

Cato Institute Policy Analysis No. 67: Pursuing a Strategic Divorce: The U.S. and the Anzus Alliance

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Ted Galen Carpenter

Ted Galen Carpenter is a foreign policy analyst with the Cato Institute.

Executive Summary

ANZUS, the military alliance linking Australia, New Zealand, and the United States, is beset by turmoil and ill will. In its pursuit of an uncompromising anti-nuclear policy, New Zealand bars atomic-powered and nuclear-armed American naval vessels from its ports. In response, the United States has excluded New Zealand from military exercises and has otherwise frozen New Zealand out of intra-alliance affairs for more than a year. Officials in Washington and Wellington repeatedly exchange barbed accusations. U.S. leaders charge the New Zealand government with "shirking" its alliance responsibilities and are denounced in turn for engaging in "overbearing," even "totalitarian" behavior. While relations between the United States and Australia have not reached such a nadir, serious stresses trouble that front as well.

Once considered an amicable democratic partnership and one of America's most stable alliances, ANZUS is now subject to serious doubts about whether it has, or even ought to have, a future. The quarrel with New Zealand is providing the catalyst for a badly needed reassessment of the 35-year-old military association. U.S. policymakers must confront the reality that ANZUS has outlived whatever limited use it may have possessed at one time. The ultimate test of their statesmanship with respect to the alliance is whether they can now implement a strategic divorce without bitterness and recrimination.

Advent of the Crisis

The current turmoil began in July 1984 when New Zealand's Labour party ousted the governing National party in parliamentary elections. One crucial plank in Labour's political platform was a commitment to ban all atomic-powered and nucleararmed warships from New Zealand as an initial step toward making the nation a "nuclear-free zone." This issue featured prominently in the campaign and apparently contributed to the Labour party victory. Indeed, this election triumph represented the culmination of a potent anti-nuclear movement that had been gathering strength for more than a decade.[1]

David Lange, the new prime minister, moved rapidly to implement what he interpreted as his government's anti-nuclear mandate. He announced that New Zealand's ports would no longer be available to American warships unless the United States provided explicit assurances that the ships were neither nuclear-powered nor nuclear-armed. At the same time, Lange reaffirmed his nation's allegiance to ANZUS and to a collective, conventional defense of the South Pacific region.[2]

The Reagan administration's response was swift and uncompromising. It reminded Lange's government that the United

States had a longstanding, unequivocal policy against revealing which ships carried nuclear weapons. Releasing such information, Washington declared, would simply give potential adversaries an intelligence bonanza, allowing them to target the most lethal vessels in the event of hostilities. The State Department also stated in polite but firm tones that it considered New Zealand's action a violation of that country's ANZUS obligations.

While the United States refused to accept the Lange regime's anti-nuclear initiative, it also avoided any steps that might have provoked a needless confrontation. Instead, the Reagan administration initiated discussions with the Labour government, hoping to buy time and eventually secure a reversal of the decision.[3] This was essentially the same strategy the United States had employed following the March 1983 election victory of the Australian Labor party. There was considerable apprehension in Washington that the new government of Prime Minister Robert Hawke, under pressure from his party's left wing, might seek a phase-out of American military installations. Quiet but uncompromising U.S. diplomacy convinced the Hawke government that such actions would place the future of ANZUS in jeopardy, and any inclinations to seek removal of the bases were at least temporarily abandoned.[4] Reagan administration leaders apparently concluded that a policy of patient firmness would work equally well with New Zealand.

It was an illusory hope. Months of negotiations failed to budge the Lange government from its anti-nuclear position. Finally, the United States decided to test the ban in late January 1985 by requesting port privileges for the U.S.S. Buchanan. American officials clearly designed this test case to offer Lange's government the least degree of provocation. A conventionally powered destroyer, the Buchanan was a type of warship unlikely to be carrying nuclear weapons. The only question was whether New Zealand would demand an explicit U.S. assurance to that effect. If Reagan administration leaders believed the Lange government's policy was a bluff, they miscalculated. New Zealand officials demanded to know whether the Buchanan carried nuclear weapons, and when the United States refused to divulge that information, the vessel was denied port access.[5]

The Buchanan incident abruptly terminated the Reagan administration's policy of quiet diplomacy. Washington immediately announced several punitive measures. First, it canceled the ANZUS "Sea Eagle" naval exercise scheduled for spring 1985. It also called off a visit to U.S. military headquarters in Hawaii by the New Zealand parliament's defense committee. More ominously, the United States announced that it would restrict the flow of intelligence information to New Zealand. The rationale for this action was most revealing: American officials stated that while New Zealand remained a "friend," its status as a loyal ally was in question, and the sharing of intelligence data was predicated on allied status.[6] Although President Reagan expressed continued friendship toward New Zealand, the message of U.S. actions was that Washington was through tolerating its maverick policies.

Rather than persuading Prime Minister Lange and his associates to alter their anti-nuclear stance, Washington's initial actions seemed to deepen Wellington's intransigence. Lange denounced the U.S. tactics as "akin to the very totalitarianism we're supposed to be fighting against." While he conceded that the measures were serious and damaging, the prime minister defiantly vowed, "New Zealand can live with that." [7]

Since the February 1985 brouhaha over the Buchanan, relations between New Zealand and its ANZUS associates have continued to deteriorate. Under intense U.S. pressure, Australia canceled the ANZUS foreign ministers meeting scheduled for July in Canberra. Prime Minister Hawke asserted that such a conference was inappropriate, since "insofar as ANZUS is a trilateral relationship, virtually nothing of it is operative now." Bilateral meetings between Australian officials and Secretary of State George Shultz held during the latter's Far Eastern trip in July further underscored New Zealand's isolation.[8]

Initially, the State Department stressed that its decision to curtail the level of military cooperation with New Zealand did not portend any move to abrogate the ANZUS alliance. This remained Washington's official position throughout the spring and early summer, even as hope dimmed that the Lange government would alter its policy on port visits. Some members of Congress were less conciliatory. Early in the crisis, Rep. Stephen Solarz, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Asian subcommittee, stated that New Zealand's port-call policy raised "the gravest questions about the future of the alliance" and urged that serious consideration be given to abrogating the treaty. Other congressional militants, most notably Sen. William Cohen, wished to go further, eliminating trade preferences for New Zealand lamb, wool, and casein and invoking other economic sanctions.[9] Reagan administration leaders firmly resisted such

suggestions to escalate the confrontation.

An abrupt change in the administration's attitude took place in late July when Lange announced his intention to formalize the nuclear-ship ban later in the year through parliamentary legislation. Michael H. Armacost, undersecretary of state for political affairs, warned that such action would prompt "another look at whether or not there is any further basis for retaining the alliance." [10] Several months later, when it became apparent that the Lange cabinet was proceeding with plans to enact restrictive legislation, the Reagan administration reportedly informed Wellington that passage would probably compel the United States to renounce the ANZUS treaty. High-level State Department officials leaked reports stressing that the dispute with New Zealand had "reached a decisive point." Such pessimism was confirmed in mid-December when the Lange government ignored U.S. warnings and introduced legislation banning all nuclear-armed ships and aircraft from New Zealand. [11]

Incompatible Perceptions

It might be tempting to conclude that the ongoing quarrel with New Zealand is an isolated incident involving a relatively minor issue that escalated out of control. This sanguine conclusion would be erroneous. The current conflict involves issues that go to the heart of the ANZUS alliance. It is not the result of inept diplomacy or miscommunication but of a growing divergence in the perspectives, objectives, and perceived security interests of the three signatories. The anti-nuclear policies of the Lange government merely brought into public view critical stresses within ANZUS. In so doing, those policies are giving impetus to a long-overdue reassessment of the 35-year-old military alliance. The current situation raises fundamental questions not only about ANZUS but about the nature of all collective security arrangements and America's future role, if any, in them.

A conceptual chasm divides the Lange government's views from those of the Reagan administration. The crux of Lange's thesis is that ANZUS is not, and was never designed to be, a nuclear alliance. "ANZUS is not the southern hemisphere replica of NATO," he insists. "A South Pacific NATO was not, and is not, needed. The contrast is absolute between Europe, a landmass divided ideologically and physically into antagonistic blocs," and the South Pacific. The latter region "is not an area of super-power rivalry or confrontation. The kinds of security threats faced by South Pacific countries are of a different order than those existing in Western Europe." [12] Lange contends that ANZUS is as much an affirmation of common interests and democratic values as it is a military alliance. He notes that the ANZUS signatories, unlike their counterparts in NATO, have never moved toward formal military integration under a unified command structure. In the same fashion, there are no ANZUS standing forces, detailed military strategies, or contingency plans. Finally, he observes that Australia and New Zealand have never sought or received American aid, either economic or military.

Lange and his colleagues vehemently deny allegations that New Zealand is unwilling to bear its share of collective Western security obligations or that it has deserted ANZUS. The government's policy merely reflects a belief that the strategic environment of the South Pacific does not require a nuclear presence. "New Zealand does not ask, nor do we expect, to be defended by nuclear weapons," the prime minister emphasizes. [13] Conversely, New Zealand remains eager to continue multilateral operations with Australia and the United States to preserve South Pacific regional security by conventional means. Moreover, Lange's thesis holds that it is in America's own interest to preserve ANZUS even with an anti-nuclear caveat. He asserts that the alliance enables Australia and New Zealand to promote the "peaceful, stable development and democratic orientation of the South Pacific." This approach, in turn, has been "fundamental in maintaining the almost complete strategic denial of the region to Soviet penetration." Isolating New Zealand and otherwise disrupting the alliance is counterproductive and undermines vital U.S. interests in the region, according to this theory. [14]

Essentially, Lange and his supporters argue that ANZUS is based upon a wide-ranging "community of interests" transcending purely military considerations. New Zealand, being a sovereign, democratic nation and an equal partner in the alliance, has the right to place limits or conditions on the nature of its military participation. Through democratic processes, New Zealanders have decided that one limitation will be to prohibit the presence of nuclear armaments in their country, and the United States should respect this decision rather than engaging in petulant recriminations. Beyond showing greater consideration for the sovereign rights of a democratic ally, a more conciliatory U.S. response is warranted for two important reasons, according to Lange. First, Wellington's action has not dealt a mortal blow to

ANZUS, since nuclear weapons are essentially irrelevant to the security needs of the South Pacific. Second, New Zealand has in no way abandoned the non-nuclear aspects of ANZUS, and its multifaceted role in that alliance enhances Western, hence U.S., interests throughout the South Pacific region.

The American government perceives the situation in a radically different way. Reagan administration spokesmen have repeatedly stressed two fundamental points: first, the unitary nature of Western security needs and the indivisibility of the military means used to protect them, and second, equitable "burden sharing" and a requirement that every military alliance be a "two-way street." New Zealand's conduct, in the U.S. view, violates both principles.

Secretary of State George Shultz outlined the American rationale for collective security in a July 1985 speech. The goal of U.S. alliances at the time ANZUS was formed, Shultz stated, was to deter Soviet and Soviet-sponsored aggression. This "web of alliances" remains as essential in the 1980s as it was in the 1950s, he insisted. Moreover, it is not enough that allies agree to aid each other in the event of war, since the primary objective is to deter conflicts. Deterrence requires ongoing military cooperation among treaty partners and the elimination of any hint of instability, dissension, or lack of resolve. New Zealand's action, according to Shultz, weakens regional stability, "one of the most important links in the efforts to prevent nuclear war." [15]

Paul Wolfowitz, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, also stressed a requirement for unity on the level of military strategy. It was impossible, Wolfowitz contended, to distinguish between nuclear and non-nuclear means of ensuring regional security, as the Lange government sought to do. "The presence of strong defense capabilities, necessarily naval in this maritime region, is the best guarantee against eruption of conventional conflict. And, if conventional conflict can be deterred, the threat of nuclear conflict is significantly diminished." [16] Given that interrelationship, it is not advisable or even possible for the United States to tailor its military strategy and weaponry to suit the biases or whims of individual allies. "We have only one navy," Wolfowitz observed with thinly veiled sarcasm, "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." [17]

Reagan administration officials have been equally vocal on the necessity of "burden sharing," and they openly accuse the Lange regime of abandoning New Zealand's ANZUS obligations. "When New Zealand decided to reject the Buchanan," George Shultz asserted, "it also decided, in effect, that the basic operational elements of the ANZUS treaty would not apply to it. In a sense, New Zealand walked off the job--the job of working with each other to defend our common security." If even one member "shirks its responsibilities, the health and unity of the entire alliance are placed in jeopardy." [18] Paul Wolfowitz offered a succinct summary of the U.S. attitude toward what Washington considered New Zealand's dereliction of duty:

With words New Zealand assures us that it remains committed to ANZUS; but by its deeds New Zealand has effectively curtailed its operational role in ANZUS. A military alliance has little meaning without military cooperation--without some equity in sharing both the burdens and the rewards. New Zealand can't have it both ways. [19]

Australia finds itself caught in the middle of the quarrel between its two alliance partners. Throughout the current crisis the Hawke government has attempted to maintain cordial relations with both parties, tilting slightly in favor of the U.S. position on the question of port access while reiterating its support for New Zealand's long-term objective of making the entire South Pacific a nuclear-free zone. At times this balancing act has given Australian policy a certain schizoid quality. Canberra endorsed U.S. plans to cancel trilateral naval exercises and postpone the ANZUS foreign ministers conference. At the same time, it has continued to conduct bilateral military exercises with New Zealand and apparently shares Wellington's renewed interest in the moribund Canberra pact of 1944, which provided for political and military collaboration between the two nations. Moreover, Australia introduced a proposal for a "South Pacific Nuclear Weapon Free Zone" at the August 1984 meeting of the South Pacific Forum (a consultative association comprising Australia, the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and Western Samoa). Predictably, the Lange government enthusiastically supported that initiative. [20]

Australia has had its own conflicts with the United States over aspects of military policy. The most telling episode occurred in February 1985 shortly after the U.S.S. Buchanan incident, when the Hawke government withdrew the use

of Australian support facilities for American tests of the MX missile. To preserve its access to joint Australian-U.S. military communications facilities, Washington also had to assure Canberra that those installations would not be used for development of the Strategic Defense Initiative, a program the governing Labor party strongly opposes.[21]

The United States has sought to minimize the significance of these conflicts. One State Department official asserted that there was "no comparison" between these differences and the dispute with New Zealand. "In the case of New Zealand, we are talking about something that is really at the very core of our military interaction as allies. You have to distinguish between that and a broader range of other cooperation." [22] Nevertheless, it is evident that U.S. leaders were troubled by Australia's conduct, and it is uncertain whether Washington would have been so conciliatory if the United States was not already embroiled in an acrimonious confrontation with its other ANZUS ally. The mild response may simply reflect the Reagan administration's realization that it could ill afford a two-front struggle.

Fundamentally, the Hawke government appears to share New Zealand's suspicions of things nuclear and embraces the ultimate objective of a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific. At the same time, it seems more concerned than Wellington about preserving ANZUS and considers the port-access ban premature and needlessly provocative. Canberra also apparently regards U.S. concerns about equitable "burden sharing" within the alliance to be legitimate. It is important to note, however, that a powerful left-wing faction in Hawke's Labor party openly sympathizes with New Zealand's position and is exerting increasing pressure to abolish ANZUS or make it an explicitly non-nuclear association.[23]

It is apparent that the three ANZUS members have sharply different conceptions of what the alliance is and ought to be. New Zealand views ANZUS primarily as a political association, expressing democratic solidarity and promoting a regional stability that is as much economic and political as it is military. The United States regards the alliance as merely one component in a global security network designed to deter Soviet expansionism. Australia's government straddles the issue, seeking to preserve both the political and military dimensions of ANZUS while beginning to tilt toward New Zealand's viewpoint.

Some Hidden Agendas

These diverse positions conceal some vital but less obvious motives and objectives. For example, at the root of the Lange government's policy lies a profound ambivalence about ANZUS. Lost in all the furor over the port-ban decision was the fact that the Labour party also called for a "renegotiation" of the ANZUS treaty immediately upon assuming power.[24] More than a few New Zealanders echo anti-nuclear activist Helen Caldicott's assertion that ANZUS, as now constituted, is a "suicide pact." In addition to burnishing the Labour party's reputation as a leader in the global nuclear-disarmament movement, Lange's policy seeks to decouple ANZUS risks and benefits. New Zealand's leaders no longer wish to risk having their nation become a casualty in a superpower nuclear confrontation, and continued association with a nuclearized American military presence creates precisely that danger.

Nevertheless, Wellington does not want to abandon the protection afforded by a political alliance with the United States. There may be no serious security threat in the South Pacific presently, and New Zealand officials are reasonably certain that this benign environment will persist, but some lingering doubts are inevitable. If a danger did emerge, formal linkage to the United States might be quite useful, at least sparing New Zealand the necessity of increasing military expenditures beyond the present modest level and perhaps preserving the nation's very existence. U.S. accusations that New Zealand wants the best of both worlds are well founded. That nation may not, as Prime Minister Lange has emphasized, wish to be defended by American nuclear weapons, but it does want to be defended. The Lange strategy is to convert ANZUS into a long-term insurance policy on which New Zealand would have to pay few premiums and for which it would have to assume even fewer risks.

The Labour government's "basic requirements" for renegotiating the treaty underscore that objective. As outlined by Wallace Rowling, ambassador to the United States, those requirements include "1) the recognition of our unconditional antinuclear stance; 2) the unfettered right to actively promote a nuclear weapons free South Pacific; 3) the acceptance of absolutely equal partnership on all issues and the requirement that decisions under the terms of the agreement be unanimous; and 4) a guarantee of the complete integrity of New Zealand's sovereignty." [25]

American policymakers have several equally important items on their hidden agenda, including a desire to reassert

U.S. preeminence in alliance affairs. But the foremost objective is to prevent other allies from imitating New Zealand's maverick tendencies. Indeed, the uncompromising response to the Buchanan incident strongly suggests that the issue at stake transcends anything to do with the ANZUS alliance. Reagan administration spokesmen have conceded as much, although sometimes in diplomatically veiled language. One of the more candid admissions came from State Department spokesman Bernard Kalb during the initial stage of the confrontation: "Some Western countries have anti-nuclear and other movements which seek to diminish defense cooperation among the allied states. We would hope that our response to New Zealand would signal that the course these movements advocate would not be cost-free in terms of security relationships with the United States." [26]

The apprehension that New Zealand's deviation might prompt similar actions among other allies considered far more relevant to the American-led collective security network emerges from the comments of other U.S. officials. A "senior State Department official" conceded that if the United States accepted the port-access policy with equanimity, it might provoke calls in strongly anti-nuclear Japan for a similar policy. Even worse, U.S. acquiescence might encourage Western European governments to refuse the Cruise and Pershing II missiles and otherwise seek to curb American nuclear weapons in Europe. [27] George Shultz exhibited the same fear when he asserted that if even one U.S. alliance partner becomes unwilling to make the necessary sacrifices, "others will wonder why they should carry their share of the burden. The result may be the gradual erosion of popular commitment to the common cause." [28]

These broader concerns make the unyielding response to the Buchanan episode more comprehensible. In truth, U.S. leaders do not regard the South Pacific as a probable arena for superpower rivalry in the foreseeable future. Even diehard advocates of mutual defense consider ANZUS only marginally relevant to American security. While Washington expresses pleasure at having a military association with two congenial democracies, the alliance has never represented a high priority in U.S. foreign policy. Were it not for the danger of contagion, Reagan administration leaders might have chosen to handle the port-access dispute with New Zealand in a low-key fashion. But U.S. leaders fear that if even a secondary member of a major alliance, such as NATO, followed New Zealand's precedent, the results could be most undesirable. And if a "vital" ally--West Germany, Italy, Britain, or Japan--moved in that direction, America's elaborate system of alliances could begin to unravel. Given their entrenched belief in collective security, U.S. leaders would consider such a result calamitous for the entire Western world. It is this fear that dictates the uncompromising U.S. policy toward New Zealand. The Reagan administration is determined to bend the Lange government to its will, or, failing that, to make an example of New Zealand as a warning to other U.S. allies.

Australia's hidden agenda is less well defined, but one exists nonetheless. Canberra seeks to keep all its options open. Geographically closer than New Zealand to previously volatile Southeast Asian nations, Australia is somewhat less sanguine about the continued absence of any security threat. Hence, the Hawke government is apprehensive about risking ANZUS, even to further long-range anti-nuclear objectives. Domestic factors also promote a cautious, balanced policy: while the left wing of the governing Labor party fully shares New Zealand's anti-nuclear proclivities, Prime Minister Hawke recognizes that Australians are more ambivalent on the nuclear issue and more solidly pro-ANZUS than their brethren across the Tasman Sea.

These conflicting foreign policy concerns and domestic pressures accentuate Australia's desire to retain all available options. Consequently, Canberra sides with the United States on the port-access question and does not discourage U.S. diplomatic inquiries into the possibility of a bilateral security treaty if the problems with New Zealand cannot be resolved. Yet Australia also preserves its ties with New Zealand by conducting joint military maneuvers, working with Wellington on the Pacific nuclear-free zone proposals, and exploring ways to revitalize the bilateral Canberra pact. If ANZUS endures, Australia remains on good terms with both alliance partners and can help restore comity. If ANZUS disintegrates, Australia still retains important ties to both parties.

Recognizing Strategic Realities

A salient feature of the ongoing trouble in ANZUS is that all three members, despite pious rhetoric about alliance loyalties and the merits of collective security, have operated according to their perceived national interests. No one should be surprised, since governments rarely utilize any other standard, however much they may attempt to disguise the fact. It is vital, then, that U.S. policymakers determine America's future policy toward ANZUS on the basis of unemotional calculations concerning our security requirements. They must avoid perpetuating an outmoded alliance

out of nostalgia or misplaced sentimentality toward "fellow democracies," while being equally diligent to rise above petulant retaliation.

The first reality that Washington should recognize is that ANZUS is part of an obsolete security strategy. Paul Wolfowitz inadvertently underscored that point when he stated that ANZUS was originally formed "to prevent repetition of the circumstances that led to World War II." [29] He was speaking of the dramatic and massive projection of Japanese naval power into the South Pacific in the late 1930s and early 1940s, an action that alarmed Australia and New Zealand as well as the United States. In a real sense, ANZUS was obsolete at its inception. Japanese naval power was long since smashed, and neither the Soviet Union nor any other potentially hostile nation was capable of more than a token presence in the South Pacific. Today that situation has changed somewhat, but a serious threat remains remote. Although Soviet naval power has increased substantially, most of it is stationed in the extreme western Pacific at a considerable distance from Australia and New Zealand. [30]

ANZUS is merely one example of the proliferation of U.S.- sponsored security pacts during the Truman and Eisenhower years. Throughout that era, American policymakers assumed that a web of paper alliances around the periphery of the Soviet Union would somehow thwart the expansion of world communism. In all too many instances such "alliances" were little more than mechanisms authorizing a disparate collection of militarily insignificant nations to huddle under America's nuclear umbrella. Columnist William Safire makes the perceptive observation that U.S. leaders tend to view alliances "as good in themselves--as if the purpose of an alliance is to have an alliance." [31] At no time was this attitude more evident than in the 1950s. Several of the arrangements were manifestly unstable. The Baghdad Pact and the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) passed into oblivion years ago. The other agreements have endured, but most of them have lost even their original dubious reasons for existence.

Although ANZUS may have given Australia and New Zealand some psychological reassurance during the frightening days of the early cold war, in the political and strategic environment of the 1980s it is an anachronism. Today, ANZUS is an alliance in search of a purpose. Much of the current turmoil is a result of that obsolescence, even though all three participants seem reluctant to confront the issue.

In examining the growing dissension within NATO, Earl Ravenal concludes that the intra-alliance conflict represents not a crisis of "will" but of "situation." [32] The security needs and objectives of America and Western Europe have simply diverged to the point that the community of interests necessary to sustain the alliance no longer exists. Such an observation is even more pertinent with respect to ANZUS. David Lange wistfully demonstrated that point in analyzing his country's dispute with the United States. "The fact that two treaty partners could take such different views of the character of the alliance raises serious questions about how the alliance will be managed, and the security of the South Pacific maintained, in the future." [33]

The second reality U.S. policymakers must acknowledge is that the military interests and goals of our ANZUS partners differ sharply from our own. Moreover, this chasm is expanding, not contracting. From New Zealand's perspective (and, to a more limited extent, Australia's) external security threats are virtually nonexistent. Given its geographic isolation, New Zealand would be an unlikely arena for military combat even in a worst-case scenario--a war between the two superpowers. Only its previous willingness to serve as a host to America's nuclear navy made that pastoral nation a potential military target. New Zealand's government, and apparently a decisive majority of the population as well, [34] decided that the risks involved in a continued nuclear alliance with the United States vastly outweighed any potential benefits. Australia, although more hesitantly, appears to be moving toward a similar conclusion.

The effort to create a nuclear-free South Pacific may prove to be a dangerous delusion, eventually leaving both Australia and New Zealand militarily vulnerable, but it is their decision to make and their risks to assume. The security and well-being of those two nations, not our own, are at stake. [35]

Toward an Amicable Solution

While U.S. leaders should respect the independent foreign policy courses being charted by New Zealand and Australia, no purpose is served in tolerating the Lange government's effort to reshape ANZUS to suit New Zealand's own purposes. Lange's conception of the alliance perpetuates a costly American obligation to defend two distant nations for few, if any, reciprocal benefits. The United States should make it clear to New Zealand that we will not be that nation's

military insurance policy. Lange has affirmed that New Zealand intends to be more "independent" and "self-reliant," but his desire to preserve ANZUS belies such statements.[36] Trends toward military self-reliance should be encouraged; attempts to prolong a convenient dependency must be politely, but firmly, rejected.

The United States should take immediate, positive action to terminate the ANZUS treaty. Moreover, it would be beneficial for American leaders to use this opportunity to reassess the republic's role in other alliances. The assumptions underlying the doctrine of collective security have gone unexamined and unchallenged far too long. ANZUS provides an ideal starting point for such a review. Little of the emotional or geostrategic baggage that would accompany a reassessment of NATO or the U.S.-Japanese security treaty is present in this case, thus enhancing the chances for abrogation. Furthermore, it serves no purpose to allow the situation to drift amid mounting recriminations and ill will between this country and New Zealand.

Although the United States should withdraw from ANZUS, it is vital that this step be taken for the right reasons. ANZUS is failing not because one member callously seeks to "shirk" its obligations or refuses to bear a "proper share" of collective Western defense burdens. Such thinking is either naive or exploitive, for it assumes that America's perceived security needs are--or at least ought to be--shared by all other Western nations.[37] ANZUS is no longer viable because the security interests of the three signatories are fundamentally incompatible.

For this same reason, there should be no effort to replace ANZUS with a bilateral U.S.-Australian arrangement. Given Canberra's manifest ambivalence during the current crisis, a new confrontation would likely surface in a few years. Fundamentally, the South Pacific is not an area involving vital U.S. security needs. No military pacts, whether bilateral or trilateral, are needed.

Above all, the United States should promote the demise of ANZUS with a maximum of grace. Trade sanctions against New Zealand, as suggested by Senators Cohen, Dole, and others, would be particularly cruel and counterproductive. David Lange's government, despite its leftist image, is adopting several refreshing policy changes in the economic arena. Since assuming power, it has removed controls on wages, prices, and interest rates. It has also eased agricultural subsidies, trimmed government spending, dismantled an archaic import-licensing system that protected inefficient domestic manufacturers, and announced plans to lower tax rates. In the view of one economic analyst, this ostensibly socialist government is "embracing free-market principles at a torrid pace." [38]

Given its small domestic market, however, New Zealand is heavily dependent upon its ability to export. The adoption of protectionist measures by the United States would have a devastating impact because America is New Zealand's third-largest trading partner. The economic repercussions would predictably revive public sentiment for controls and domestic subsidies, thus undermining the Lange government's laudable free-market initiatives. Since the Reagan administration favors a more open, capitalist global order, it should resist any temptation to resort to economic retaliation against New Zealand out of pique over foreign policy disagreements.

Worst of all, trade sanctions would needlessly poison relations with an otherwise friendly country. While it is desirable for all concerned that the United States and its ANZUS associates cease being allies, there is no reason to become adversaries. A strategic divorce is necessary, but American policymakers should endeavor to make it an amicable one.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Kevin P. Clements, "New Zealand's Relations with the UK, the U.S., and the Pacific," *Alternatives: A Journal of World Policy* 10, no. 4 (1985): 595-97. One important factor promoting the growth of anti-nuclear sentiment in New Zealand and throughout the South Pacific is the pervasive hostility toward French nuclear testing in the region. See also David Knibb, "Pacific Islands are Drifting Away from West," *Wall Street Journal*, December 30, 1985.

[2] "New Zealander Wants to Avoid Fight With U.S.," *New York Times*, July 16, 1984; "Harboring Doubts," *Time*, July 30, 1984, p. 81.

[3] Paul D. Wolfowitz, "ANZUS Alliance," *Department of State Bulletin* (June 1985): 65-66. The initial U.S. position can be discerned from the comments of Secretary of State George Shultz at a news conference in Wellington, New Zealand, a few days after the Labour party victory. *Department of State Bulletin* (September 1984): 20-22.

[4] Clements, p. 599; Department of State Bulletin (September 1984): 22. The rather tense state of U.S.-Australian relations in mid-1983 was apparent during the annual ANZUS meeting of foreign ministers. Even the communique issued that year was unusually vague, sidestepping several sensitive issues. "ANZUS Council Meets in Washington," Department of State Bulletin (September 1983): 71-75. A concise analysis of Australian ambivalence during this period can be found in Robert Kaylor, "Why Australia Grows Uneasy With Washington," U.S. News and World Report, June 20, 1983, pp. 54-56.

[5] Wolfowitz, p. 66; "New Zealand Says No to Port Call by U.S. Destroyer," Dallas Morning News, February 5, 1985.

[6] Robert Kaylor, "Storm Signals Fly for U.S. in South Pacific," U.S. News and World Report, March 4, 1985, pp. 31-33; "U.S. Drops Military Exercise with New Zealand," Dallas Morning News, February 16, 1985; Clements, p. 600.

[7] "New Zealand Leader Criticizes U.S. Tactics," Dallas Morning News, March 1, 1985.

[8] "Australia Indefinitely Delays Alliance Meeting," Dallas Morning News, March 5, 1985; "U.S.-Australian Joint Statement, Canberra, July 15, 1985," Department of State Bulletin (September 1985): 30-31. It was a measure of strained U.S.-New Zealand relations that Prime Minister Lange refused to meet with Secretary of State Shultz during the latter's Far Eastern trip. "Lange Won't Confer With Shultz," Dallas Morning News, May 23, 1985.

[9] Clements, pp. 599-600; Bernard Gwertzman, "Australia Takes Middle Position in U.S.-New Zealand Dispute," New York Times, February 8, 1985. Senator Cohen and eight colleagues (including Senate majority leader Robert Dole) introduced a resolution urging, among other things, that New Zealand's trade preferences be revoked. Congressional Record (February 6, 1985): 131, no. 12: S1204-5. Protectionist elements in the House were equally eager to use the port-access dispute to call for restrictions on New Zealand imports that compete with items produced in their home districts. See the comments during a House debate on ANZUS in Congressional Record (February 26, 1985) 131, no. 21: H695- 702.

[10] Philip Shenon, "U.S. Says It is Considering Breaking Military Ties With New Zealand," New York Times, August 1, 1985.

[11] "New Zealand Plan to Bar Nuclear Ships Threatens Treaty With U.S.," Dallas Morning News, November 29, 1985; James Wallace and Bob Horton, "Why Another U.S. Treaty is Going Down the Drain," U.S. News and World Report, December 23, 1985, pp. 28-29.

[12] David Lange, "New Zealand's Security Policy," Foreign Affairs (Summer 1985): 1013, 1015.

[13] Ibid., p. 1011.

[14] Ibid., p. 1014.

[15] George Shultz, "Alliance Responsibility," Department of State Bulletin (September 1985): 33.

[16] Wolfowitz, p. 66.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Shultz, pp. 33, 34.

[19] Wolfowitz, p. 66.

[20] Clements, p. 598; Lange, pp. 1011-12.

[21] "Australia Balks on Accord to Aid in U.S. Test of MX," New York Times, February 7, 1985; Andrew Mack, "U.S. Bases in Australia--The Controversy Grows," Asian Defense Journal (November 1984): 49; Geraldine Brookes, "Many Australians Worry That U.S. Bases Put Nation in Jeopardy as Nuclear Target," Wall Street Journal, August 22,

1985.

[221 "Australia Balks."

[23] Clements, p. 602; Malcolm Saunders and Ralph Summy, "One Hundred Years of an Australian Peace Movement, 1885-1984: Part II: From the Second World War to Vietnam and Beyond," *Peace and Change* (Fall/Winter 1984): 69-71. For a discussion of Hawke's views and his problems with the militant left, see Owen Harries, "Crisis in the Pacific," *Commentary* (June 1985): 49-50.

[24] Clements, p. 599.

[25] Wallace Rowling, "New Zealand Foreign Policy: Time for a Change?" *New Zealand International Review* 9, no. 3 (1984): 8. Rowling restated his concept of the alliance in a Los Angeles speech a year later. Wallace Rowling, "The Future of the ANZUS Treaty," *Vital Speeches*, August 15, 1985, pp. 645-47.

[26] "U.S. Plans Actions to Answer Rebuff by New Zealand," *New York Times*, February 6, 1985.

[27] "New Zealand Says No to Port Call."

[28] Shultz, p. 34.

[29] Wolfowitz, p. 65.

[30] Harry Anderson, Kim Willenson, et al., "A Pacific Power Play," *Newsweek*, May 20, 1985, pp. 42-44.

[31] William Safire, "Friends and Allies No More," *New York Times*, February 28, 1985.

[32] Earl C. Ravenal, "NATO: A Crisis of Will or Situation?" *Cato Policy Report* 7, no. 6 (November/December 1985): 12.

[33] Lange, p. 1015.

[34] Public opinion polls show New Zealand majorities as high as 76 percent opposed to the presence of nuclear weapons. Clements, p. 597.

[35] Those who contend that America should maintain a military presence in the South Pacific invariably cite a need to support even more geographically remote obligations. For example, they portray the waters near Australia and New Zealand as constituting vital "sea lines of communication" assisting the United States in maintaining its "strategic forward position" at Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. Likewise, they see this region as relevant in helping the United States project the naval power necessary to protect oil routes in the Arabian Sea, Persian Gulf, and Western Pacific vital to the economic well-being of Western Europe and Japan. Such a conclusion is valid, however, only if one accepts the dubious assumption that the United States actually has "vital interests" in the Indian Ocean and must protect the oil routes of prosperous nations that are, or ought to be, capable of taking on that defensive role themselves. A typical example of such globalist assumptions can be found in Robert A. Brand, "Australia, New Zealand, and ANZUS," *Atlantic Community Quarterly* (Winter 1984-85): 357-59.

[36] Lange, p. 1019.

[37] For a nongovernmental example of such thinking, see "Nuclear Myopia," *National Review*, March 8, 1985, pp. 18-20.

[38] Steve Lohr, "Auckland Adopts Free-Market Stand," *New York Times*, June 10, 1985. Other useful accounts of New Zealand's economic reforms include "A Labour Government Sets Things Right," *Economist*, June 1, 1985, pp. 17-20; and Jane S. Shaw and Richard L. Stroup, "New Zealand's Free-Market Experiment," *Wall Street Journal*, December 2, 1985.