant' defence doctrine. Australian 'middle-power' diplomacy as articulated by Gareth Evans benefitted from a rules base international order with American strategic pre-eminence at its core. But it also required significant Australian diplomatic effort with the Cairns group and then with APEC in order to shape the international order, and Australia's regional environment, so that they better served Australian interests.

It was only amidst the overhaul in thinking arising from the end of the Cold War that Australian reliance on American strategic pre-eminence in Asia begun to be most strongly articulated. Keating's push to upgrade APEC and pursue further economic integration in Asia assumed that the United States would continue to occupy a central role America in the Pacific. The security treaty that Keating signed with Indonesia was an answer to a long-standing Australian strategic vulnerability. Yet it was also conceived as a prize that had been won through cross-cultural co-operation and an example to the rest of the region of what could be hammered out between nations of different cultural backgrounds. Australia could have based its future dealings in Asia on the success of this treaty had it not been torn up by Indonesia in the late 90s.

The new iteration of great power rivalry in the Pacific of the late 2000s to the present has been difficult for the strategic imagination to grapple with, but it is important to remember that the relationship between sentiment and self-interest in the past has not been navigated smoothly either. China's economic importance to Australia remained a significant strategic consideration despite the former's increasing efforts to upend the current regional order, and the stark differences between the two nation's political systems. The Australian strategic imagination had

always intensified an idea of the national community's ontological exceptionalism within its geographic neighbourhood. Its language, culture and political values were considered to more closely link Australia with Britain, America, or the West than anywhere else. Even conceptions of Australia as a rightful part of the Asia or the Pacific made the argument in terms of the hard facts of geography, and could only hope to make the shift from being the 'odd man out' to 'odd man in'.[26] The return to great power competition, and the prospect that Australia had to live in a region with tensions between the United States and China, nations with varying degrees of sentimental and material importance, was not one that the strategic imagination has been well equipped to deal with. The largest economy in Asia, a key component of Australian prosperity over the last three to four decades, seemed more and more to be inextricably locked in a struggle with Australia's most important strategic partner for the past six decades.

The 2016 Defence White Paper regarded the U.S.-China relationship as the most influential determinant of Australian security for the following two decades.[27] The U.S.-Alliance, based as it were on 'shared values', was to remain the 'centrepiece' of Australian Defence Policy. China, on the other hand, was depicted as having economic importance and forecast to differ from Australia on certain strategic issues.[28] This was an uncomfortable tension for Australian policymakers. In early 2017, for example, Foreign Minister Julie Bishop articulated her unease at the current state of international affairs by stating that 'we live in uncertain times'. This was in part due to the British decision to leave the European Union, China's intentions in the South China Sea, and Russia's annexation of the Crimean Peninsula. One represented a shift away from the trends of 'international integration' and the other a challenge to assumptions of a 'rules based international order'. More significant, however, was the uncertainty of U.S.-Chinese geo-political and geo-strategic competition. The U.S. reflected 'the liberal rules based-order' within its own 'domestic political system and values.' China, on the other hand, would never wholly feature in Australia's 'preferred order' as long as it was not a democratic state. While Bishop assumed that the United States would remain the 'pre-eminent global strategic power in Asia and the world by some margin', her efforts in this speech were to convince Singapore and ASEAN to add their efforts to:

[26] Gareth Evans, 'Australia's Role in the New World Order', 28 November 1990, https://www.gevans.org/speeches/old/1990/281190_fm_roleinthenewworldorder.pdf. p. 7.
[27] Australia and Department of Defence, *2016 Defence White Paper*, 2016. p. 40.
[28] Ibid. p. 44.

> 'preserve and strengthen the liberal rules based order if peace, stability and prosperity is to continue.'[29]

Such a burden, in other words, could not be left for the United States to uphold alone, but Bishop, at least, was not willing to question American power. She did not need to. The election of American President Donald Trump in November of 2016, less than six months before Bishop's speech, provided adequate subtext for questions about what posture the new administration would take toward Asia-Pacific strategy and China more specifically. For Bishop, it was not a question of American power, but of American will.

Hugh White followed up his 2010 Quarterly Essay with another in 2017, addressing the fact that Trump's unorthodox approach to American alliances was just one symptom of a deeper problem.[30] He questioned whether there was adequate American will to oppose China's increasing strength and capability, claiming that it could not hope to remain the primary strategic force in Asia even if such will did exist.[31]

White bemoaned the stagnancy in Australia's strategic outlook, one that unquestionably 'clung to illusions about America's power' when America's power in relative terms waned.[32] Yet amidst his sober assessments on the folly of reliance on American strategic primacy in Asia, and his proposals of a return to a more self-reliant posture in defence, even White could not fully escape the strategic imagination as delineating the contours of policy potential. What if, he asked, President Obama could have been convinced to make a more concerted effort to limit China's 'power and influence' earlier? Surely this 'would have been greatly to Australia's benefit.' But what voice outside of the Washington foreign policy establishment could have persuaded the President that such a 'radical and creative approach was both necessary and possible?' White posited, 'an effective Australian Prime Minister could have convinced him of that', and in doing so, voiced one central theme of the Australian strategic imagination himself – how to convince the greater power to which Australia has voluntarily aligned itself that it shares common interests in the hopes of multiplying its own influence on the world stage.[33]

It looks as if the tension over values and interests in the strategic imagination will continue unabated for some time yet. The first half of 2020 brought a new level of more forthright

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[29] Julie Bishop, 'Change and Uncertainty in the Indo-Pacific: Strategic Challenges and Opportunities', 13 March 2017, https://www.foreignminister.gov.au/minister/julie-bishop/speech/change-and-uncertainty-indo-pacific-strategic-challenges-and-opportunities.

[30] Hugh White, *Without America: Australia in the New Asia*, Quarterly Essay, QE 68 (Collingwood, Vic: Black Inc, 2017). pp. 19-20.

[31] Ibid. p. 57.

[32] Ibid. p. 76.

[33] Ibid. p. 77.

discussion and increased tensions between Australia and the United States on one hand, and China on the other. A Defence White Paper update heralded that Australia needed to be prepared for 'the prospect of high-intensity conflict.'[34] In his speech accompanying the White Paper update, Prime Minister Scott Morrison remarked:

> 'we have not seen the conflation of global, economic and strategic uncertainty now being experienced here in Australia in our region since the existential threat we faced when the global and regional order collapsed in the 1930s and 1940s.'[35]

Yet China's importance to Australian trade had kept him from naming it specifically as this key strategic threat. Asked whether the 'new defence strategy' indicated that China was being viewed as 'a potential threat' or 'untrustworthy', Morrison answered:

> 'No, it signals that the Australian government will always be consistent with its values and its interests. And that's what we've always done.'[36]

Policymakers would do well to acquaint themselves with the history of Australia's strategic imagination given the frequency with which commentators use concepts from the past as a way of grappling with current problems. Can, for example, the current rivalry between China and the United States be described as another 'Cold War'? How closely can one draw comparisons? Does history, as Odd Arne Westad argues, point to the need for a focussing of the 'American mind' in order to uphold American power and prevent chaos in the international community?[37] Or would such a moniker, as Melvyn Leffler claims, 'likely… catalyse a destructive spiral of heightening tensions that would make the world a more dangerous place…'?[38] How the United States and China view their current confrontation is of immense importance to Australia. The return of a Cold War in Asia would be most unwelcome, given the current imperative of attempting to balance strategic with economic relationships with greater powers.

[34] Department of Defence, *2020 Defence Strategic Update*, 2020, https://www.defence.gov.au/StrategicUpdate-2020/docs/2020_Defence_Strategic_Update.pdf. p. 6.
[35] Scott Morrison, 'Launch of the 2020 Defence Strategic Update', 1 July 2020, https://www.pm.gov.au/media/address-launch-2020-defence-strategic-update.
[36] Scott Morrison and Leigh Sales, 'Interview with Leigh Sales, ABC 730 | Prime Minister of Australia', 22 July 2020, https://www.pm.gov.au/media/interview-leigh-sales-abc-730-3.
[37] Odd Arne Westad, 'The Sources of Chinese Conduct', October 2019, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2019-08-12/sources-chinese-conduct.
[38] Melvyn P. Leffler, 'China Isn't the Soviet Union. Confusing the Two Is Dangerous.', The Atlantic, 2 December 2019, https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/12/cold-war-china-purely-optional/601969/.

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