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TROUBLE IN THE FAMILY: NEW ZEALAND'S ANTINUCLEAR POLICY

F. Allan Hanson

ON 11 AUGUST 1986 SECRETARY OF STATE George Shultz announced that the United States was formally suspending its defense ties to New Zealand. Those ties began with the signing of the 1951 ANZUS (Australia-New Zealand-United States) treaty, an alliance established mainly to allay Australian and New Zealand fears of resurgent Japanese militarism.¹ The formal renunciation of the U.S. commitment to New Zealand followed a two-year dispute between the nations over the decision of New Zealand's Labour government, headed by Prime Minister David Lange, to forbid port visits by U.S. ships powered by nuclear reactors or that might be carrying nuclear weapons. As the U.S. Navy has always refused to confirm or deny that a given vessel is carrying nuclear weapons, the port ban effectively barred most U.S. naval craft from docking in New Zealand's ports.

Although New Zealand is small, remote, and not strategically located, the significance of this diplomatic imbroglio should not be underestimated; it has far-reaching implications for Western solidarity and the ability of the United States to keep its allies in line. The seriousness with which the United States views this action can be seen in its willingness

1. *The New York Times*, 12 August 1986.

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to suspend formally its military ties with New Zealand, ties that have persisted for thirty-five years under the ANZUS pact.

New Zealand is an ally of a special sort. It is, as the U.S. ambassador to New Zealand said, "in the family."² The family in question consists of the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand: nations bound together by a common English language and Anglo-Saxon traditions inherited from Mother Britain. In effect, New Zealand's port ban means that the biggest and strongest member of the family, who has assumed primary responsibility for its affairs, has been defied by the runt.

The U.S. government's dour view of New Zealand's behavior is well known; former secretary of state Dean Rusk observed that the United States cannot be treated as "a call girl who is available upon request but who is snubbed in between calls"—an apt depiction of sentiments in Washington.³ This essay deals with what has not been so well covered by the American media: the New Zealand point of view and the historical and cultural context in which it was formed. First, however, the salient events will be reviewed.

The matter came to a head in February 1985 when New Zealand refused to accept a visit by the conventionally powered U.S. destroyer *Buchanan*, on the grounds that the ship might have been carrying nuclear weapons. This was the first test of New Zealand's antinuclear policy, which was enunciated by the new Labour government when it came into office the previous July. The *Buchanan* incident touched off a diplomatic row between the United States and New Zealand that has lasted ever since.

The dispute has left ANZUS, as a U.S. military officer said, "dead in the water." The United States has taken the attitude that if New Zealand will not behave as an ally, it will not be treated as one. Hence the United States has suspended all military cooperation with New Zealand: consultation, intelligence sharing, and joint exercises. By early August 1985 no fewer than twenty-two joint exercises planned under ANZUS auspices had been cancelled.⁴ New Zealand's two military officers assigned to U.S. Intelligence Center Pacific and the U.S. Third Fleet headquarters, both in Hawaii, were excluded from important activities and the United States advised that they would not be replaced when their terms expired later in 1985.⁵ In addition, Sir Wallace Rowling, New Zealand's ambassador to the United States, has confirmed that New Zealand officers will no longer be accepted at the U.S. Army's Command

2. Paul M. Cleveland, "The Benefits of Collective Security," *New Zealand International Review*, July–August 1986, 23, 26.

3. *The New Zealand Herald*, 7 August 1985.

4. *The Auckland Star*, 8 August 1985.

5. *The New Zealand Times*, 7 July 1985.

and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He regards this as particularly unfair treatment because the college welcomes officers from nonaligned nations that are far less supportive of the United States than is New Zealand.

For its part, after announcing its intention to do so for months, the New Zealand government introduced a bill into parliament in December 1985 that would raise the port ban from executive policy to the status of law. The bill is due for final action in December, 1986. Given the Labour party's majority in parliament and the hardening of both countries' positions in the months since the bill was introduced, it is certain to pass. This change would make it far more difficult for any future government to reverse the port ban. When the plan to legislate the port ban was first announced, Secretary of State Shultz warned that any such move by New Zealand could provoke the United States to review the ANZUS treaty.⁶ This echoes a resolution, cosponsored by a majority of the Senate, which calls on the president to explore the possibility of a bilateral security arrangement with Australia if the port ban issue cannot be satisfactorily resolved.⁷

In late April 1986 the State Department spelled out the U.S. position officially and unequivocally: should the port ban be enacted as law, the United States will declare New Zealand to be in "material breach" of Article II of the ANZUS treaty, which states that the parties "separately and jointly by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack." The effect will be to drum New Zealand out of ANZUS, leaving the United States and Australia to maintain the alliance as a bilateral pact.⁸

Secretary Shultz met with Prime Minister Lange in Manila in late June 1986, in a last-ditch attempt to break the impasse. The effort failed, and Shultz consequently announced that the United States no longer considered itself bound to provide a security guarantee to New Zealand. "We part as friends," he said, "but we part company so far as the alliance is concerned."⁹ Following Shultz's more formal announcement in San Francisco on 11 August 1986 that the United States is suspending its defense commitment to New Zealand, Lange stated that New Zealand's position is unchanged and that his government will persevere in the introduction of antinuclear legislation.¹⁰ It remains to be seen if the United States will take any further steps after the legislation is adopted. Moreover,

6. *The Evening Post* (Wellington), 16 July 1985.

7. Senate Resolution 66, (*Congressional Record*, 6 February 1985).

8. *The New York Times*, 29 April 1986.

9. *The Washington Post*, 28 June 1986.

10. *The Christian Science Monitor*, 13 August 1986.

it is unclear whether congressional approval is needed to undo an alliance, because nothing of this kind has been done before.¹¹

The U.S. position rests on the premise that the Western allies have shouldered the responsibility to maintain world peace, stability, and the independence of free nations against the threat of an expansionist Soviet Union. The port ban means that New Zealand is shirking its share of the collective burden, perhaps in the vain hope that it can avoid the notice of aggressors by hiding in its remote corner of the world. This has raised a certain ire in the United States. As Senator William S. Cohen (R-Maine) stated in a speech to the Senate, "New Zealand must be aware that it cannot be a part-time member of the alliance and of the free world, selecting the burdens it will bear while partaking of all the benefits."¹² Secretary Shultz also chastised New Zealand for having "walked off the job."¹³ A few days earlier he referred to New Zealand's policy as one of "escapism and isolationism." "Fortunately," he continued pointedly, "the United States and Australia have not sought to opt out of our commitment to one another and to all those responsibilities essential to peace and security in the West."¹⁴ Moreover, by hampering the movements of the U.S. navy, New Zealand makes it more difficult for the United States to discharge its own global responsibilities.

The threat that New Zealand's action poses to Western security is mainly symbolic, however, because American warships have called at New Zealand ports in the past primarily for purposes of rest and recreation. The real danger is one of example and precedent. Elsewhere in the Pacific region, the Japanese peace movement might be encouraged to demand more stridently that the Japanese government enforce the policy barring nuclear weapons from Japan rather than discretely looking the other way when U.S. naval vessels are in port and failing to inquire whether the ships are nuclear-armed. In addition, New Zealand's successful defiance of the United States might put ideas into the heads of Filipinos when the time comes to renegotiate the U.S. leases for the strategically important bases at Clark Field and Subic Bay.¹⁵ In Europe, New Zealand's position has been endorsed by Neil Kinnock, leader of Britain's Labour party and a favorite to be Britain's next prime minister. New Zealand's stand has probably even encouraged the movement to declare New York Harbor nuclear-free. It is not beyond the realm of possibility for the port ban to be emulated by other, more strategically significant allies, in which

11. *The Washington Post*, 28 June 1986.

12. Senate Resolution 66 (*Congressional Record*, 6 February 1986).

13. *Evening Post* (Wellington), 19 July 1985.

14. *The Dominion* (Wellington), 16 July 1985.

15. Owen Harries, "Crisis in the Pacific," *Commentary*, 79:6 (June 1985), 52-53.

event the solidarity of the Western alliance would be called into question, U.S. prestige damaged, and U.S. naval movements severely curtailed.

United States officials are also irritated by New Zealand's presumptuous unilateral efforts to redefine ANZUS as an alliance limited to conventional armaments. The United States is not about to allow the smallest and least significant member of ANZUS to dictate the parameters of the alliance; nor will the superpower capitulate to tiny New Zealand's stipulations about the nature of bilateral military relations. "We have only one navy," Assistant Secretary of State Paul Wolfowitz pointed out in congressional testimony, "not one conventionally capable navy and one nuclear-capable navy; not one navy to accommodate one country's policy and another navy for the rest of the world."¹⁶

NEW ZEALANDERS DO NOT SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE on the port ban. Their differences on this issue reflect deeper divergences of opinion about the significance of New Zealand's history and the country's proper place in today's world.

During most of the period since European settlement in the mid-nineteenth century, New Zealanders thought of themselves as occupants of a distant and dependent outpost of Great Britain. The immigrants felt insecure and out of place among the dense fern forests and tattooed Maori natives in this remote corner of the world. Attempting to domesticate the alien setting by transplanting familiar British culture wholesale, they imported sheep and established British farms and towns, planted English gardens, observed British customs, and played British games. At Christmas, beneath the antipodal midsummer sun, they exchanged cards depicting snowscapes, candles in frosted windows, and good cheer around blazing hearths. For New Zealanders, including many who were born in that country and had never traveled outside it, the word "home" meant Great Britain, half a world away.

A small population isolated in an exotic setting, New Zealanders felt vulnerable and in need of the protection of a great power. It is no accident, perhaps, that New Zealand's national anthem is titled "God Defend New Zealand." More practically, New Zealanders relied on the British lion for protection against all who might threaten them. In return they considered themselves loyal and sturdy yeomen ready to support the mother country in whatever trials it might encounter. In a 1939 radio address announcing New Zealand's declaration of war on Germany, prime minister M.J. Savage proclaimed: "Both with gratitude for the past, and

16. Testimony before the House subcommittee on Asian and Pacific affairs, 18 March 1985.

with confidence in the future, we range ourselves without fear beside Britain. Where she goes, we go, where she stands, we stand.”¹⁷

The apron strings were economic as well as political and sentimental. Britain played an overwhelming role in New Zealand's trade. In the decades between 1920 and 1950 Britain's share of New Zealand exports varied from a high of 88 percent in 1940 to a low of 66 percent in 1950, while imports from Britain were just under 50 percent for most of the period and reached a peak of 60 percent in 1950.¹⁸ Essentially, the pattern of trade was that British manufactured goods were traded for New Zealand lamb, butter, and other agricultural products. This was true to such an extent, in fact, that New Zealand was often referred to as “Britain's farm.”

New Zealand was reluctant to leave the nest even when nudged. Although the British parliament adopted the Statute of Westminster in 1931, granting Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and other dominions full powers of self-government, New Zealand did not accept its provisions until 1947.¹⁹ But the special relationship with Britain began to unravel during World War II. The large British naval base at Singapore fell to the Japanese in 1942—sobering proof that the Royal Navy, fully occupied at home with the Germans, could not provide military protection at the other end of the world for New Zealand (and, of course, Australia) at a time when those nations felt seriously threatened by Japan. New Zealand instead turned to the United States, the dominant friendly power in the Pacific, for security. The United States obliged by agreeing to send a battalion of marines to New Zealand during the war. Great Britain never reestablished significant military power in the Pacific.

New Zealand may have resolved to go where Britain went, but not long after World War II Britain went where New Zealand could not follow. The long process of Great Britain's entry into the European Economic Community (EEC) began during the 1960s and finally reached fruition in 1973. This dealt a body blow to New Zealand's economy because Britain would import its agricultural products from France and other EEC nations rather than from New Zealand. The trading component of the special relationship was effectively ended as New Zealand, about to be cut off from its economic dependency on Britain, scrambled during and after the 1960s to find new markets. In 1960 Britain still received 53 percent of New Zealand's exports, but by 1970 the figure had dropped to 36 percent and in the 1980s exports to Britain fell below

17. W. David McIntyre and W.J. Gardner, eds., *Speeches and Documents on New Zealand History* (New York: Clarendon Press of Oxford University, 1971), 366.

18. *New Zealand Official Yearbook for 1984* (Wellington: New Zealand Department of Statistics, 1984), 609.

19. McIntyre and Gardner, 284-92.

15 percent, on a par with New Zealand's three other major trading partners: the United States (13-15 percent), Japan (13-14 percent), and Australia (12-13 percent).²⁰

For a number of New Zealanders, particularly middle-aged and older individuals, the organization of the immigration service at British seaports and airports is symbolic of their estrangement from the motherland. They used to stand in the same queue as British subjects. Now three queues are used: one for British subjects, one for citizens of other EEC nations, and one for "other." To New Zealanders these classifications signify degrees of closeness to Britain, and they find it ironic to be forced to stand with Asians, Africans, and Americans in the "other" queue. Recalling how New Zealanders fought on behalf of Britain in two world wars, it is particularly galling to see Germans in the more favored EEC queue.

Despite these remnants of nostalgia, however, most New Zealanders have weaned themselves away from their former dependence on Britain. They are increasingly comfortable with the notion that theirs is a Pacific nation and they are properly a Pacific people. Many young and middle-aged adults remember with amusement how their parents referred to Britain as "home," something today's adults never do and their own children can scarcely imagine. For these two generations, "home" is New Zealand.

BY THE 1970s, THEN, the umbilical cord that formerly linked New Zealand with Great Britain was definitely severed, and New Zealanders were (and still are) searching for ways of surviving in a world filled with old dangers and new opportunities. Of course, they do not all perceive the situation alike. Some are more anxious about the dangers while others are enchanted by the opportunities. Differing attitudes about the port ban and ANZUS are especially interesting because, as will become clear, they are diagnostic of more general views about New Zealand's proper role in the contemporary world. Three distinct positions may be identified within the spectrum of public opinion and designated by familiar labels: conservatives are those who oppose the port ban and favor remaining in ANZUS; liberals approve of both the port ban and continued membership in ANZUS; radicals applaud the port ban *and* want New Zealand out of ANZUS.

Conservatives are preoccupied with what they perceive to be New Zealand's vulnerability, but they are not of one mind as to the nature of the threat. Two points of view may be distinguished: mainstream conservative and ultraconservative or reactionary. For those at the reactionary end of conservatism the threat is starkly political. Perpetuating attitudes born in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they fear that their

20. *New Zealand Official Yearbook for 1984*, 609.

fertile and sparsely populated outpost of Western civilization invites the covetous attention of conquerors. Some of these may identify the aggressor as the Soviet Union at the head of an international, expansionist communist conspiracy, but for most of them the peril is yellow: conquest by an Asiatic nation, such as Indonesia, China, or Japan, bent on securing additional land for its teeming population. It is as if they fear that history will repeat itself: their own predecessors—the colonists—took New Zealand away from its indigenous Maori inhabitants, and they are worried that the same thing may happen to them.

With a population of only 3.3 million and relatively small armed forces, reactionaries maintain that New Zealand could not defend itself against a massive invasion. Nor would friendly nations be moved to heroic efforts of assistance because, given New Zealand's isolated and nonstrategic position, the conquest of the country would not threaten their own vital interests. (Another scenario, beginning elsewhere but ending in the same place as the foregoing, holds that New Zealand attracts the rapacious because it *is* strategically located, "a dagger pointed at the heart of Antarctica." If and when the rush to grab the resources of that continent begins, an unfriendly power might well be tempted to annex defenseless New Zealand as a platform for its Antarctic enterprises.)

These anxieties produce an "insurance policy" mentality. Weak New Zealand requires the protection of a great power. Since the defense of New Zealand is not a vital interest of the power, however, New Zealand must "buy" the protection by paying premiums that please it. In the beginning the protector was Great Britain and the insurance premiums included helping to fight Britain's wars. Hence New Zealand was quick to send troops to fight for Britain in the Boer War, World War I and World War II. These old habits die hard: as late as the 1982 Falklands War, New Zealand offered to dispatch a naval vessel to the Indian Ocean in order to enable the British to release one of their own ships from that region for duty in the South Atlantic war zone.²¹

In more realistic moments, however, even the most unrepentant reactionary recognizes that the protector has changed from Britain to the United States. The new dependency is not nearly so full-blooded as the previous relationship with Great Britain. The nearly total economic dependence is absent. Talk about a common Anglo-Saxon heritage is shallow, lacking roots established by shared historical circumstances and especially by large-scale migration between the countries and the ties of kinship that would have resulted from it. In these cultural and sentimental matters the affinity remains with Britain—Elizabeth II still counts "Queen

21. Sir Jack Hunn, "The Nuclear Delusion," in *Alternatives to ANZUS*, Volume Two, Roderic Alley, ed. (Auckland: New Zealand Foundation for Peace Studies, 1984), 58.

of New Zealand" among her titles. In the field of security, however, reliance on the U.S. protector is very similar to the previous arrangement with Britain. Insurance premiums in the familiar currency still come due and have been paid: New Zealanders fought for the U.S. cause in both Korea and Vietnam.

The reactionary position on the port ban and ANZUS is readily understood in this context. Access to New Zealand ports by U.S. naval vessels of any and all types—nuclear-powered, nuclear-armed, or otherwise—is the premium that happens to fall due at the moment. Unless it is paid, the company is likely to cancel the policy. Given New Zealand's vulnerability, to risk the loss of ANZUS and U.S. protection over the port access issue is extremely unwise.

The broader stream of conservatism is represented by the leadership of the National party. National, one of the two largest political parties in the country, was in government from 1976 to 1984, with Robert Muldoon as prime minister. As with mainstream conservatives everywhere, those in New Zealand like to think of themselves as hardheaded realists. As such, they do not share the reactionaries' anxiety about being conquered by a foreign power. If one draws a map of the hemisphere with New Zealand at its center, one quickly appreciates the vast distances that separate that country from potential adversaries. Assuming that an expeditionary force from Australia can be ruled out, these distances and the logistical difficulties they would present render it extremely unlikely that any nation, Asian or otherwise, would be interested in or able to accomplish a successful invasion and occupation of New Zealand. Recent history has no examples of one nation conquering and settling its own people in another country thousands of miles away. In the context of any world system remotely similar to the postwar world, the reactionaries' fear of New Zealand falling to foreign conquest is unrealistic.

It is not unrealistic, however, to recognize that New Zealand has special vulnerabilities. Conservatives note that New Zealand is a trading country with important commercial links in the Pacific, the Americas, Asia, and Europe. Former prime minister Muldoon summed this up succinctly in 1980: "Our foreign policy is trade."²² For this reason, New Zealand has a vital interest in the maintenance of the peace and stability of the ocean trade routes in the Pacific and elsewhere in the world. New Zealand's tiny navy, however, is woefully inadequate for the job of policing them. For that it must rely on a great sea power, currently the United States.

Mainstream conservatives agree with the reactionary wing, then, that New Zealand is dependent on U.S. protection for its vital interests. In this

22. Derek Round, "Interview with the Prime Minister, R.D. Muldoon," *New Zealand International Review* (January-February 1980), 3.

case, however, the vital interest is not the autonomy of the New Zealand homeland but the continued capacity of New Zealand to engage in overseas trade. Still, the upshot is the same: New Zealand should maintain friendly relations with the United States in order to assure the continued protection of its vital commerce. Mainstream conservatives see the port ban as producing precisely the opposite result and therefore urge that it be rescinded.

Conservatives also point to other advantages of alliance with the United States. For one, it occasionally translates into a trade benefit in the important U.S. market. If, for example, a bill pending in Congress is potentially injurious to New Zealand trade, it is possible that the U.S. administration might encourage modification of the troublesome provisions on the ground that New Zealand is a loyal ally. Insofar as that loyalty is questioned, as it most definitely is at present because of the port ban, such favorable consideration is unlikely to be forthcoming.

Moreover, conservatives claim that membership in the ANZUS alliance gives New Zealand more influence in world affairs than other countries of its size and strategic importance. Because of ANZUS, they say, their diplomats and military officers have ready access to the high-ranking U.S. officials who make vital decisions. This is true with reference, among other things, to nuclear issues. As with those on the Left, conservatives in New Zealand favor negotiated agreements for nuclear arms control. They argue that ANZUS membership and cordial relations with the Americans enable New Zealanders to press their antinuclear views with greater likelihood of success than if they did not have the indulgent ear of a superpower.²³

THE LIBERAL POSITION has been official government policy since the Labour party came into power after the 1984 election. A port ban against nuclear vessels was an issue in the election and was favored by the two minor parties (Social Credit and the New Zealand party) as well as by Labour, being opposed only by the National party. However, other issues—particularly those pertaining to the economy—were more significant in the election than a port ban and defense policy.

In what skeptics might see as wanting to have their cake and eat it too, those designated here as liberals favor both the port ban and New Zealand's continued membership in ANZUS. Not only do Prime Minister Lange and other liberals want to remain in ANZUS, they also want to fine-tune the alliance to the particular conditions in the South Pacific. The most pressing political challenges in the region are maintaining free

23. Jim McLay, "Disarmament and Security: An Alternative Viewpoint," *New Zealand International Review* (May-June 1985), 20.

ocean passage for trade and ensuring that the many newly independent islands in the region develop into stable, democratic, and pro-Western nations. For the most part this seems to be happening, and New Zealand takes a good deal of credit as broker between the large Western democracies and the island states.

The liberal view is that an ANZUS focused on the South Pacific should be nonnuclear. They point out that Soviet influence in the region is not great and that nuclear weapons are of no conceivable use in dealing with the region's particular political challenges. New Zealand is determined to do everything in its power to keep nuclear weapons out of the South Pacific. It promotes the designation of the region as a nuclear-weapons-free zone, it does not ask or expect to be defended by nuclear weapons, and it absolutely prohibits their presence on its territory. Liberals see this stand as neither anti-ANZUS nor anti-American. On the contrary, they argue, since a supreme aim of both ANZUS and the United States is to prevent a global nuclear war, they should support efforts to keep the costly and dangerous nuclear arms race from spreading to yet another part of the world. Moreover, the recent behavior of the United States actually undermines its own interests in the Pacific because its harsh response to the port ban has made it more difficult for New Zealand to do its part in maintaining the stability and Western orientation of the region.²⁴

This reasoning has a great deal of appeal in New Zealand, where both the port ban and continued membership in ANZUS enjoy majority support.²⁵ Indeed, one of the Labour government's intentions may be to parry accusations that its policies caused the United States-New Zealand arm of ANZUS to break. As Barton Finney, New Zealand's consul general in San Francisco, said, "New Zealand at no point has said it's pulling out of ANZUS. We're being cold-shouldered out of it."²⁶ Partisan politics aside, however, the liberal position reflects a particular image of New Zealand's place in the contemporary world.

Liberals think of New Zealand as located naturally in the South Pacific and of themselves as Pacific people. Noting that sixty percent of New Zealand's exports now go to Asian, Pacific, and Pacific-rim countries, Prime Minister Lange said in 1984 that New Zealand "has evolved into a Pacific nation. We are no longer a European outpost."²⁷ This simple recognition has had a number of remarkable consequences. One is a greater sense of security. Feeling less alien in their corner of the world

24. David Lange, "New Zealand's Security Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, 63:5 (Summer 1985), 1017.

25. *World Press Review*, April 1986, 12.

26. *The San Francisco Chronicle*, 13 August 1986.

27. David Lange, "Trade and Foreign Policy: A Labour Perspective," *New Zealand International Review* (September-October 1984), 3.

than the mainstream conservatives and especially the reactionaries, liberals also feel less vulnerable to foreign threats and therefore less in need of protection. Hence they do not share the notion that New Zealand must pay "insurance premiums" of blind support for the policies of a protecting power. This frees New Zealand to pursue a more independent foreign policy, of which the port ban and the attendant defiance of the United States is the most dramatic example to date.

It is true that Soviet interest in the Pacific, while still modest, is growing. The Soviets have turned the huge naval base built by the United States at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam to their own purposes and have recently signed a fishing agreement with the tiny mid-Pacific nation of Kiribati. These developments are viewed with concern by conservatives (and alarm by reactionaries) in New Zealand, but liberals—and radicals—do not see the Soviet Union as the most troubling outside influence in the Pacific. That honor belongs to France, the only colonial power remaining in the region. French nuclear weapons tests at Mururoa in French Polynesia are universally condemned in New Zealand, and a great deal of concern exists about the violent unrest that has already surfaced in France's colony of New Caledonia and that may eventually emerge in French Polynesia as well. Finally, the clumsy bombing of the *Rainbow Warrior* by French intelligence forces on 10 July 1985 did little to enhance New Zealanders' views of the French role in the South Pacific. The Greenpeace ship was sunk in New Zealand's Auckland Harbor as it prepared to sail to Mururoa to protest a planned test detonation of a French nuclear device.

Because liberals perceive New Zealand as a Pacific nation, their foreign policy is distinctly oriented toward this region. There New Zealand's traditional position vis-à-vis other countries is reversed. Far from being small and insignificant, compared with tiny island nations as Tonga, Niue, Tuvalu, Western Samoa, the Cook Islands, or Kiribati, New Zealand is a large, developed, and wealthy nation with a natural leadership role to play. Together with Australia, for example, New Zealand is active in the South Pacific Forum, an international organization composed of those two countries together with the independent island nations in the Pacific. In recent years the importance of the South Pacific Forum has increased while that of the South Pacific Commission—an older organization consisting of Australia, New Zealand, a few independent island nations, and outside powers with interests in the region, including the United States and France—has declined. The contrasting fortunes of these two bodies suggests that control over South Pacific affairs has shifted from the old colonial powers to regional actors and that Australia and New Zealand are coming to identify themselves more as Pacific nations and less as offshoots of metropolitan powers. Particularly for New Zealand,

is a dramatic shift from the previous self-image of smallness and remoteness, a shift that leads to increased confidence in New Zealand's role in foreign affairs.

Of course, New Zealand also continues to engage in foreign relations on a global scale, and in that context there is no escaping the sense of smallness. In the world arena liberal policy tends to draw New Zealand closer to other small and militarily weak nations at the expense of its traditional role as a client of a great ally, such as Britain or the United States. An affinity with the Third World is seen particularly in liberal opposition to sporting contacts with South Africa, a political issue of tremendous importance in New Zealand. Other signs of the liberal foreign-policy alignment with the smaller and weaker nations are an explicit intention to stress moral considerations in foreign affairs and strong support for the United Nations.

Although liberals are fundamentally pro-Western in matters that pit East against West, this is tempered by the opinion that the United States often pursues reckless and heavy-handed policies that alienate many other nations and threaten global stability. As one former government official told me, the United States occasionally behaves like a rogue elephant on a rampage around the world. He mentioned the mining of Nicaraguan harbors, but more recent U.S. actions that would probably fall into the same category are the bombing attack on Libya, the refusal to join the Soviets in a moratorium on nuclear weapons tests, and the decision to abandon SALT II.

A word needs to be said about why the issue that pits New Zealand under liberal leadership against the United States is a nuclear one. Although not a region of superpower nuclear confrontation, the South Pacific has been more exposed to the effects of nuclear explosions than any other part of the globe because of the many nuclear tests that have been conducted there. The United States, Britain, and France have all conducted atmospheric nuclear tests in the Pacific, at times with lethal effects, while the United States, the Soviet Union, and China have used Pacific targets for ballistic missile tests. France still performs its tests in French Polynesia and was induced (largely by vehement New Zealand and Australian opposition) to move them underground only in the 1970s. New Zealanders and other Pacific peoples deeply resent the fact that the Western powers have visited the fallout and other disruptive effects of nuclear tests on their region. A common Pacific response to French assurances about the complete safety of their testing site in French Polynesia is, "Then why don't they test their bombs in the Mediterranean or the Bay of Biscay?"

Long-standing opposition to testing in the Pacific is a major reason why the South Pacific Forum endorsed the Treaty of Rarotonga in August,

1985, establishing a South Pacific nuclear-free zone. In New Zealand itself the antinuclear movement is powerful enough that some 65 percent of the country's population live in self-declared nuclear-free zones.²⁸ It is hardly surprising, then, that the issue upon which New Zealand has staked its independence in foreign policy is one concerning nuclear weapons.

INTERESTINGLY, THE VIEW OF ALLIANCE with the United States taken by New Zealand radicals parallels that which predominates in Washington. They are fond of quoting congressional testimony by U.S. military officials to the effect that the alliance supports and promotes U.S. interests in the Pacific and that in times of crisis it can be used to assist the projection of U.S. power into the region. New Zealand radicals agree wholeheartedly with this assessment although, of course, the conclusions they draw from it are vastly different. It proves to them that the alliance, far from being a means of protecting New Zealand, is in fact a mechanism for implicating New Zealand in the grand American strategy.²⁹

That strategy, radicals maintain, is one of global domination by imperialistic capitalism. As this is the antithesis of their own international agenda, radicals wish to dissociate New Zealand entirely from U.S. foreign policy. Therefore, they favor the port ban enthusiastically, and they also promote New Zealand's withdrawal from ANZUS. A graphic statement of the radical view is the cover of *Beyond ANZUS*, a volume of proceedings of a conference of the same name, which was held in Wellington, New Zealand's capital, in June 1984. The term "ANZUS" is associated with three skeletons languishing behind bars, while above the word "Beyond" a white dove is depicted escaping from the prison and soaring skyward.

While they favor cordial political and economic relations with the Soviet Union, radicals no more wish to be allied with the Eastern bloc than with the West. In contrast with the liberals' pro-Western orientation, the radicals' vision is of a neutral or nonaligned New Zealand throwing its lot with the peoples of the Third World. At home this means strong support of the indigenous Maori people in their efforts to achieve a better position in New Zealand society. In the immediate Pacific region, radicals oppose the continued French colonial presence in New Caledonia and French Polynesia, vociferously condemn French nuclear weapons tests in French Polynesia, and favor aid for economic development of the small, independent Pacific island nations.

28. *Information Bulletin No. 11* (Wellington: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 1985), 10.

29. See the various papers in Barbara Harford, ed., *Beyond ANZUS* (Wellington: Peace Movement Aotearoa, 1985).

An interesting development in recent New Zealand politics is that in their promotion of the port ban, withdrawal from ANZUS, and the establishment of a neutral or nonaligned foreign policy, the radicals have been joined by a group that in economic and other matters espouses distinctly conservative policies. This faction formed the New Zealand party in order to field candidates in the 1984 election. The colorful founder and leader of the New Zealand party, Bob Jones, argued his foreign-policy objectives on the ground that no aggressor is likely to have designs on New Zealand. He made his point in 1984 campaign speeches with masterful use of wit and ridicule. "Who is our enemy?" Jones would ask. "It can't be the Russians: they're buying our meat at less than production cost. Why should they take us over and pay the full price?"³⁰ The New Zealand party received 12.3 percent of the vote in the 1984 elections—a substantial proportion—but won no seats in parliament.³¹

IN LATE APRIL 1986, when the United States unequivocally announced that it would not tolerate New Zealand's continued presence in ANZUS if the port ban was legislated, New Zealand's political reality changed. The liberal position, which is official government policy and enjoys wide popular support, was rendered untenable. The failure of Prime Minister Lange and Secretary of State Shultz to break the impasse at their meeting in Manila in June, and Shultz's subsequent announcements that the United States would no longer feel bound to guarantee New Zealand's security, starkly reaffirmed that New Zealand would not be allowed to have ANZUS and its port ban too. The immediate question was how the New Zealand government would react, and the answer was not long in coming. Lange's response was that the antinuclear policy would not change.³² This statement was not surprising. The Labour government has so fully committed itself that any reversal of the policy would be a clear capitulation to U.S. pressure. Parliamentary legislation of the port ban, anticipated in October, may be followed by more formal American moves to oust New Zealand from ANZUS, but for all intents and purposes the alliance between the two nations has already been broken.

The longer-range question concerns how public opinion and political attitudes in New Zealand will develop in these circumstances. Majority opinion has favored the path of keeping both the port ban and continued membership in ANZUS, a path now closed to New Zealand. It is important to realize, however, that this is not a single majority. The majority that wants to remain in ANZUS consists of all the conservatives, who

30. Bruce Gooding, "Election 84: Defense," *New Zealand Listener*, 14 July 1984, 20.

31. Dora Alves, *Anti-Nuclear Attitudes in New Zealand and Australia* (Washington D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1985), 7.

32. *The Christian Science Monitor*, 13 August 1986.

oppose the port ban, plus the liberals, who support it; the majority that supports the port ban is composed of those same liberals plus all the radicals and supporters of the anomalous New Zealand party, who favor withdrawal from ANZUS.

A poll taken in April–May 1986 shows a division of public opinion very much along these lines. Thirty-seven percent of New Zealanders questioned preferred to remain in ANZUS and drop the port ban (the conservatives); 44 percent favored remaining in ANZUS and maintaining the port ban (the liberals); 16 percent preferred to leave ANZUS and maintain the port ban (the radicals). The remaining 3 percent had no opinion.³³ The balance, then, rests with the liberals. The question is how they will tilt now that the United States has forced them to choose between ANZUS and the port ban. The opinion poll posed just that choice to the 44 percent who espoused the liberal position of wanting to retain both the port ban and participation in ANZUS, with the following results: 33 percent opted for remaining in ANZUS, 62 percent for withdrawing, and the remaining 5 percent were undecided.

Among liberals, then, the bias is definitely in favor of the port ban over continued participation in ANZUS. This seems to be entirely in line with the trend of recent history in New Zealand. The country's political, economic, and cultural evolution over the last several decades has unquestionably been in the direction of increased national autonomy. The port ban seems to have become a symbol of New Zealand's growing national independence, while acquiescence to U.S. opposition to the port ban signifies retreat to the status of a client state. To the extent that these symbolic associations have taken root, the liberals' choice of the port ban over ANZUS can be readily attributed to the momentum of New Zealand's historical development, which has drawn it away from political dependence on foreign powers.

However, the conservative element is still strong in New Zealand. As the poll results indicate, on the issue of the port ban conservatives remain much more numerous than radicals. Combining the results of the broad poll with the survey of liberal opinion, the results indicate that 52 percent of all New Zealanders would prefer dropping the port ban in order to remain in ANZUS, while 44 percent would prefer the port ban to the alliance with the United States. While the present Labour government is unlikely to reverse its position for this reason, this statistic might encourage the conservative National party to make the port ban a major issue in the next general election, scheduled for sometime between July and November 1987. A number of other factors will influence this decision,

33. An opinion poll commissioned by the New Zealand government and conducted by the National Research Bureau.

however, such as the fact that, despite the extensive coverage given to the port ban issue outside New Zealand, it currently ranks only eighth on one list of the ten issues most on the minds of New Zealanders, well behind domestic and economic concerns.³⁴

34. *The San Francisco Chronicle*, 13 August 1986.