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THE UNITED NATIONS AND NEW ZEALAND

SECURITY POLICY, 1945-1960

Thesis presented in fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in History
at Massey University

John-Martin Battersby

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ABSTRACT

The contention of this thesis is that the United Nations remained a primary focus in New Zealand's pursuit of security between 1945 and 1960 and this was not altered in any significant way by the development of regional security arrangements or changes of government during the period. Throughout this time the pursuit of security was a fundamental objective and it was the UN's value as a security provider which saw it remain vitally important to New Zealand. Such changes as there were in New Zealand security policy between 1945 and 1960 occurred gradually and were not related to changes of government or the advent of regionalism. Continuity rather than change characterized New Zealand's approach to the UN during this period.

This thesis is divided into three parts. Part 1 investigates New Zealand security and the UN in the period of the Fraser Labour Government. It will be argued that Labour's approach to the UN during this time stemmed primarily from security considerations. Differences between Labour and National were not substantial and did not make a significant impact on New Zealand's approach to the UN.

Part 2 will investigate the relationship between the UN and the growth of regionalism. It will be argued that regionalism was not a development peculiar to the 1950s, or to the National Party's approach to security. The regional emphasis apparent in New Zealand security policy during the 1950s was solidly based on precedents established in Fraser's time and was, furthermore, never strong enough to marginalize the UN. Regionalism was a phenomenon which grew alongside the world organization in the 1940s and was not detrimental to New Zealand's continuing attachment to it. At times regionalism and the UN were perceived as closely related in the pursuit of New Zealand security objectives.

Part 3 will demonstrate the continuing commitment to the UN displayed by New Zealand, under National, in the 1950s. The underlying impetus and characteristics of New Zealand security policy in the 1940s remained central in the decade that followed. An analysis of New Zealand's approach to regionalism in the 1950s, and a number of case studies involving New Zealand at the United Nations, will be used to demonstrate the enduring nature of this policy originally fashioned in the mid-1940s.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------------|--|
| ACTRO | Australian Archives, Australian Capital Territory Regional Office (Canberra) |
| ADelUN | Australian Delegation to the United Nations |
| AHC | Australian High Commissioner |
| <i>AJHR</i> | Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives |
| <i>AJIA</i> | Australian Journal of International Affairs |
| ANZUS | Australia, New Zealand and the United States (Tripartite Security Treaty) 1951 |
| <i>AO</i> | Australian Outlook |
| APM | Australian Prime Minister |
| CGO | Committee of Good Offices (United Nations) |
| CMC | Collective Measures Committee (United Nations) |
| CROSEC | Secretary, Commonwealth Relations Office |
| <i>EAR</i> | External Affairs Review |
| ECOSOC | Economic and Social Council (United Nations) |
| GAOR | General Assembly Official Records |
| <i>HPS</i> | Historical and Political Studies |
| IAPC | Inter-American Peace Committee (Organization of American States) |
| ICJ | International Court of Justice (United Nations) |

| | |
|---------------|---|
| <i>IHR</i> | International History Review |
| <i>JICH</i> | Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History |
| MAC | Mixed Armistice Commission (Palestine) |
| MDT | Mutual Defence Treaty (United States-Formosa) |
| MEA | Minister of External Affairs |
| Min. & Dept., | Minister and Department of External Affairs (Australia) |
| MinIs | Minister for Israel (Diplomatic) |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| NMC | New Members Committee (United Nations) |
| NZAmb | New Zealand Ambassador |
| NZCom | New Zealand Commissioner (Diplomatic) |
| NZDel | New Zealand Delegation |
| NZDEA | New Zealand Department of External Affairs |
| NZEmb | New Zealand Embassy |
| NZHC | New Zealand High Commissioner |
| <i>NZIR</i> | New Zealand International Review |
| <i>NZJH</i> | New Zealand Journal of History |
| NZLeg | New Zealand Legation |
| NZMin | New Zealand Minister (Diplomatic) |
| <i>NZPD</i> | New Zealand Parliamentary Debates |
| NZPM | New Zealand Prime Minister |
| NZPMUN | New Zealand Permanent Mission, United Nations |

| | |
|--------|--|
| NZPRUN | New Zealand Permanent Representative, United Nations |
| OAS | Organization of American States |
| POC | Peace Observation Commission (United Nations) |
| PS | Political Science |
| SCUA | Suez Canal Users Association |
| SEACDT | Southeast Asia Collective Defence Treaty (Manila Pact, 1954) |
| SEATO | Southeast Asia Treaty Organization |
| SecEA | Secretary of External Affairs |
| SPNFZT | South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Raratonga, 1985) |
| UKHC | United Kingdom High Commissioner |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNCCP | United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine. |
| UNCIO | United Nations Conference on International Organization (San Francisco) |
| UNEF | United Nations Emergency Force (Sinai) |
| UNSCOP | United Nations Special Commission on Palestine |
| UNTSO | United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (Palestine) |

PREFACE

This study is concerned with the role of the United Nations in New Zealand's pursuit of security from 1945 to 1960. The approach which has been adopted is that of an empirical historical work, directed at the particular experience of New Zealand in the UN. It is not a theoretical analysis of the general role of world organizations in the security of small states. This study contends that the UN remained a major focus for New Zealand and that this was unaffected by the development of regionalism or changes of government during the period. Security considerations were central to New Zealand's approach to the UN throughout, and led to a UN policy characterized by continuity rather than change.

This thesis is divided into three parts. The first deals with the way the UN was approached under the First Labour Government and discusses the formation of New Zealand policy in the mid-1940s. Attention will be given to the San Francisco Conference at which the UN Charter was drafted, the pursuit of collective security, the veto and other related issues. Also investigated here is the relationship between Labour and National and, in particular, the significance of their respective approaches to the UN.

A further concern, dealt with in Part 2, is the relationship between the UN and regional organizations in New Zealand's approach to security problems. The emergence and development of regionalism will be traced from the mid-1940s with attention to its effects on New Zealand's approach to the UN. The commonly held view that regionalism was necessarily detrimental to a continuing emphasis on the UN will be rejected. It will be demonstrated that the growth of regionalism did not significantly affect New Zealand policy toward the UN and at times the two were closely related. As early as 1944-5 New Zealand approached regional and UN initiatives as complementary elements in its pursuit of security. This dualism became the foundation of New Zealand policy subsequently.

Finally, Part 3 will analyze the nature of New Zealand's commitment to the

UN after 1950 and investigate the degree to which it was similar or different to policy in the previous decade. The bases of New Zealand security policy concerning the UN, and its relationship to regionalism, were established and maintained under the Fraser Labour Government. These will be traced through the period 1950-60, demonstrating an essential continuity in New Zealand's approach to the UN.

The fundamental concern of this thesis is the issue of New Zealand's security. New Zealand foreign policy from 1945 to 1960 consisted of a number of components, including trade, human rights, trusteeship and colonialism, international law, and security. Security was the most urgent of these. New Zealand found itself in a very different security environment following the Second World War. British power had been weakened and the Royal Navy no longer commanded the seas as it had done in earlier times. New Zealand had experienced a direct military threat in the Pacific, sent in excess of 100,000 men to fight overseas and, at the conclusion of it all, faced an uncertain future. Would British power return? Would the United States face up to its international responsibilities (including the defence of New Zealand) or revert to pre-war isolationism? What was to stop the outbreak of another world war, or another hostile Asian power asserting itself in the Pacific? It was in this context that New Zealand embraced the UN. It promised a general security system, which, if successful, would solve New Zealand's complex security problems.

Security remained the major issue for New Zealand after 1945. The onset of the Cold War, and instability and conflict in Asia, continued to fuel anxieties that New Zealand might again face a direct threat to its territorial integrity and political independence. The UN remained part of New Zealand's effort to overcome the security problems of the Cold War. While defence commitments and regional arrangements became more significant in New Zealand security policy, these did not displace the UN as an organization which could be used, and was used, to meet potential military threats to New Zealand.

Throughout the period covered in this thesis other important issues such as trusteeship and human rights were major components of New Zealand's activity in

the UN. These issues were not unconnected with security. The observation of basic human rights and the institution of a gradual and orderly system of self-determination through trusteeship were considered as means of eliminating the potential for world conflict. However, legal, constitutional, and administrative issues, rather than security, dominated New Zealand's approach to its trusteeship responsibilities in Western Samoa. Furthermore, Samoa did not pose a security risk, nor give rise to any major security problem in the way crises in Southeast Asia or other international problems did.

Human rights issues were also important, but New Zealand's immigration policy and approach to South Africa in the 1940s revealed inconsistencies between precept and practice in this area. Clearly, New Zealand believed that the UN should primarily observe the integrity of the sovereign state and deal with human rights issues only when this priority would not be compromised. New Zealand's approach to the UN was built around security concerns. The UN was useful and important for many other purposes, but security was the issue New Zealand perceived as most fundamental and which it expected the UN to face up to before anything else. Consequently, trusteeship and human rights have not been dealt with in detail in this thesis.

An issue more directly related to security, that of disarmament, has not been considered either. This issue did not impact significantly on New Zealand and was overshadowed by other Cold War issues. New Zealand was supportive of nuclear and conventional disarmament but frustrated by the lack of progress and soon accepted that, until the international climate improved, any move toward disarmament was unlikely. Disarmament was not considered an avenue which contributed significantly to New Zealand security during the 1950s.

This study has 1945 as its starting point, the year the UN was formed. However, the nature of the UN, and New Zealand's approach to it, had already been developed in the later stages of the Second World War and some attention will, therefore, be given to years immediately preceding 1945. New Zealand's Labour

Government, elected in 1935, had a history of supporting international organizations. It enthusiastically endorsed League of Nations action against Italy following the invasion of Abyssinia and was critical of the League's failure to act effectively. In 1936 New Zealand produced a comprehensive document outlining means by which the League might be made more effective. This emphasized that there was no material fault with the League Covenant, but identified major problems with member nations not fulfilling their obligations under it. Many facets of Labour's approach to the League were transferred to its policy toward the UN. But it was the Second World War, not the League, which shaped New Zealand's UN involvement. The failure of the Singapore strategy and the Japanese invasion of the eastern Pacific in the 1940s made the need for new security arrangements imperative.

The finishing date of 1960 marks the end of a period distinguished by the importance of the UN in New Zealand security policy. The closing years of the 1950s saw extensive changes in the UN's membership and the effect of this began to tell after 1960. New Zealand became a smaller part of an ever-increasing world organization made up of unfamiliar nations which did not approach the UN in the same way as New Zealand traditionally had done. The period 1945 to 1960 was, therefore, a period in which New Zealand had a profile and influence in the UN well out of proportion to its size, and certainly in comparison with the following two decades. This enabled New Zealand to pursue security priorities, established originally by the First Labour Government, through the UN for some 15 years. After 1960, the security emphasis in New Zealand's approach to the UN was no longer as influential. New Zealand's influence in the organization declined with its increasing membership. The loss of Western dominance in the UN, also due to increasing membership, deterred the Western nations from using the UN as a means of dealing with major security problems. Consequently, in the 1960s, unlike in 1954, the UN offered little comfort to New Zealand over problems in Vietnam.

In order to meet the new international climate of the 1940s, New Zealand's wartime Prime Minister, Peter Fraser, established a diplomatic service. With Britain struggling to defend itself at home in 1940, the importance of the United States to

New Zealand's security increased, and became critical after the Japanese drive into the Pacific in 1941-2. Walter Nash, Fraser's deputy, was sent as New Zealand's first Minister to the United States in 1942. The following year the Department of External Affairs was established and gradually the personalities who would have a major impact on New Zealand foreign policy after the war were drafted into it.

Initially, experienced government servants were drawn into the service. Carl Berendsen, Head of the Prime Minister's Department from 1935 until 1943, had had a significant influence in New Zealand foreign policy, such as it was, since the mid-1920s. Almost alone, he had constituted New Zealand's Imperial Affairs Office, a section of the Prime Minister's Department. Later he was a central character in the formulation of the Labour Government's approach to the League of Nations, collective security, and opposition to appeasement. In 1943 he was sent to Australia as New Zealand's first High Commissioner and replaced Nash as New Zealand's Minister (later Ambassador) to the United States in 1944. Berendsen went with Fraser to the San Francisco Conference in 1945 and was New Zealand's Permanent Representative to the UN until he retired in 1951. Berendsen had a powerful personality, was dogmatic in his views and expressed them forthrightly. He tended to be independent and autocratic and other departmental officials held him in awe.

Alistair McIntosh, Berendsen's successor as Head of the Prime Minister's Department, became the inaugural Secretary of External Affairs and remained in that post until his retirement in 1966. He was less dogmatic and outspoken than Berendsen. While his relationships with political superiors, apart from Fraser, were not easy, his personality gained their respect and he exercised a major influence on foreign policy decisions for more than twenty years.

Other important personalities included Foss Shanahan, War Cabinet Secretary from 1940-45 and Assistant Secretary of External Affairs from 1943 to 1955. He became New Zealand Commissioner to Southeast Asia following the creation of SEATO in 1955. J.V. Wilson was also influential in New Zealand foreign policy-making until the mid-1950s. Wilson had been with the League of Nations secretariat

in Geneva from 1923-40 and later joined the Department of External Affairs. Like Berendsen, he made an important contribution to New Zealand policy at San Francisco and was involved in New Zealand's UN delegation subsequently. Other personalities included Frank Corner, who joined the Department of External Affairs in 1943 and George Laking, who originally joined the Prime Minister's Department in 1941. Both had a series of overseas postings and were important in policy formation in the period covered by this thesis. These officials have also been an important influence in the historiography of the period. McIntosh, Wilson, Corner, Laking, and others, including R.H. Wade, R.R. Cunninghame, Bruce Brown and particularly Malcolm Templeton, have all made important contributions to the literature available on the various aspects of New Zealand foreign policy.

Amongst the politicians, Peter Fraser and Walter Nash dominated the formulation of foreign policy between 1940-49. Fraser was Minister of External Affairs from the Department's establishment until Labour's election defeat in December 1949. While Fraser usually consulted Cabinet on major issues, he tended to make foreign policy decisions himself. He was a tough and autocratic politician whose determination and commitment to the UN, in particular, created a strong personal following in the Department of External Affairs.

Nash was the only other Labour politician in the 1940s who was involved to any significant extent in foreign policy. He frequently represented New Zealand at Commonwealth Conferences, but not at the UN, of which he was also an enthusiastic supporter. Nash became Prime Minister in 1957 following the election of Second Labour Government and, like Fraser, served as Minister of External Affairs.

From 1950 to 1957 National was in power under Prime Minister Sidney Holland. Holland did not take the External Affairs portfolio, but was influential in foreign policy. He was unpopular with officials in the Department of External Affairs, who perceived him as uncompromising and uninterested in international issues. Frederick Doidge was National's first Minister of External Affairs until he

retired in 1951. Clifton Webb was Minister from 1951 to 1954 when he, too, retired and again succeeded Doidge, this time as New Zealand's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom. Despite being somewhat resented by departmental officials, Webb had an important influence in foreign policy from the closing years of the Korean War until the height of the first Offshore Islands Crisis in 1954-55. Though dominated by Holland, Webb was a conscientious Minister, interested in international affairs and a determined broker in negotiations with other nations. Thomas Macdonald was National's third Minister of External Affairs. He saw out the first Offshore Islands Crisis and had to deal with the Suez Crisis the following year.

These political personalities, of major importance to the period, are far less influential in the historiography of it. Few have written at all, and then not extensively. Fraser and Nash have been less affected by this. Fraser was the founder of the Department of External Affairs; understandably, those for whom it became a career have looked favourably on him, and the years 1943-49, in which many of them entered the Department. His contribution to foreign policy has been well covered. National's Ministers, by contrast, fare less well; there were various conflicts of personality between officials and National politicians, and National explicitly halted departmental recruitment in 1950. As a consequence, officials, and even academics, have tended to be more critical of them.

With Berendsen's retirement in 1951 came the appointment of Leslie Munro as New Zealand's Ambassador to the United States and UN Permanent Representative. Munro was not a member of the Department of External Affairs and had no diplomatic experience. He had been Professor of Law at Auckland University, editor of the *New Zealand Herald* and a member of the National Party. The fledgling Department resented such political appointments and Munro was consequently unpopular there. Munro's egoism exacerbated the problem and frustrated his ministerial superiors as much as his colleagues. He was not fondly remembered, but his contribution was immense.

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