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Australian Foreign Policy and Africa, 1972-1983

Robert Jansen

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A thesis submitted for the degree of
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This thesis is my own original work.
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Abstract

This thesis examines Australian foreign policy with a focus on relations with Africa. I contrast the foreign policy position of the Whitlam Labor Party government with the international policies of the Fraser Liberal and Country Parties government. The structure of analysis demonstrates the links between general and specific elements of foreign policy. I discuss Australia's relations with the United States, approach on the Indian Ocean region, voting pattern at the United Nations, and role in the Commonwealth. I also examine Australia's policies in relation to the demands of developing countries in general, and study the positions of Whitlam and Fraser on China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. This narrowing of analysis culminates with an investigation into Australian foreign policy on Africa, particularly South Africa and Rhodesia. The comparison of the foreign policies of the Whitlam and Fraser governments illustrates the extent of change and continuity in Australia's international position over time. I argue that Whitlam and Fraser produced similar foreign policy positions on Africa from different political perspectives. I also argue that Whitlam and Fraser established an anti-racist and anti-colonial foreign policy for Australia.
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Conclusion

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In December 1972, Gough Whitlam and the Labor Party were elected following twenty-three years of Liberal and Country Parties government. The Whitlam government initiated many changes to Australian foreign policy, including a significant shift in relations with Africa. In December 1975, Malcolm Fraser and the Liberal and Country Parties were elected after Whitlam was dismissed from office. The Fraser government adopted some of the policies established by Whitlam, in particular, the position to oppose racial discrimination in South Africa and Rhodesia.

In this thesis, I argue that Whitlam and Fraser established an anti-racist and anti-colonial foreign policy for Australia. This was a considerable shift from the international position instituted by Menzies and the subsequent Liberal and Country Parties governments. I also argue that Whitlam and Fraser produced remarkably similar foreign policy positions on Africa from quite different political perspectives. This outcome was not predicted at the time and has not been analysed in detail in the academic literature on Australian foreign policy. As such, I illustrate the extent of change and the degree of continuity in foreign policy from Whitlam to Fraser.
I demonstrate that the personal influence of Whitlam and Fraser, within their respective governments, was an important factor in the construction and implementation of Australian foreign policy. Also, by narrowing the analysis through the structure of this thesis, I explain that Whitlam and Fraser forged links between the general and specific elements of foreign policy. For example, I show that both Prime Ministers connected Australia's position in the United Nations and Commonwealth with Australia's approach toward the developing countries and with Australia's policies on Africa. In this way, I illustrate the roles played by Whitlam and Fraser in reforming elements of foreign policy while linking Australia's position on Africa with Australian foreign policy in general.

Approach

The research process for this thesis was based on several assumptions on my part which establish the boundaries of the topic and argument. The thesis is an examination of Australian foreign policy with a central focus on relations with Africa. However, the nature of Australian relations with Africa means that I analyse Whitlam and Fraser's policies on southern Africa primarily, and this implies a concentration on South Africa and Rhodesia as the dominant issues. Australia did not have extensive relations with the countries of North Africa or West Africa. Policy initiatives in these areas were limited to a small amount of economic aid to Egypt and occasional discussions with Nigeria during Commonwealth meetings.

The chosen time frame begins with the election of the Whitlam Labor government in December 1972 and ends with the electoral defeat of the Fraser Liberal and Country Parties government in March 1983. More importantly, Whitlam and Fraser instituted substantial changes in Australian foreign policy in this period. In particular, both Prime Ministers were attentive to African issues, notably the political conflicts in southern Africa.

This thesis also embodies the assumption that political history is useful and valuable in itself. This is not a theoretical discussion of the basis of foreign policy to be used to examine the foreign policies of other countries. The primary value of this research is the analysis of issues which have not been adequately explained, such as Whitlam's position on South Africa and
Fraser's role in the political and constitutional settlement in Rhodesia. My argument carries the research somewhat further than this task but the content and style of this thesis remains within the conventional approach to the analysis of Australian foreign policy.¹

Literature

The academic literature on Prime Ministers Whitlam and Fraser includes an unusual combination of works. The material on Whitlam prior to November 1975 reflected either an enthusiasm for the reform process or a revulsion for the agenda and style of the Labor Party government. Subsequently, the literature on Whitlam was affected by polarised views on the constitutional crisis and the dismissal of the Whitlam Labor government.² In both cases, there was a wealth of material produced on Whitlam as Prime Minister and on the policies of the Whitlam government.

The dismissal of Whitlam, and Fraser's role in the constitutional and political crisis, impacted upon the literature on Prime Minister Fraser and the Liberal and Country Parties government. The small amount that has been written about the policies of the Fraser government reflects opinions on Fraser's path to power. The academic community that analysed the policies of the Whitlam government did not demonstrate the same interest


in the Fraser government.³ Little academic attention was focused on the policies of the Fraser government and therefore the positive work of Fraser in foreign affairs was rarely recognised.⁴

Most recent literature ignores Fraser's work on foreign policy or characterises Fraser's foreign policy, in passing, as split between an anti-Soviet security agenda and a concern for African issues.⁵ An example of this literature is the influential work of Evans and Grant which spends only four paragraphs in 350 pages to describe Fraser's foreign policy as incoherent.⁶ While I would not have expected this partisan account to adopt a positive view of Fraser, the contribution of Fraser to Australia's international standing should have been acknowledged and the links within Fraser's foreign policy should have been identified.

Somewhat separate from this academic or specialist literature, there have been several biographies and analyses of Whitlam and Fraser.⁷ The most important contribution has been Patrick Weller's study of Fraser as Prime Minister and the nature of the Fraser government. Weller's research

³ Commentators writing on Whitlam that did not subsequently focus on Fraser foreign policy include, for example, D. Altman, The First Six Months, Current Affairs Bulletin, vol. 50, 2, July 1973; B.D. Beddie, ed.: Advance Australia - Where?, Oxford University Press with the Australian Institute of International Affairs, Melbourne, 1975; J. Camilleri, A New Australian Foreign Policy, Arena, no. 31, 1973; Owen Harries, Mr Whitlam and Australian Foreign Policy, Quadrant, vol. 17, 4, July–August 1973; and D.J. Murphy, New Nationalism or New Internationalism: Australian Foreign Policy 1973–74, World Review, October 1974.
⁴ The obvious exception was Henry S. Albinski, The Australian-American Security Relationship: A Regional and International Perspective, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1981.
I have not used interviews to provide evidence for my argument. At a key point in the research process, the question was raised whether I could gain new information from Whitlam and Fraser, in particular, to better explain policy outcomes. On this, Whitlam had written more than 150 pages on international affairs in the book on the Whitlam government and Fraser had made many public statements on foreign policy while in government. There was also the problem that interviews conducted some considerable time after the event could be unreliable. I decided that interviews were not central to the research process for this thesis.
focused on the role of Fraser as Prime Minister, the operation of cabinet and Fraser's presentation of the government to the electorate. With this focus, Weller provided a unique study of power within the Australian political system by gaining unprecedented access to materials relating to the Fraser government. The research drew on the private papers of Malcolm Fraser, official classified documents, interviews and the public record. The problem with Weller's account is the over-reliance on unavailable material and lack of supporting evidence from the accessible sources.\(^8\)

In contrast to Weller's book, this thesis focuses on the public record to construct an analysis of Australian foreign policy. I aim to complement the research conducted by commentators such as Weller by concentrating on the Parliamentary debates, newspaper articles; and academic literature. Further, the public record contains a wealth of information which, particularly for Fraser's foreign policy, has not been employed to analyse Australia's international position.

Each of the public documents provide material for analysis and complement each other in offering specific parts for a complete picture. Parliamentary statements by Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers offer a clear indication of government policy against which outcomes can be tested, while debates in the Parliament expose arguments and Parliamentary questions reveal details of policy at particular times. Newspaper articles add information on specific issues, provide commentary within ongoing debates and fill gaps in academic analysis. Further, the academic literature offers a more thorough and considered account of government policies over time while linking and contrasting related issues to explain the development of policies.

Essentially, this thesis uses public documents, both primary and secondary, which were available at the time of the Whitlam and Fraser governments. With this material, the argument is situated in the political context of the time. Exceptions to this rule are two important books that were published some time after the event. However, both of these works employ primary sources from the terms of the Whitlam and Fraser governments. The first is Whitlam's 1985 book *The Whitlam Government 1972-1975* which details

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\(^8\) For example, Weller, ibid., p. 319, stated that the Department of Foreign Affairs prepared a Cabinet submission prior to the 1977 London CHOGM which advocated a progressive but moderate role for Australia, including opposition to armed struggle as a solution in Rhodesia. This is revealing and interesting as background to the analysis in this thesis but it is also unverifiable and therefore less useful here.
the historical background to the Whitlam government and provides information not available elsewhere.9 I have been careful in using this work because the book is a lengthy attempt by Whitlam to highlight the achievements of the Whitlam Labor government. Second, I have used Renouf’s 1986 book because it is the only source which examines the range of issues related to Fraser’s foreign policy.10 Here again I have been cautious as Renouf was one of Fraser’s harshest critics.

The question of sources relates to where this thesis fits with other large studies in the area. I have found no substantial academic works that provide a direct comparison of the foreign policies of Whitlam and Fraser and nor have I found a doctoral thesis that analyses Fraser’s work on African issues. The Ph.D. thesis of Wilkinson on aid policy and the shorter thesis of Toenniessen on Australian foreign policy in general provide a background to the argument presented in this thesis.11 In relation to events subsequent to the time frame of this thesis, the Ph.D. thesis of Cox investigated Australia's policy on South Africa.12 Not uniquely, Cox failed to acknowledge the importance of Fraser’s work on South Africa and Rhodesia. These substantial works form the academic bookends to this thesis.13

10 Alan Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian foreign policy, Australian Professional Publications, Sydney, 1986. This is notwithstanding Albinski, The Australian-American Security Relationship, op. cit., which examined the security aspects of Fraser’s foreign policy.
In terms of the literature employed for this thesis, I have focused on the political and legislative processes in the Australian context, thus situating the foreign policies of Whitlam and Fraser within the parameters which defined their work as political leaders. Therefore, I am aware of related fields of literature but do not focus on this material in this thesis. First, there is a large body of work that focuses on the leadership role of the United States President. This literature examines the role of the President as directly elected, in conflict with the legislative structure, and as promoter of the executive arm of government. These issues are significantly different from the situation in Australia where the Prime Minister must operate as a part of the legislative process and lead the political party of government. I have found some interesting comparisons in this literature but this contrast is a separate project.

Second, there is a field of study which examines the role of Prime Ministers in Westminster systems. The central question in this literature is whether

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cabinet government has been replaced by prime ministerial government. It is argued that Prime Ministers are now pre-eminent through control over substantial powers, including the role to speak on behalf of their country in international forums. Certainly in regard to foreign policy, Prime Ministers have considerable freedom to determine relationships with little interference from the Parliament or the cabinet. This thesis makes a contribution to these debates by focusing on the influence of the Prime Minister within the Australian Parliamentary system.

Similarly, the distinct set of literature which examines the role of the Australian Prime Minister offers some reflections on the governments led by Whitlam and Fraser. This field has been driven by the work of Weller on the position of the Australian Prime Minister and is small in comparison with the research completed on the roles of the US President and the British Prime Minister. No doubt, the power held by Whitlam and Fraser as Prime Ministers contributed to their success in implementing foreign policy initiatives. However, to examine their international agendas from the literature on the role of the Australian Prime Minister is a different task.

Also, there are many books and papers which analyse the domestic policies of the Whitlam government and an eclectic collection of articles on the Fraser government. In this thesis, I have alluded to several domestic issues in explaining elements of foreign policy, including aspects of immigration policy in relation to the arrival of refugees and elements of


federalism with regard to the representation of Rhodesia in Australia. While I have not pursued the related domestic topics here, some valuable research could be undertaken to analyse the interaction between domestic and foreign policies during the Whitlam and Fraser governments.

In total, this thesis accords with the conventional method of foreign policy analysis through the use of the public record to examine the foreign policy positions of Whitlam and Fraser. This approach places this thesis within the substantial academic literature on Australian foreign policy.

Structure

The structure of this thesis is based on a series of comparisons of the foreign policies of Whitlam and Fraser. Again, it demonstrates that Prime Ministers Whitlam and Fraser arrived at similar foreign policy positions on Africa from different political starting points. Specifically, the argument is based in the comparative analyses of different foreign policy issues within a single government and corresponding foreign policy issues between governments. For Whitlam and later for Fraser, I examine the domestic context of foreign policy, compare Australia's key international relationships, narrow the analysis to investigate relations with developing countries, and finally focus on policies on African issues. At the same time, I analyse and compare each issue over time to demonstrate the extent of change or continuity in policy outlook. In total, the structure of the thesis projects a matrix of comparisons to present a clear picture of the connections between foreign policy issues.

In establishing the historical context for the Whitlam Labor government, chapter one examines the foreign policies of the Liberal and Country Parties governments prior to December 1972. I analyse Australia's connection with Britain, particularly in the United Nations and the Commonwealth, and Australia's parallel defence alliance with the United States. I also focus on Australia's colonial administration of Papua New Guinea, the nature of the aid program, and the support of the Menzies government for the minority populations in South Africa and Rhodesia. This chapter establishes the central issues which were the focus of the Whitlam and Fraser foreign policies, particularly in reference to Africa. I highlight Australia's conservative international image prior to the election of the Labor
government and detail the foreign policies that Whitlam claimed were in need of significant change.

In introducing the foreign policy of the Whitlam government, I argue in chapter two that Whitlam was central to the construction of Australian foreign policy through the Labor Party Platform and the November 1972 policy speech. This chapter demonstrates Whitlam's success in changing the Labor Party's foreign policy agenda prior to 1972 and capacity to implement significant changes to Australian foreign policy as both Prime Minister and Foreign Minister.

In chapter three, I analyse the general international issues which formed the context for the Whitlam foreign policy on the developing countries and Africa. I examine the Whitlam Labor government's criticisms of the United States with regard to Vietnam while Prime Minister Whitlam also attempted to secure Australia's alliance with the United States. This issue included the future of US military facilities in Australia and the strategic balance of forces in the Indian Ocean. This chapter shows that Whitlam initiated significant changes to Australian foreign policy in general, especially at the United Nations, but maintained the central assumptions of Australia's international relationships.

On more specific issues, I argue in chapter four that Whitlam aligned Australia with the demands of the developing countries in international forums, thereby projecting a new image for Australia. This chapter includes analysis of Whitlam's approach on the Asia and Pacific region, including the proposal for an Asia Pacific forum, Australia's recognition of the People's Republic of China, the complex diplomatic relations surrounding Cambodia, and the debate within the Labor government on Vietnam. I also provide a discussion of the Whitlam government's response to the situation in East Timor through 1975 and the debates on changes to the Australian aid program, including the end of colonial administration of Papua New Guinea. Through these issues, I demonstrate that Whitlam supported the interests of the developing countries and thereby provided an anti-racist and anti-colonial foundation for Australian foreign policy.

Chapter five focuses the analysis on the significant change initiated by Whitlam on Australia's relations with Africa. I examine the Whitlam government's strong diplomatic opposition to apartheid while continuing to trade with South Africa. I also detail Whitlam's decisions to reverse
Australia's voting pattern in the United Nations to act against the minority regime in Rhodesia and highlight the decisions to provide Australian aid to Africa in support of liberation groups. This chapter is central to the thesis in providing the key comparison with Fraser's foreign policy on Africa.

In shifting attention to the Fraser government in chapter six, I initially examine Fraser's response to the movement of Indonesian troops into East Timor prior to the December 1975 federal election. This chapter analyses Fraser's personal political stance and shows that Prime Minister Fraser played an important role in the implementation of foreign policy. This chapter demonstrates that Fraser's foreign policy outlook was based on a coherent philosophy which directed the Fraser government's relations with Africa.

Fraser's approach on international relations focused on security concerns and, in particular, the intentions of the Soviet Union and the capacity of the United States to respond to conflict. Chapter seven examines Fraser's agenda as outlined in the June 1976 statement to the Parliament, the strengthening of the strategic alliance with the United States, the security concerns about the Indian Ocean region, Fraser's critical stance on the Soviet Union's actions in Afghanistan, and support for President Reagan, particularly in relation to the revolution in Iran. This chapter analyses the details of the Fraser foreign policy in the context of scarce academic literature in this area.

Chapter eight shows that Fraser maintained Australia's support for the demands of the developing countries. I analyse the Harries report on Australia's relations with developing countries, Fraser's support for the developing countries in the North South debate, especially on the idea of a Common Fund, and the extension of relations with countries in the Asia Pacific region, including mixed success in terms of conflicts in Kampuchea and East Timor. I also examine the Fraser government's support for the independence process in Papua New Guinea and the use of aid policy to support foreign policy objectives. I argue that Fraser aligned Australia with the developing countries in general, not only with the countries of the Asia Pacific region, and that Fraser's approach on developing countries was important for the policies on Africa.

Finally, on Africa, Fraser clearly built upon, and extended, Australian foreign policy in opposition to the minority governments in South Africa.
and Rhodesia. Chapter nine examines Fraser's participation at the 1977 London CHOGM, the significant role of Fraser at the 1979 Lusaka CHOGM, and the continuation of policies into the 1981 Melbourne CHOGM and 1982 Brisbane Commonwealth Games. Through this analysis, I illustrate the continuity in foreign policy on Africa from Whitlam to Fraser.

In total, this thesis examines aspects of Australian foreign policy that have received little academic attention. Indeed, the purpose of the thesis is revealed in the structure which places Fraser's foreign policy, with emphasis on Africa, against the background of the Whitlam foreign policy. This exercise shows that Whitlam and Fraser were central to the construction and implementation of Australian foreign policy and both Prime Ministers arrived at a position which opposed racial discrimination in South Africa and Rhodesia. Indeed, from different political perspectives, Whitlam and Fraser established an anti-racist and anti-colonial foreign policy for Australia.
The foreign policies of the Liberal and Country Parties governments prior to December 1972 provide the obvious background to the foreign policies of the Whitlam Labor government. The Liberal Party, led by Robert Menzies, and in conjunction with the Country Party, formed government in Australia following the federal election in December 1949. Menzies remained Prime Minister for sixteen years, winning seven federal elections, until retirement in January 1966. The Liberal and Country Parties governments were subsequently led by Harold Holt, John Gorton, and William McMahon until the December 1972 federal election. In terms of foreign policy, the Liberal and Country Parties established a conservative agenda for Australia in international debates.

In this context, the Labor Party, led by Gough Whitlam, claimed that there was a need for significant change in Australian foreign policy. The speed and extent of reform instituted by the Whitlam government after December 1972

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reflected this understanding of the need to reassess and alter Australia's international position.

This chapter is not intended to provide a comprehensive outline of the foreign policies of the Liberal and Country Parties governments. Rather, this analysis of key topics is designed to assist with the discussion of the Whitlam foreign policy agenda. Also, in a different way, this background will be valuable for the assessment of the foreign policies of the Fraser government.

The foreign policies of the Liberal and Country Parties governments, as initiated by Prime Minister Menzies, focused on the historical connection with Britain while recognising the need for defence arrangements with the United States. Australia prioritised security issues as the basis of foreign policy which led to active involvement in regional conflicts, including Vietnam. Within the United Nations and the Commonwealth, the Liberal and Country Parties governments reinforced a conservative approach to international relations by consistently aligning with Britain, especially in opposition to the demands of developing countries.

As a part of United Nations trusteeship arrangements, Australia was responsible for Papua New Guinea and Nauru. The Liberal and Country Parties governments were slow to promote the independence of Papua New Guinea until the work of Minister for External Territories Peacock in 1972. Further, aid policy was administered through the Colombo Plan and was closely linked to the security agenda of foreign policy. Related to these elements of foreign policy, the Liberal and Country Parties governments maintained loyal support for the minority population in South Africa and, while reluctantly conforming to international pressure to impose sanctions, provided active diplomatic assistance to Rhodesia. In particular, Australia was seen to support South Africa's colonial administration of South West Africa. These foreign policy positions were reflected in the Liberal and Country Parties policy statements for the 1972 federal election.

International relations

Prior to the election of the Whitlam Labor government in December 1972, Australia pursued an explicit security agenda on international issues. The Liberal and Country Parties governments reinforced the historical connection with Britain and established a close link with the United States. Part of this
approach was the commitment of Australian troops to a number of conflicts, notably in Malaysia and Vietnam, to support the United States role in the Asia Pacific region. By the late 1960s, the international political environment was changing and this caused some difficulties for the Liberal and Country Parties government.

From December 1949, Prime Minister Menzies constructed and implemented a foreign policy based on security and defence. For many in the Liberal and Country Parties, the security of Australia was linked to the colonial history with Britain, including the understanding that Britain would defend Australia and that Australia would assist with the defence of Britain. Particularly for Menzies, the relationship with Britain was fundamental to Australia's international position. In addition, and in response to Britain's limited capacity to assist Australia, the Australia-New Zealand-United States Treaty was launched in 1951 which, for the Menzies government, extended the United States security alliance into the Asia Pacific region.

Further, the Menzies government believed that Australian contributions to the deterrence or defeat of communist-inspired activities complemented foreign policy security objectives. Thus, upon election, Prime Minister Menzies increased the level of military support for the British counter-insurgency effort in Malaya and subsequently committed troops to the Korean conflict and to action in Borneo. In 1962, military advisers were dispatched to Vietnam followed by combat troops in 1965. The Australian forces in Vietnam exceeded 8000, including conscripted soldiers, costing 500 deaths and 3000 wounded Australian personnel. By December 1972, the Australian government had withdrawn combat troops from Vietnam but advisers remained.

At relatively high costs, particularly in Vietnam, the Menzies government seemed to be successful in committing the United States to the defence of the Asia Pacific region, that is, to actively oppose communism and thereby to support Australian foreign policy goals. Further, the Liberal and Country

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Parties governments enthusiastically supported the relationship with the United States by hosting information-gathering military facilities in Australia. These facilities included the US naval communication station at North West Cape which transmitted ultra-low frequency messages to submarines in the Indian Ocean, and the Pine Gap base near Alice Springs and Nurrungar near Woomera which both monitored Soviet and Chinese nuclear missile systems. This arrangement complemented Australia's foreign and security policy objectives by enhancing the global military capability of the United States and apparently committed the United States to the long-term defence of Australia.

This approach to foreign policy and the focus on narrow understandings of security was seen as outdated by 1971-72. The Liberal and Country Parties government led by Prime Minister McMahon from March 1971 was slow to react to changes in the international political climate and failed to appreciate the implications of change for Australia. The United States and the Soviet Union were moving toward a guarded accommodation of their rival military capabilities while new regional influences such as China and Japan were emerging. Long held positions on Vietnam and China were changing which produced a realignment in international relations. Nevertheless, the McMahon government adhered to established understandings of the world, specifically continuing to view the Asia Pacific region as volatile and placing responsibility with China for perceived instability. The Liberal and Country Parties government continued to stress the need for strong security ties with the United States and remained reticent about embracing the aspirations of developing nations.

the United Nations and the Commonwealth

The Liberal and Country Parties governments aligned with Britain and the United States in the United Nations, and embraced Britain within the Commonwealth of Nations. In particular, Prime Minister Menzies valued the intimacy and British character of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings. As part of this approach, Australia joined the colonial powers in both forums to act against the demands of the developing countries. For example, the Menzies government did not support the UN Declaration on the

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Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in 1960.\(^5\) Similarly, Prime Minister Menzies disliked the practice of converting the Commonwealth meetings into forums for the condemnation of South Africa and Rhodesia. Over time, Menzies became disillusioned about the value of the Commonwealth as the membership became more diverse with the inclusion of independent countries from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean.\(^6\)

Further, Australia argued that the United Nations should not act in relation to matters within the 'domestic jurisdiction' of member states. The Menzies government relied upon Article 2(7) of the UN Charter:

> Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorise the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter.\(^7\)

Menzies also invoked this argument at Commonwealth conferences to halt discussions on the domestic concerns of members. In supporting the 'domestic jurisdiction' principle in all cases, Australia attempted to protect the regimes of South Africa and Rhodesia from interference from the United Nations and the Commonwealth. In turn, it was thought that adherence to the notion of 'domestic jurisdiction' would exclude Australian policies on Aboriginal peoples or immigration from criticism.\(^8\)

Linked to this approach, Prime Minister Menzies attempted to support the apartheid regime by opposing the exclusion of South Africa from the Commonwealth. Menzies was unsuccessful and South Africa was effectively expelled from the Commonwealth in 1961.\(^9\) On the efforts of Menzies, the

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\(^5\) Claire Clark, ed., *Australian Foreign Policy: Towards a Reassessment*, Cassell, North Melbourne, 1973, pp. 139-44. Also, Australia consistently opposed the seating of China in the General Assembly.


\(^9\) South Africa decided at a referendum in October 1960 to leave the Commonwealth the following May. See Albinski, *Australian External Policy..., op. cit.*, pp. 21-2 and Millar, op. cit., p.
South African Prime Minister Verwoerd wrote that 'you are seen by all shades of opinion as the best friend South Africa has, and the feeling of comradeship with Australia has never been better'. For others, Menzies' approach was exposed as a commitment to colonialism and a clear rejection of the aspirations of many African countries.

After some time, the Australian stance in the United Nations was modified to offer a more flexible approach on some issues. By 1969, a partial change in style was instituted by Prime Minister Gorton with some influence from Andrew Peacock. Gorton allowed the Australian delegation to use their initiative in UN debates and were thereby free to endorse or reject resolutions in line with government policy to assist in tactical manoeuvres in the voting process. Nevertheless, Australia resigned from the United Nations Committee on Decolonisation. While this action received a muted response, it signalled that Australia had withdrawn support for the decolonisation process. Resignation from the Committee on Decolonisation again demonstrated the Australian government’s sympathy for the colonial powers and the minority regimes of southern Africa.

The relatively mixed but apparently more constructive position of Australia within the UN General Assembly prompted the McMahon government in 1972 to seek election to the Security Council for a two-year term. Australia was not competing against another nomination, only for the required two-thirds support, that is, eighty-eight votes in the General Assembly. It appeared that the improved image and hard work from the Australian delegates attracted support from most Asian states, Egypt as well as Israel, a number of African countries including the influential Nigeria, along with European and most


11 Andrew Peacock was Minister for the Army from 12 November 1969 to 2 February 1972, Minister assisting the Prime Minister from 12 November 1969 to 27 May 1971, and Minister for External Territories from 2 February 1972 to 5 December 1972.
12 Albinski, Australian External Policy..., op. cit., p. 23. The correct title of this committee is the United Nations Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, also known as the Committee of Twenty-four or the Committee on Decolonisation. In fact, Australia decided in late 1968 to withdraw from this Committee and conveyed the decision to the Secretary-General on 28 January 1969.
13 Australia was elected to the Security Council for terms in 1947-48 and 1956-57 as a nominee of the Commonwealth group. No provision was made for representation of the Commonwealth when, in 1965, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council were enlarged. Henceforth Australia, New Zealand and Canada became members of the Western European and Others Group therefore reducing the opportunities for nomination.
Latin American members. 14 Australia was elected with 109 votes, only marginally behind the other candidates – Peru 116, Austria 115, Indonesia 115 and Kenya 112. Also, given that Australia stood for an available European seat, some African and Asian members may have preferred Australian candidature over the prospect of a continuing European presence. An alternative explanation may be that many members of the UN General Assembly were expecting the Australian Labor Party to win the next federal election and therefore supported Australia for a term which began in 1973.

Finally, in November 1972, the McMahon Liberal and Country Parties government sponsored a resolution at the UN which was critical of French nuclear testing in the Pacific Ocean. 15 New Zealand and eleven other Pacific countries sponsored the resolution along with Australia to condemn atmospheric tests 'in the Pacific and elsewhere' and secured the withdrawal of a Belgian amendment designed to delete the reference to the Pacific in order to reduce the direct criticism of France. Public opinion in Australia appeared to compel the McMahon government to take a strong line against France as Australia had not previously supported criticism of nuclear testing.

Papua New Guinea

The Menzies government placed considerable importance upon the strategic position of Papua New Guinea. 16 Australian fears persisted long after Japan's occupation of the territory during the second world war. Australia provided financial assistance to Papua New Guinea, at first, as an expression of gratitude for help by the people of PNG to the Australian armed forces. 17 Subsequently, aid was provided for economic and social development in conjunction with the defence of Papua New Guinea as part of Australia's security strategy. This

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14 Clark, op. cit., p. 154. Also, the Soviet Union supported Australia, perhaps in response to Australia's policy on the containment of China. While China did not support Australia, the delegation of the People's Republic did not actively lobby against the nomination.

15 See ibid., pp. 150-1.

16 Under United Nations arrangements, Australia administered trustee relationships with the territories of Papua New Guinea and Nauru. Papua was not a trust territory but from the initiation of moves to create a union with the trust territory of New Guinea, Australia reported to the Trusteeship Council on administrative matters and common policy associated with the union. The western half of New Guinea was a Dutch territory until its acquisition by Indonesia as West Irian in 1963. See Albinski, Australian External Policy..., op. cit., p. 23, Clark, op. cit., p. 148, and Millar, op. cit., pp. 121-2 & 130-5. For more on Australia's policies toward the island territories of the Indian and Pacific Ocean regions, see David Goldsworthy, British Territories and Australian Mini-Imperialism in the 1950s, Australian Journal of Politics and History, vol. 41, 3, 1995.

policy was generally supported within Australia and the allocation for both development assistance and general administrative support steadily increased from $1million in 1945 to $100million in 1974-5.\textsuperscript{18}

International attention focused on Papua New Guinea and Nauru following the 1962 UN Visiting Mission to the territories which recommended 'an acceleration of political, economic and educational development in Papua New Guinea'.\textsuperscript{19} Australia implemented many of the reforms suggested by the UN Report but the Trusteeship Council criticised the continuing practises of racial discrimination and different wage scales for Australian workers in PNG.

Meanwhile, in Nauru, the Menzies government facilitated a substantial measure of self-government by instituting representative decision-making bodies. However, Australia abstained on a General Assembly resolution in December 1965 which requested a fixed date for Nauru's independence as envisaged by the Nauruan leader, Hammur de Robert. Also, the UN Committee on Decolonisation became increasingly resentful of the Australian government's refusal to allow another visiting mission to the territory. The Menzies government may have attempted to delay talk of independence to offer more time for Australian mining companies to exploit Nauru's phosphate deposits. Nevertheless, the Nauruan Legislative Council decided upon a date for independence and this was achieved in accordance with UN expectations.\textsuperscript{20} Again, the Liberal and Country Parties governments had a mixed record on the administration of Nauru and this partial reluctance to promote an early independence date reinforced Australia's colonial position for many United Nations members.

The independence of Papua New Guinea remained a problem for the Liberal and Country Parties governments.\textsuperscript{21} It was not until 1970 that momentum for

\textsuperscript{18} T.B. Millar, \textit{Australia in Peace and War: External Relations 1788-1977}, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1978, pp. 374-5. The aid to Papua New Guinea was not tied to purchases of Australian goods but elsewhere from 1950, aid was required to have a two-thirds Australian context. The Australian aid contribution declined from eighty percent of PNG government revenue post-war to fifty percent in the early 1970s, including the differential costs of Australian public servants in PNG.

\textsuperscript{19} Led by Sir Hugh Foot, the UN mission also stressed the need to resettle the Nauruans before the island's phosphate deposits were exhausted. Plans were formulated to resettle the people of Nauru on an island off the Queensland coast but these lapsed in 1964 due to opposition from within that state and the Nauruans' insistence on the preservation of their national identity and their demand for either independence or an extensive measure of self-government. See Clark, op. cit., p. 148.

\textsuperscript{20} The independence date was 31 January 1968.

\textsuperscript{21} The PNG House of Assembly first met in 1964 and, from this point, responsibilities began to be transferred to the people of the territory.
independence was increased with the arrival of Peacock as Minister for External Territories. The progressive role of Peacock was credited for restoring a bipartisan consensus in Australia on PNG.22 Indeed, the initiatives of Minister Peacock from early 1972 provided the McMahon government with a constructive image on Papua New Guinea. The role of the Prime Minister was essentially one of concurrence with Peacock and the cabinet was quiet on the issue. This personal dominance of foreign policy demonstrated the rather disjointed state of affairs in which the Liberal and Country Parties governments were operating in the later years. This example also signalled the possibilities for a single Minister to fashion policy and implement initiatives without a large degree of cabinet influence or Parliamentary debate.

In total, the Liberal and Country Parties governments acted slowly on the independence of both Papua New Guinea and Nauru. PNG was understood as a strategic element of Australia's defence which seemed to legitimise the increasing financial support for the PNG economy. The attempts by the United Nations Committee on Decolonisation to monitor Australia's trustee relationships with PNG and Nauru through the 1960s coincided with Australia's international support for other colonial powers and for the minority regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia.

Aid policy

The Australian aid program was focused on the Colombo Plan, established in 1950, to allocate aid through the structures of the Commonwealth to developing countries. The Menzies government highlighted humanitarian concerns as well as trade opportunities, in addition to the need for political stability and the imperative to oppose communism. Thus, the aid policy fitted with Australian foreign policy which prioritised security and defence issues.

The post-war international context saw the largest international aid donor, the United States, directing economic assistance through bilateral channels to Greece, Turkey, China and the countries of Western Europe under the Marshall Plan of 1947-52. Subsequently, President Truman's 'Point Four' program outlined in January 1949 was implemented in an atmosphere of hostility toward the newly acquired communist enemies.23 In Australia, the Menzies

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23 President Truman listed four major guidelines for US foreign policy: (1) support for the United Nations; (2) support for continued economic recovery; (3) strengthening the 'free
government attempted to ban the Communist Party and was gripped by the hysteria surrounding the activities of Senator McCarthy in the United States. This political environment produced Australian foreign aid programs designed to assist recipient governments in resisting communist pressures.

Apart from the major aid commitment to Papua New Guinea, the Colombo Plan was the central instrument of Australian aid. In January 1950, the new Australian Minister for External Affairs, Percy Spender attended the Colombo conference of Commonwealth Foreign Ministers with a plan for bilateral economic assistance between members. Spender introduced the aid scheme with support from Ceylon, which had proposed a more extensive yet less acceptable strategy, and encouragement from the United Kingdom, despite its economic problems. The Spender Plan, subsequently known as the Colombo Plan, presented a series of bilateral aid programs from the Commonwealth donors allowing for recipient countries to decide on the need for capital equipment, technical assistance and consumer goods. The scheme was approved by the Commonwealth conference and subsequently endorsed by the Australian cabinet. Millar claimed that the Spender plan was part of the Australian policy to ensure its own security and trade but it nevertheless had its own economic objectives and political momentum. Specifically, Australia undertook to provide £31 million over the initial six years from July 1951.

The rationale underlying Australia's aid policy was announced by Minister Spender in Parliament several months after the Colombo conference:

In the first place, on humanitarian grounds we cannot ignore the basic needs of such a large and important section of the world's population. Secondly, a permanent improvement in world trade depends in a substantial degree upon the economic development and increased productive capacity of the countries of South and South-East Asia. Thirdly, the task of achieving political stability in this area will be well-nigh impossible unless living standards are lifted from their present very low levels. Finally, conditions
misery and want provide a fertile breeding ground for philosophies and forces, particularly imperialistic communism, which seek the destruction of democratic institutions.\footnote{27}

The order of these priorities did not seem to correspond with the underlying priorities of aid practice. Clearly, the links between anti-communism and security were at the forefront of government policy formulation. These objectives remained as the basis for the Australian aid program for more than twenty years.

The aid policies of the Menzies government maintained a humanitarian feature, but this consideration was secondary and was conceived as enlightened self-interest. This justification for providing aid was useful in explaining the allocation of Australian resources for distant countries to the domestic electorate and to the narrow protectionists within the Liberal and Country Parties. Again, this approach was justified as assisting the stability of recipient economies in order to quell destabilising domestic or external pressures as well as an efficient device for creating economic opportunities for Australia. Moreover, the Liberal and Country Parties' concentration on South East Asia as Australia's primary security concern was complemented by the direction of foreign assistance.\footnote{28}

In the end, the Colombo plan was unable to raise sufficient resources to assist the recipients even at a marginal level. Australia's commitment was set at a low level, only eight shillings per capita compared with fourteen shillings for New Zealand, eighteen for Canada and nineteen for the United States.\footnote{29} As Millar candidly stated:

\begin{quote}
Apart from a few concerned people, the public and parliament were not interested in aid. It was not a political issue. The Treasury was sceptical about the value of aid, felt aid had to yield to balance of payments problems, and used all its weight to limit or reduce aid funds. Of the two ministers who should have given a lead in cabinet and in the country, the Prime Minister (Menzies) had little feel or sympathy for Asian peoples, and the Minister for External Affairs (Casey) did not have the strength to persuade his fellows.\footnote{30}
\end{quote}

\footnote{27} Spender, Minister for External Affairs and Minister for External Territories, CPD, HR, vol. 208, 6 June 1950, p. 3723.
\footnote{28} Albinski, \textit{Australian External Policy...}, op. cit., p. 17.
\footnote{29} Millar, \textit{Australia in Peace and War}, op. cit., p. 372.
\footnote{30} ibid., p. 373, parentheses in original. The Minister for External Affairs also explained that: At the end of this afternoon (and at the end of the consideration of the expenditure side of the Budget), my Colombo Plan and International Relief items came on in Canberra. I proposed a reduction of 250,000 pounds (in total) from what we had proposed for all these items. Treasury proposed a 500,000 pounds cut. I did not
While there was minimal interest in the aid program, the allocation of aid funds was seen to benefit Australia in terms of access to the region, opposition to communism in developing countries and assistance to defence objectives. Aid programs provided a link to ministers and officials in neighbouring countries for discussions that otherwise would not take place. Also, it was important for Australia's position in Asia to provide an image of co-operation on regional issues.

In total, the transfer of Australian aid resources contributed to important public works, employment and productivity along with education in Australia for many students. It may also be argued that Australian aid helped to maintain particular authoritarian regimes, increased inequalities and social dislocation, provided access for Australian business to the detriment of recipient peoples and continued to enforce colonial policies which perpetuated the dependent attitudes and economies in South East Asia, especially Papua New Guinea.

On an administrative level, the Australian aid program was directed by the Department of External Affairs, later Foreign Affairs, and the Department of External Territories with contributions from Treasury, Department of Trade and Industry and Department of Primary Industry. A formal co-ordination of aid policies was attempted through an interdepartmental committee after a review in 1964-65. From this committee, Australia decided to join the OECD Development Assistance Committee which, subsequently, was critical of the quantity and quality of Australia's aid program. As a result, the Australian government established a tariff preference scheme in 1966 for the importation of selected products from developing countries.31

Finally, at the close of the Liberal and Country Parties governments, foreign aid spending for 1972-73 was projected at $220 million. The emphasis of Australian aid had become firmly fixed on South East Asia where political instabilities fuelled Australian fears. The Liberal and Country Parties governments demonstrated the useful purposes of economic assistance within the

have a supporter and the Treasury case won. The discussion reflected a complete absence of appreciation of the situation - which makes it very hard - and rather frightening. The gap in thinking is so great it is useless to argue.

Casey quoted in ibid., p. 373. The Minister for External Affairs may have been more successful by arguing in terms of the threat to stability in the region, reflections of Japan during the war and the need to oppose communism in the region. It seems Casey preferred not to use this tactic.

framework of regional economic and strategic objectives. Significantly, the aid policy was not directed nor evaluated, rather the policy simply evolved.32 By 1972, this situation provoked suggestions from the community and the Labor Party that a statutory body should administer aid and that aid policy was in need of substantial change.33

Africa

Prior to the election of the Whitlam Labor government in December 1972, Australia's relations with Africa were limited to a close association with the minority governments of South Africa and Rhodesia. Australia was seen to share a common history with South Africa and Rhodesia through the Boer war and this bond was subsequently reinforced by strong political and diplomatic ties, sustained by long-standing trade and sporting links, and formalised through the Commonwealth of Nations.

At the United Nations, the Liberal and Country Parties governments ensured that Australia provided overt support for the South African and Rhodesian regimes. The notion of 'domestic jurisdiction' as derived from the UN Charter was used to substantiate Australia's position but clearly the Australian government was primarily defending the minority regimes of southern Africa. Also, Australia opposed sanctions, encouraged trade with both South Africa and Rhodesia, and supported the continuation of the South African mandate over South West Africa. Further, Australia voted against the inclusion of apartheid as an item on the General Assembly agenda when first moved in October 1952, a position which was defeated, and continued to oppose this discussion within the UN.34 Not surprisingly, the words and actions of the Australian government in the United Nations prior to 1972 were interpreted as support for the apartheid system in South Africa and for the minority regime in Rhodesia.

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33 Clunies-Ross, ibid.
34 Australia, with Britain, were the only two members voting against UN resolutions condemning South Africa after 1956. See Clark, op. cit., p. 144; J.D.B. Miller, Notes on Australian Relations with South Africa, Australian Outlook, vol. 25, 2, August 1971, p. 134; Millar, The Commonwealth and the United Nations, op. cit., pp. 149, 153 & 156; and A.K. Fryer, South Africa, A Target for Foreign Policy: A Footnote to J.D.B. Miller's 'Notes', Australian Outlook, vol. 26, 2, August 1972, pp. 216-21.
The United Nations General Assembly vote in May 1961 was the first available debate on South Africa in which member states could express their view on the Sharpeville massacre. This was also the first vote after South Africa withdrew from the Commonwealth.
A critical juncture for Australia on South Africa followed the Sharpeville massacre in March 1960. A general motion of condemnation of the South African government appeared on the UN General Assembly agenda and, as expected, Australia announced its intention to vote against. However, Britain surprisingly changed its traditional position and decided to vote in favour of the resolution which in turn jolted the Australian delegation to alter its stance. It seemed that the practice of following Britain prevailed over Australia's insistence upon South Africa's domestic jurisdiction. Prime Minister Menzies claimed slightly more independent grounds for the change in vote when concluding that Australia 'would have been misunderstood all over Asia about our attitude' and could no longer afford to be isolated. Without a change in attitude toward apartheid, and without an apology for past support for the apartheid regime, Australia for the first time, and with some reluctance, supported a move in condemnation of South Africa.

Subsequently, Australia supported a UN resolution requesting South Africa to abandon the trial of Nelson Mandela and other opponents of the apartheid system and to grant an unconditional release to all political prisoners. Nevertheless, Australia consistently voted against the implementation of sanctions against South Africa. Prime Minister Menzies was adamant in opposing economic, diplomatic or military restrictions on South Africa given Australia's adherence to the principle of domestic jurisdiction and encouragement of favourable trade relations. Indeed, the economic and investment relationships between Australia and South Africa were cultivated over a long period by both governments. Members of the Liberal and Country Parties in Australia openly advocated the benefits of the apartheid system for African workers and displayed overt racism in support of trade with South Africa. Further, the Australian Trade Commissioners in Cape Town and Johannesburg were attempting to bind Australian investors to the apartheid

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35 At Sharpeville, sixty seven Africans were killed and one hundred and eighty-six wounded by the South African police and military forces at the start of an action campaign led by the Pan-Africanist Congress. Subsequently, pressure against the South African regime mounted both within the Commonwealth and at the United Nations. Clark, op. cit., p. 144.
37 Clark, op. cit., p. 145. Notwithstanding the Australian approach, the Security Council adopted a resolution for an arms embargo against South Africa in December 1963. See also Millar, op. cit., pp. 163 & 165.
An important element in the growth of Australian trade with the apartheid economy was the South African regime's need to maintain ties with faithful allies such as Australia, Britain and Portugal, in order to protect investments and provide alternatives against international dissociation. By 1972, continued business and government approval marked South Africa as one of the most important export markets for Australia.40

On the question of responsibility for South West Africa, Australia again supported the apartheid regime. The South African government had retained South West Africa under a mandate provided by the League of Nations and subsequently had not sought trusteeship from the United Nations. The South African mandate was challenged in the International Court of Justice where, in July 1966, the ICJ President, Sir Percy Spender, delivered the casting vote to reject the declaration. Whitlam claimed that this judgement had serious implications:

The Court's decision had a catastrophic effect in disillusioning the African nations with legal processes and converting them to political methods to secure independence for their neighbours.41

Irrespective of the merits of the ruling, the resolution was bitterly resented by the African and Asian members of the UN, and once again Australia was seen to be in alliance with the apartheid regime in South Africa.42

At the subsequent session of the UN General Assembly, thirty-five African and Asian countries moved to end South Africa's mandate over South West Africa and to transfer direct responsibility for administration of the territory to the United Nations. Australia suggested that South West Africa be placed under the trusteeship system, a solution long advocated by other members. As


40 See Witton, op. cit., pp. 18-19. See also Miller, op. cit., p. 132.

41 Whitlam, op. cit., p. 68.

expected, South Africa objected to UN jurisdiction over the territory. The Australian delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution but, in later sessions, abstained regarding the establishment of a United Nations Council for South West Africa and the appointment of a UN Commissioner to carry out administrative tasks in relation to the territory.43 Australia’s mixed record on this issue reflected the competing considerations of support for South Africa and endorsement of the trusteeship system. Indeed, the Australian position recognised that South Africa would retain control over the territory of South West Africa while conceding little to the United Nations.

In contrast, after 1969, the Australian government displayed a more flexible position at the UN by supporting resolutions on the expansion of the Special Committee on Apartheid, assistance to the people of South Africa, and in 1971, five humanitarian resolutions condemning apartheid.44 However, the appearance of a constructive approach on South Africa was engineered through support for issues on which the Australian government did not fear domestic repercussions. On this, the McMahon government directed that Australia vote against resolutions on severing ties or condemning all contact with South Africa, consistently oppose the denial of the credentials of the South African delegation and vote against a resolution denouncing ‘foreign economic interests in South Africa for impeding decolonisation and the end of racial discrimination’.45 As such, in 1971, Australia was singled out for criticism over the maintenance of trade and sporting contacts with South Africa.

As an example of Australia’s support for the South African regime, the McMahon Liberal and Country Parties government supported the tour of the South African rugby team to Australia in 1971. There was substantial support within the Australian government and the community for the view that politics should not intrude upon sport and therefore the tour should proceed.

43 The appointment of a UN Commissioner appeared to be a futile task while South Africa maintained its strong resistance to the exercise of UN authority. Further, in 1971, the International Court of Justice, its composition changed since 1966, confirmed the illegality of South Africa’s continued presence in South West Africa. In 1972, however, South Africa allowed a visit to the territory by the newly appointed UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, and in October-November 1972, a special representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Escher of Switzerland, visited South Africa and Namibia and submitted a written report on the question. Clark, op. cit., p. 146.
44 The Australian representatives were consistent in their contributions to debates and committees focussed on socio-legal questions and technical expertise while beginning to play a more constructive mediating role on issues of procedure and substance. See ibid., p. 152.
45 See ibid., p. 150. Also, Australia did not contribute to the UN Fund for South Africa nor the UN Educational and Training Programme for South Africans. Further, while not opposing, Australia abstained on resolutions to strengthen the arms embargo against South Africa, the provision of information on apartheid and an end to all sporting contacts with South Africa.
Alternatively, it was argued that the visit to Australia offered acceptance of South Africa's practice of segregated sport and of the apartheid policies. When opponents of the tour threatened to disrupt the rugby matches, Prime Minister McMahon offered a Royal Australian Air Force aircraft to the tourists if required and warned of an early federal election based on the issue of law and order. More important was the Prime Minister's overt support for South Africa to the domestic constituency and the international community.

Similar to Australia's relationship with South Africa, the Liberal and Country Parties governments displayed a clear sympathy for the Rhodesian regime. Australia complied with pressure from the United Nations to isolate the Rhodesian government but supported the minority regime through alternative methods.

The question of Southern Rhodesia was before the UN General Assembly in 1962 where Australia voted against its inclusion on the agenda and subsequently abstained on resolutions calling for a 'new constitution ensuring majority rule and urging the release of political prisoners'. Following the collapse of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1963 and the independence of Northern Rhodesia as Zambia and Nyasaland as Malawi in 1964, the progression toward the declaration of independence for Southern Rhodesia seemed inevitable. At this time, African governments were faced with a dilemma. While opposed in principle to imperial rule, they could not advocate independence for Rhodesia while it continued to be ruled by a colonial minority of the population. Britain was not prepared to concede independence under conditions demanded by the African governments, and thus Southern Rhodesia proclaimed a unilateral declaration of independence on 11 November 1965. Later that day, a resolution condemning the UDI was adopted in the General Assembly. Australia supported the resolution with only Portugal and South Africa against. The following day, the Security Council adopted a resolution urging all states to refuse to recognise 'the illegal

46 On this, see Albinski, *Australian External Policy*, op. cit., pp. 24-5, Bruce Grant, *The Crisis of Loyalty: A Study of Australian Foreign Policy*, Angus & Robertson with the Australian Institute of International Affairs, Sydney, 1972, p. 30, and Colin A. Hughes, *Australian Political Chronicle* May-August 1971, *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, vol. 17, 3, December 1971, p. 419. 47 Clark, op. cit., p. 146. The issue of Southern Rhodesia was first introduced to the United Nations General Assembly in 1961. Britain was asked to supply information regarding a new constitution for Southern Rhodesia which eliminated Britain's reserve rights and appeared to ensure minority rule indefinitely. The British government argued that they could not submit information as the colony had been self-governing since 1923. However, the Committee of Seventeen on Decolonisation stated that Southern Rhodesia was not self-governing in terms of the Declaration on Ending Colonialism. 48 Britain did not vote pending the arrival of the Foreign Secretary from London.
racist regime' and a week later adopted a compromise proposal which avoided a call for the use of force, sought by some African members and rejected by Britain, but which asked all members to sever economic relations with Rhodesia and to impose an oil embargo.49

On 16 November 1965, Prime Minister Menzies stated that Australia would not recognise the illegal regime but expressed grave reservations regarding sanctions.50 In line with UN resolutions and British sentiments, a ban was imposed on the export of arms to Rhodesia and the importation of tobacco, Commonwealth tariff preferences were suspended, and Australia's trade representation in Rhodesia was terminated.51 In the face of official empathy with the Rhodesian regime, Menzies implemented the sanctions to induce Rhodesia to acknowledge the lack of support for UDI and to return to established channels of diplomacy.52 However, as Australian imports were valued at less than two million pounds annually, these sanctions did not impact upon the Rhodesian economy. It seems the straining of traditional political ties had a greater effect. Possibly as a concession to the supporters of Rhodesia within the Liberal and Country Parties government who were linked with wheat growers and their advocates, Menzies continued to sell wheat to Rhodesia through the 'humanitarian' loophole in the UN resolution.

The act of unilateral independence by Rhodesia was not recognised by any Commonwealth country. This issue was discussed at a meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in Lagos in January 1966. Menzies did not attend the meeting and publicly claimed to object in principle to the subject of

49 Clark, op. cit., p. 147. See also Millar, *Australia in Peace and War*, op. cit., p. 363.
52 See Albinski, *Australian External Policy..., op. cit., p. 22 and Millar, *Australia in Peace and War*, op. cit., p. 364. Menzies explained that any action taken by Australia was to assist the United Kingdom to establish a constitutional government in Rhodesia. Menzies, *CPD, HR*, vol. 49, 16 November 1965, pp. 2768-9, 2770, also stated that two extreme views advanced in debate were not practicable:

The first extreme view was that either immediately or within a few months there should be adult suffrage with, in consequence, an African majority. If this view were to prevail then, as I said to my friend, [Prime Minister] Mr. Smith, I could see all the elements of bad, because inexperienced, government, and possible economic disaster. The other extreme view was that the achievement of an African majority should be indefinitely resisted. This view, as I have repeatedly said, and, as I said to Mr. Smith, was, in the prevailing international political climate, quite impracticable... What is needed in Rhodesia is a reasonable timetable, accompanied by a special educational campaign... to fit the African votes for their ultimate authority.
the meeting and presumably the location, although Menzies was actually on the point of retirement. Whatever the reason, the perception among those attending the Lagos meeting and others was that Australia was aligning with the minority regime in Rhodesia.53

At the United Nations in October 1966 and November 1967, Australia abstained on strongly worded United Nations resolutions proposed by African and Asian countries on Rhodesia.54 This appeared largely consistent with previous voting by Australia but these particular decisions may have been influenced by the forthcoming federal election in November 1966, the first since 1948 without Menzies as leader of the Liberal Party, and the half Senate election at the end of November 1967. The government would have been anxious to avoid a possible foreign policy debate on Rhodesia at these times and therefore the abstentions may have been the only options.55

In 1967 and 1968, the Holt and Gorton Liberal and Country Parties governments directed the Australian ambassador in Pretoria to issue passports, valid for five years, to the secretary of the Rhodesian 'Department of External Affairs' and to the Rhodesian 'diplomatic representatives' in Portugal and South Africa. As Whitlam explained:

Since no other governments recognised Rhodesia's purported passports and the British Government would not issue passports to the rebel residents of Rhodesia, the regime's contacts with the outside world had been conducted by courtesy of the Australian Government.56

In addition, the Liberal and Country Parties governments' tolerance of the Rhodesian Information Centre in Sydney was widely regarded as a breach of the sanctions demanded by the UN Security Council. While it was an explicitly political decision to permit this international point of publicity, it could be

53 Coral Bell, Dependent Ally, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1988, p. 93 and Whitlam, op. cit., p. 68. For different reasons, both Ghana and Tanzania also refused to participate. An Australian diplomat was an observer at the public sessions of the conference.

54 The UN General Assembly vote in November 1967 adopted a resolution 92 votes to 2 with 18 abstentions, including Australia, calling on Britain to take 'all necessary measures, including the use of force' to end the rebellion. The Australian delegation consistently spoke against a call to arms on the grounds that Britain was not prepared to use force and it would be improper to make this request. See Millar, Australia in Peace and War, op. cit., p. 364.

55 Clark, op. cit., p. 147. In 1968, Australia cast negative votes on resolutions calling upon Britain to use force and asking the Security Council to impose sanctions against South Africa and Portugal for not complying with UN recommendations on measures against Rhodesia. This situation arose due to the actions of South Africa in attempting to maintain an overland link with Rhodesia in order to circumvent a British naval blockade of the Mozambican port of Beira. See Millar, Australia in Peace and War, op. cit., p. 364.

56 Whitlam, op. cit., p. 68.
explained given the empathy for the minority population in Rhodesia among sections of the Australian community, especially among those who had lived in Rhodesia and South Africa. Apparently, a number of senior officials in the Rhodesian government were Australian-born and held Australian passports.\footnote{Clark, op. cit., p. 148.}

In order to avoid controversy at home, the Australian government consistently argued at the United Nations and elsewhere that Rhodesia was essentially a problem for the British government. In the end, Australia was one of the few countries to continue to support the regime in Rhodesia. The personal, political and economic links between the Liberal and Country Parties governments in Australia and the minority governments in Rhodesia sustained the relationship amidst serious criticism and international isolation.

However, there was considerable dissent from within the Liberal and Country Parties government on the set of issues emerging from southern Africa. As a representative of a progressive but minority element within the Liberal Party, Neil Brown was openly critical of the government's foreign policies on South Africa and Rhodesia. Brown pointed to a lack of consistency between the declared abhorrence of the minority regimes and the actual policies, particularly the government's toleration of the Rhodesian Information Centre in Sydney.\footnote{See Brown, \textit{CPD, HR}, vol. 78, 23 May 1972, p. 2881.} Importantly, Brown identified the context of Australia's position on southern Africa. This included the links with the United Nations attitude toward Australian trusteeship in Papua New Guinea, the extent of participation in new trade with African economies, and relations with some nations in Asia given Australia's identification with 'the reactionary forces in southern Africa'.\footnote{Brown, \textit{CPD, HR}, vol. 78, 23 May 1972, p. 2881.}

The disagreement on foreign policy issues within the government parties was expressed by Brown:

\begin{quote}
What we must do is to move more into the mainstream of opposition to the minority forces in southern Africa, be more vocal in our condemnation of those forces where appropriate and refrain from acting as a nation in ways which could suggest that we are not genuine in our protestations of opposition to the minority forces in southern Africa and to apartheid in particular.\footnote{Neil Brown, \textit{Africa and the Indian Ocean Area}, in Clark, op. cit., pp. 78-9.}
\end{quote}

This position was significantly distant from the established Liberal and Country Parties policies and emerged at a time of political debate led by the Labor Party on South Africa and Rhodesia.
Nevertheless, as a general impression, the Liberal and Country Parties
governments of Australia prior to 1972 were strong and sustained supporters of
the minority governments in South Africa and Rhodesia. Australia was seen to
oppose all arguments and measures which were intended to place pressure
upon the South African and Rhodesian regimes. Meanwhile, the Liberal and
Country Parties governments encouraged trade with and offered other forms of
support to South Africa and Rhodesia. Even in 1969-72, when Australia was
more constructive in its relationship with Papua New Guinea, there was little
movement within the Australian government on relations with the minority
regimes of southern Africa. This demonstrated the limited influence of
Minister Peacock on relations with South Africa and Rhodesia in contrast with
the Minister's constructive initiatives on PNG. This also indicated the relative
importance placed upon the support for the minority regimes in Africa by the
Liberal and Country Parties governments compared to the governments' interest in issues central to Papua New Guinea.

The simple explanation for the Liberal and Country Parties' close association
with the minority regimes of South Africa and Rhodesia was a collective
preference for dealing with similar peoples. The authority for this view might
be Menzies' approach to the Commonwealth over time. It is not difficult to
conclude that the Liberal and Country Parties' overt support for the
governments of southern Africa was based on racist views.

Australia's international image as a close supporter of South Africa and
Rhodesia was a prime target for the Whitlam Labor Party government.
However, doubt remained whether the Labor Party would choose to reverse
each part of the relationship with the minority regimes or baulk at losing some
trade and economic benefits. Nevertheless, the long-standing approach of the
Liberal and Country Parties governments from 1949 toward the minority
regimes of South Africa and Rhodesia formed an important background to the
foreign policies of the Whitlam Labor government.

Liberal and Country Parties policies for the 1972 federal election

For the 1972 election campaign, Prime Minister McMahon continued to pursue
a security agenda as the basis for foreign policy. Essentially, the Liberal and
Country Parties decided to offer consistency in foreign policy rather than
promote changes to Australia's international relationships.
As an aside, the Liberal Party policy speech in November 1972 reaffirmed the government's stance on immigration:

[The policy] is to ensure that we have in Australian society a homogeneous and integrated community, not a community with enclaves of people who cannot be integrated. We are committed to the policy of attracting new settlers from traditional sources . . . It will remain a selective policy, based on the skills of the migrants and their ability to integrate.61

This position was interpreted as selective on the basis of race and provided a direct contrast with the recently altered Labor Party policy on immigration.

On foreign policy, McMahon explained that the Liberal Party would strengthen the close links with the United States, Britain and New Zealand.62 This predictable stance emphasised continuity in traditional ties for Australia. More interesting was the statement relating to China that the Liberal Party would 'proceed at all times with care and prudence, bearing in mind that Australia's long-term interests are paramount'.63 This was not a promise to recognise the People's Republic of China but these few words implicitly raised the question of the Liberal Party's understanding of Australia's interests, especially in terms of trade with China.

Prime Minister McMahon supported self-government and independence for Papua New Guinea and the Liberal Party pledged to maintain aid for friends in the Asia Pacific region.64 While the policy speech did not mention relations with Africa, Foreign Minister Nigel Bowen had previously outlined the government's position on South Africa and Rhodesia:

... we appreciate the resentment which is felt at the continued implementation of policies of racial discrimination and minority rule in southern Africa. Policies of apartheid, racial discrimination and severely restricted franchises . . . have no support in Australia. At the same time, it is not our policy to encourage or support calls for the use of force to change the racial policies applied in southern Africa.65

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64 Liberal Party Policy speech, op. cit., p. 20.
This position had been advocated consistently by the McMahon government but earned sustained criticism from the Labor Party and from within the Liberal Party.

In contrast to the Liberal Party policy speech, the Country Party statement for the 1972 election devoted considerable space to defence and foreign policies. While prioritising an agenda for Australia as an important trading nation, the Leader of the Country Party and Deputy Prime Minister Anthony advocated the objective of normalising relations with China. This departure from Liberal Party policy seemed to be driven by opportunities for agricultural exports but it was also tempered by a curious international concern:

The Country Party believes our desire to extend our influence must spring from a concern for people. We want to build relations, not merely to serve the ends of politics or trade, but to bring people together. We want to advance the thinking of Australians beyond the important but limited concept of nationalism - which concentrates our thinking on our own nation - to the wider concept of internationalism - which stretches our thinking and our concern to embrace mankind.

And then our feeling of concern must be translated in practical action. Australia has a record in the provision of aid for which we need not apologise. But as our understanding of our responsibilities grows, and as our capacity to respond grows, then the help we give to others must increase.66

This policy position was significantly different from the Liberal Party statements and, over time, the Country Party position on China was adopted by the Liberal Party.

The pivotal position of the Democratic Labor Party within the Parliament and the role played in distributing votes in the electoral process dictated some influence on policy issues. The Liberal Party leadership needed to be aware of the DLP agenda on foreign policy. Specifically, the Democratic Labor Party stated the need for strengthening Australia's Indian Ocean naval forces and the rapid completion of naval and air bases on the Western coastline. In agreement with the Liberal Party, the DLP argued for selective immigration and the screening of migrants.67

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Thus, at the time of the 1972 federal election campaign, the Liberal and Country Parties continued to advocate a security agenda for Australian foreign policy, with support from the Democratic Labor Party. In particular, the McMahon government argued for continued inaction on South Africa and Rhodesia.

Conclusion

The policies of the Liberal and Country Parties governments prior to December 1972 provided a distinct inheritance for the Whitlam Labor government. In general terms, the Menzies government constructed Australian foreign policy on the basis of defence, security and anti-communism. This position was consistent with the foreign policies of Britain and the United States and caused Australia to become involved in conflicts in Korea, Malaysia, and Vietnam. At the United Nations, the Liberal and Country Parties governments aligned with the colonial powers at the expense of relations with developing countries, particularly in the Asia Pacific region. Australia was vocal in opposing the entry of China to the UN and invoked the notion of domestic jurisdiction to oppose UN intervention in South Africa. Australia also defended the minority regimes of South Africa and Rhodesia in the Commonwealth.

The Liberal and Country Parties governments understood that Papua New Guinea was an important component of defence policy and thus was slow to promote the independence of PNG within the UN trusteeship arrangements. Significantly, Minister Peacock hastened the move toward independence in the last year of government. Linked to the approach to PNG was Australia's aid policy which complemented the defence and foreign policies. Essentially, aid was allocated through the Colombo Plan to Commonwealth countries in order to oppose communism and to promote trade. Again, this linked with the general purpose of Australian foreign policy and characterised Australian relations with countries in the Asia Pacific region.

On Africa, the Menzies government maintained and promoted close relations with the minority populations in South Africa and Rhodesia and tended to neglect relations with the rest of Africa. Australia opposed UN sanctions against South Africa and continued to support the apartheid regime after the Sharpeville massacre which, for some countries, was the point of change in relations with South Africa. The Liberal and Country Parties governments also continued to support Rhodesia despite the implementation of UN resolutions designed to isolate the minority regime.
The Liberal and Country Parties governments displayed a consistently conservative image in international debates and demonstrated a decidedly conservative set of political objectives in foreign policy. The Liberal and Country Parties governments clung to the early edicts of Prime Minister Menzies on anti-communism, southern Africa, the UN and the Asia Pacific region and refused to alter these preconceptions as the basis of Australian foreign policy. This consistent approach on a range of issues contrasted with significant change in international relations. This explains the argument promulgated by the Labor Party that the policies of the Liberal and Country Parties were outdated and inappropriate by 1972.

In the end, foreign policy debates combined with domestic issues to provide distinct images of the electoral protagonists for the 1972 federal election. The Liberal Party seemed tired, overcome by events and without effective leadership. The Labor Party was seen as invigorated, clear in objectives, and contemporary in ideas. For the Labor Party entering an election campaign, it was logical to highlight that it was time for change.

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Domestic context of the Whitlam foreign policy

Prior to the 1972 federal election, Gough Whitlam led the Australian Labor Party in the construction of foreign policy proposals that were clearly different from the established positions of the Liberal and Country Parties government. The Labor Party debated and drafted elements of the ALP Platform at each national conference and this document directly underpinned the policies outlined by Whitlam in the campaign speech. This chapter examines the domestic political environment in which Whitlam implemented changes to Australia’s foreign policy. This examination reveals that the personal influence of Whitlam was an important element in the establishment of an anti-racist and anti-colonial foreign policy for Australia.

Following the 1972 federal election, Prime Minister Whitlam and Deputy Prime Minister Barnard formed a duumvirate, a two person cabinet, to immediately implement changes to Australian foreign policy. Whitlam also assumed the portfolio of Foreign Affairs until November 1973 and directed the Labor Party foreign policy agenda with few limitations. Specifically, the implementation of foreign policy did not appear to be constrained by the Parliament, cabinet,
caucus, Parliamentary committees, the bureaucracy or the electorate. Prime Minister Whitlam ensured that Australia would adopt a new position in international debates.

Whitlam and Labor Party foreign policy

Whitlam was elected leader by the Parliamentary Labor Party on 8 February 1967. This not unexpected move was seen as a generational change for the Labor Party as Whitlam replaced the older and more conservative Arthur Calwell. The change in leadership signalled a move away from the old canons of the ALP, such as a racist immigration policy, and the old battles of the Labor Party, such as the split in 1955.1

Whitlam provided a new image for the Labor Party. As opposition leader, Whitlam was also the Labor Party's spokesperson on foreign affairs.2 Whitlam had the opportunity to gain information and contacts through many official overseas tours and this role provided new ideas and new strategies for the Labor Party foreign policy.3 The shape and direction of policy design under Whitlam was fashioned to suit specific international and regional issues.

The ALP was also the beneficiary of a revitalised debate in the Australian community about foreign policy. The debate emerged from a combination of groups protesting against the United States actions in Vietnam and the repressive nature of apartheid in South Africa. Whitlam kept a safe distance from the more dissonant elements of the anti-Vietnam protest movement in stark contrast to the activities of another Labor Member of Parliament, Dr. Jim Cairns.4


2 Indeed, Freudenburg claimed that, in terms of foreign policy initiatives, Whitlam demonstrated the power of the position as Leader of the Opposition, and stated that, whatever history makes of Whitlam as Prime Minister, Whitlam was 'unquestionably the greatest Leader of the Opposition'. Graham Freudenburg, Aspects of Foreign Policy, in Hugh Emy, Owen Hughes and Race Mathews, eds, Whitlam Revisited: Policy Development, Policies and Outcomes, Pluto with the Public Sector Management Institute, Monash University, Leichhardt, 1993, pp. 201-2.


4 ibid., p. 32 and Senator D. Willesee, Australian Foreign Policy in the 1970s, chapter 1 in B.D. Beddie, Advance Australia - Where?, Oxford University Press with the Australian Institute of
From this, Whitlam established a moderate position, appealing as an electoral option for the Australian voters, but also for the powerful elements of the domestic media and business groups, and toward the United States expectation of pragmatic allies. The cost of this position was the sustained criticism from within the ALP where Whitlam was involved in a continual balancing act with more radical elements. A question remained over the extent to which Whitlam was simply manoeuvring for electoral success in order to implement a more extensive program of reforms once in government.

Notwithstanding this approach by Whitlam, the Labor leader was seen to be offering, for the 1960s, a radical policy agenda for Australia. Whitlam expressed a desire to overcome the conservative framework of policy-making centred on the United States alliance and the containment of China. The McMahon government had been unable to deal with the significant changes in the international environment in 1971-72. The basis of Australia's foreign policy was undermined by President Nixon's visit to China, the United Nations acceptance of China, Nixon's shift on Vietnam, and the beginning of detente. At the same time, Whitlam embraced these changes in providing a new vision for Australian foreign policy.

Whitlam understood that new visions and new policies needed to be supported by the Labor Party through its formal structures. The authoritative source of Labor Party policy was the bi-annual federal conference at which delegates review and debate Labor policies. The ALP conference has often been the forum for intense battles over particular policies or indeed the direction of the Party, and has been used at other times to demonstrate a level of unity prior to a federal election. Thus, after the 1966 federal election loss and the installation of Whitlam as leader, the 1967 federal conference debated proposed reforms of the Labor Party structures. In contrast, the 1971 federal conference was relatively quiet in preparation for the 1972 election.

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5 This relationship with the US was reinforced on Whitlam’s visit in 1967 where meetings included influential foreign policy figures and a favourable assessment from President Johnson.
8 See McMullin, op. cit., pp. 311-12, on Whitlam’s criticism of the ALP federal executive in 1966 and the federal executive consideration of expulsion of Whitlam from the Labor Party, and pp. 316-18 on reform of the ALP.
The Platform of the Australian Labor Party, as reformed and agreed at the 1971 federal conference, provided the base upon which Whitlam and the Parliamentary Labor Party designed policies for the 1972 federal election. The Platform included statements on international economic issues, the United Nations and the Commonwealth, a constructive plan for relations with Papua New Guinea, principles on anti-discrimination in immigration, proposed initiatives for Aboriginal peoples, resolutions condemning the governments of South Africa and Rhodesia, and several ideas for aid policy.9

In detailing these elements, the Labor Party Platform recognised the links between international economic issues and the interests of developing countries:

The Labor Party, as a democratic socialist and internationalist Party, believes that every nation must share in the skills of mankind and the resources of the world according to its needs and must contribute to those skills and resources according to its capacity.10

This position on the production and distribution of resources was later translated into a working issue for the Labor Party in relation to proposals for restructuring the world economy and Whitlam's intention to align Australia with developing countries at the United Nations.

Several other elements of the Labor Party Platform demonstrated a clear contrast to the foreign policies of the Liberal and Country Parties, for example:

• The Labor Party believes Australia cannot isolate herself from the struggles of the peoples of the world for economic development, security and self-government.

• The Labor Party gives firm and unwavering support to the United Nations and its agencies and to the United Nations Charter and will make every effort to make the United Nations an effective instrument for justice and peace and political, social and economic advancement.

• The Labor Party will foster the Commonwealth of Nations as an instrument for peace and understanding and for political, social and economic advancement and will in particular seek close relations with the Commonwealth nations in South-East Asia and the Pacific and Indian Ocean areas.

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10 ibid., Section XXI: Foreign Affairs, p. 15.
• The Labor Party will grant increasing financial assistance to Papua New Guinea. Labor will support an expanding social and economic development programme for Papua New Guinea to be administered by a joint Australia-New Guinea Commission. Labor will seek a defence treaty with Papua New Guinea.\textsuperscript{11}

These foreign policy principles linked with the sections of the Platform that were based on anti-discrimination and anti-racism. Specifically, the Platform stated that:

Labor opposes any form of segregation or discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, sex, creed or politics and will insist on ending every form of such discrimination within Australia and in Australian administered territories. It supports action, including sanctions, through the United Nations to end such segregation or discrimination.\textsuperscript{12}

Also, on immigration, the Platform directed that a Labor government would avoid 'discrimination on any grounds of race or colour of skin or nationality'.\textsuperscript{13} Significantly, it was reported that the personal commitment of Whitlam, as Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party, led to an insistence at the 1971 federal conference that the narrow racist immigration stance must be opposed.\textsuperscript{14}

The Labor Party also demonstrated a commitment to the demands and interests of Aboriginal peoples. The Platform outlined a proactive position on land, housing, health, education, and administration, in the framework of equal rights. For example, the Platform stated that:

Labor will evolve ways to regularly consult representatives of Aboriginal and Island people as to their wishes when policies are being developed and legislation prepared.

That exclusive corporate land rights be granted to Aboriginal communities . . . Aboriginal land rights shall carry with them full rights to minerals in those lands.\textsuperscript{15}

These elements of the ALP Platform demonstrated a strong commitment to the demands of Aboriginal peoples and to the notion of self-determination. This position was consistent with the statements on anti-discrimination and anti-
racism. This outline of principles was radically different to the established hostile position on Aboriginal peoples of the Liberal and Country Parties.

The Platform did not include commitments in opposition to the regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia but the 1971 federal conference supported a resolution on southern Africa:

a. Conference condemns the segregationist policies of South Africa and Rhodesia, because such policies are an affront to the dignity of man and a defiance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

b. A Federal Labor government would support all U.N. measures to apply human rights throughout Africa and would seek more effective measures to enforce them.\textsuperscript{16}

This resolution at the federal conference provided a basis for the Labor Party membership to maintain pressure upon the Parliamentary leadership to actively oppose the minority regimes in southern Africa.

Further, a new section of the Labor Party Platform was inserted at the 1971 federal conference to outline principles on the quantity and quality of Australian aid, research, administration and trade:

In accepting the United Nations programme to work towards a national contribution of one percent of gross national product, the Labor Party recognises that the quantity of aid is not the full measure of its effectiveness. In pursuit of a more meaningful aid programme the Labor Party proposes-

(a) to establish an Institute of Development Studies for the overall examination of the problem of social and economic development;
(b) to reorganise the administration of the various Australian aid programmes and to establish a mutual co-operation agency;
(c) to support an increase in the opportunities for less developed countries to sell their goods.

A Labor government will be sensitive to the quality of aid and the impact of aid on social values.\textsuperscript{17}

Interestingly, the provision for an aid agency was instigated by William Morrison, a former senior officer of the Department of Foreign Affairs and then Member for St. George.\textsuperscript{18} Morrison had witnessed the implementation of aid

\textsuperscript{16} ibid., p. 25.
\textsuperscript{17} ibid., p. 15.
\textsuperscript{18} Morrison was elected in 1969 in the electorate of St George (NSW).
programs and spent time in the aid branch of Foreign Affairs. This experience implied an awareness of the extent that developmental aspects of aid were ignored in the Department. Significantly, Whitlam offered support to the insertion of the aid section into the Platform, which suggested a commitment to the notion of a separate aid agency.19

Thus, as stated in the Party Platform, the Labor Party embracing a clear position on many important international issues. The Labor Party rejected the basis and substance of the Liberal and Country Parties government's foreign policies and explicitly advocated a new position on relations with developing countries, and Africa in particular.

Whitlam and the Parliamentary Labor Party were obliged to base the construction of policy initiatives for the 1972 election campaign on the principles embodied in the Platform. The fact that the key players had been involved in each federal conference and thereby in the construction of the Platform minimised any potential conflict between the Party principles and the intentions of the Parliamentary leadership.

On 13 November 1972, Whitlam launched the ALP campaign for the federal election:

The decision we will make for our country on 2 December is a choice between the past and the future, between the habits and fears of the past, and the demands and opportunities of the future. These are moments in history when the whole fate and future of nations can be decided by a single decision. For Australia, this is such a time. It's time for a new team, a new program, a new drive for equality of opportunities: it's time to create new opportunities for Australians, time for a new vision of what we can achieve in this generation for our nation and the region in which we live. It's time for a new government - a Labor government.20

Whitlam clearly delineated the need for policy reform and the opportunity for change under a Labor government. Whitlam differentiated the Labor Party policy agenda from the Liberal and Country Parties government through a creative projection of Labor's energy and commitment. The policy speech outlined many commitments which were drawn from the ALP Platform and which addressed key foreign policy topics. Specifically, the policy speech

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referred to relations with Papua New Guinea, China and the South Pacific, cooperation with the United States and New Zealand and the end of conscription.

However, despite this range of important topics, Whitlam claimed that the central test of the Labor Party foreign policy agenda was the relationship with the Aboriginal peoples. Whitlam explained that:

Australia's real test as far as the rest of the world, and particularly our region, is concerned is the role we create for our own Aborigines. In this sense, and it is a very real sense, the Aborigines are our true link with our region. More than any foreign aid program, more than any international obligation which we meet or forfeit, more than any part we may play in any treaty or agreement or alliance, Australia's treatment of her Aboriginal people will be the thing upon which the rest of the world will judge Australia and Australians - not just now, but in the greater perspective of history.21

Whitlam promised to legislate to provide land rights for Aboriginal peoples, 'not just because their case is beyond argument, but because all of us as Australians are diminished' while Aboriginal peoples are denied 'their rightful place in this nation'.22 More than other political statements, this exposition by Whitlam explained the links between the Labor Party's position in the United Nations, relations with developing countries, and approach on African issues.

In offering an element of self-determination for the Aboriginal peoples, it followed that Whitlam committed the Labor Party to supporting the independence of Papua New Guinea. Whitlam promised to 'co-operate wholeheartedly with the New Guinea House of Assembly in reaching successfully its time table for self-government and independence'.23

In addition, the policy speech included support for the idea of military neutralisation in South East Asia and commitment to a leadership role in the South Pacific. This regional position involved taking the question of French nuclear tests to the International Court of Justice. Also, in terms of the region,

21 ibid., International Affairs and Defence, p. 31. The policy speech, pp. 30-1, also committed the Labor Party to abolish discriminatory legislation against Aboriginal peoples, override Queensland's discriminatory laws, pay all legal costs for Aboriginal peoples in all courts, and establish a separate Ministry for Aboriginal Affairs, a Central Australian Aboriginal Reserve, and an Aboriginal Land Fund.
22 ibid., p. 4.
Whitlam explained that:

The Australian Labor Party will foster close and continuing cooperation with the people of the United States and New Zealand and our other Commonwealth partners to make these associations instruments for justice and peace and for political, social and economic advancement throughout our region.24

Significantly, this commitment to ANZUS and the Commonwealth highlighted notions of justice and development rather than the priorities of security, defence and anti-communism. Related to this approach was Whitlam’s promise to abolish conscription and to recognise the People’s Republic of China.25

Further, in a brief statement, the policy speech included a commitment that a Labor government would ‘give no visas to or through Australia to racially selected sporting teams’.26 This element of the critique of South Africa was an immediate concern for the electorate given the protests during the 1971 rugby tour.

It was clear that the Labor Party Platform provided the basis for the policy speech, which established a set of foreign policy principles prior to the 1972 federal election. Whitlam offered a vision for the Australian electorate which involved an energy and commitment to reform, including changes to foreign policy. In the Labor Party policy speech, Whitlam clearly rejected the foreign policies of the Liberal and Country Parties government and provided a new direction for the electorate. Significantly, Whitlam outlined an agenda for an anti-racist foreign policy.

The nature of the Whitlam Labor government

The Whitlam government had an immediate impact on policy in Australia. The Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister constituted an interim cabinet until the entire Ministry could be formed two weeks after the election. Whitlam was an active Foreign Minister, as well as Prime Minister, until November 1973 when Senator Willessee assumed the position of Minister for Foreign Affairs. Also, the implementation of foreign policy was relatively

24 Policy speech, op. cit., p. 33.
25 ibid., pp. 31 & 33. See also Whitlam, Australia and her region, op. cit., pp. 12-14.
26 Policy speech, op. cit., p. 33.
unobstructed by the Senate, the Labor Party caucus, the bureaucracy, or elements of the electorate.

The federal election held on 2 December 1972 resulted in a majority of seats for the Australian Labor Party in the House of Representatives. The Senate was not due for election at the same time and therefore the Liberal and Country Parties, in conjunction with the Democratic Labor Party, maintained control of this chamber. This situation was to cause considerable difficulties for the domestic agenda, rather than the foreign policy direction, of the Whitlam Labor government.

Following the election, Whitlam and Lance Barnard formed a cabinet of two. This interim arrangement was necessary because the new Labor Party caucus could not meet to choose Ministers until the results in marginal seats became known. Also, Whitlam and Barnard were immediately able to institute changes to policies which clearly signalled the election of the Labor Party government.

The 'duumvirate' was sworn in by the Governor-General, Sir Paul Hasluck, on Tuesday 5 December 1972. Whitlam provided a list of reasons to the Governor-General on why the two-Minister cabinet was required. The practical circumstances of the approaching holidays and administrative inertia was explained but, primarily, Whitlam argued that several policy matters needed urgent attention. This included the abolition of conscription and changes to the voting pattern of Australia in the United Nations. In anticipation of criticism of the duumvirate arrangements, Whitlam stressed that the interim Cabinet would conduct the business of government under the impartial scrutiny of the Governor-General as part of the Executive Council:

Although the description has passed into history, the duumvirate was in fact a triumvirate, with the Governor-General the third or,

28 For the details of the number of seats held by each party in the Senate, see Parliamentary Handbook, Commonwealth of Australia, 18th edition, AGFS, Canberra, 1973.
29 This was predicted to take at least two weeks. On the Labor Party process of selecting Ministers from the caucus, see C.J. Lloyd and G.S. Reid, Out of the Wilderness, Cassell, North Melbourne, 1974, pp. 34-55.
30 Whitlam recalled that arrangements were organised with the Governor-General for two Ministers, or three, to be sworn to the full range of portfolios until such time as a full Ministry could be presented. The alternative to the duumvirate was an interim or continuing Liberal and Country Partics government until the Labor cabinet could be formed. See Gough Whitlam, The Whitlam Government 1972-1975, Viking, Ringwood, 1985, p. 17. See also Lloyd and Reid, op. cit., p. 14.
rather, the first member. The administration thus formed was in fact the Executive Council.31

In the allocation of responsibilities, Prime Minister Whitlam held thirteen portfolios and Deputy Prime Minister held fourteen portfolios.32 It seems that Whitlam had intended to create a ministry of three with the Senate deputy leader Don Willesee who was to be appointed as Vice-President of the Executive Council. However, this would have bypassed the Labor Party Senate Leader Lionel Murphy and thus would have created friction among groups within the Labor caucus. When questioned about the two-Minister cabinet rather than a three or four member cabinet, Whitlam explained that others in the Labor Party were more senior than the Parliamentary leadership, notably Frank Crean and Clyde Cameron, and therefore many members of the Parliamentary Party could have been involved in an interim cabinet.33

The two-Minister arrangement appeared to downgrade the roles of the Senate Leader and Deputy Leader within the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party. The logical choice to form an interim cabinet appeared to be Whitlam, Barnard, Murphy and Willesee. Indeed, the four leaders worked together as a committee through the two weeks of the first Whitlam Ministry. Nevertheless, personal considerations, that is, the history of conflict between Whitlam and Murphy, determined the exclusion of Senator Murphy.34

In this context, it was significant that Murphy, as the designated Attorney-General, made the first statement, apart from Whitlam, on Sunday 3 December 1972 to announce that the new Labor government would free imprisoned draft resisters. Other Ministers-elect were involved with their prospective departments immediately following the election. Most senior Ministers had

32 Whitlam accepted the portfolios of Prime Minister; Foreign Affairs; External Territories; Treasurer; Attorney-General; Customs and Excise; Trade and Industry; Education and Science; Shipping and Transport; Civil Aviation; Housing; Works; Environment; Aborigines and the Arts. Barnard was allocated Defence; Navy; Army; Air; Supply; Postmaster-General; Labour and National Service; Immigration; Social Services; Repatriation; Health; Primary Industry; National Development; and Interior. See Lloyd and Reid, ibid., p. 22. See also McMullin, op. cit., p. 338 and Whitlam, *The Whitlam Government...*, op. cit., p. 750. Further, Whitlam, ibid., p. 18 explained that:

The 'duumvirate' thus established was not only the smallest Government with authority over Australia since the brief Wellington Administration of 1834; it was undoubtedly the least expensive. Barnard and I were legally entitled to the salaries attached to each of the Ministries we held. We accepted only our existing salaries as Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition until the full Ministry was sworn.
33 Lloyd and Reid, op. cit., p. 16. See also Age, 5 December 1972.
34 Lloyd and Reid, op. cit., p. 17. See also McMullin, op. cit., pp. 320-1, 342.
consulted with their departmental officers and had taken administrative decisions by the end of the first week of government. The duumvirate appeared to prioritise the roles of Whitlam and Barnard but it was a Ministry assisted by many Ministers without portfolio.35

Subsequently, on 18 December 1972, the Labor Party Parliamentary caucus elected 27 Ministers for the Labor cabinet.36 With regard to foreign affairs issues, the central characters were Whitlam as Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Barnard as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence, Senator Willesee as Special Minister for State and Minister assisting the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Bill Morrison as Minister for External Territories.

The size of the cabinet with 27 Ministers suggested an unwieldy decision-making body. The Liberal and Country Parties governments had separated the Ministers into senior members of cabinet and junior members without cabinet rank. The Labor Party tradition was that all Ministers would participate in the cabinet and the caucus decided to maintain this tradition.37

It is clear that, as Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Whitlam was central to the construction and implementation of Australian foreign policy. Whitlam claimed that the superficiality of foreign policy decisions under the Liberal and Country Parties governments had arisen in part from the separation of the Prime Minister from foreign policy advice, primarily the External Affairs Department. Whitlam's view that the Prime Minister should wield a commanding role over the details of foreign policy necessarily shifted greater power and responsibility to the position of Prime Minister. This led to Whitlam's merging of the two functions and thereby increased the Prime Minister's control over both domestic and foreign affairs.

An additional factor in this arrangement was the various positions within the Parliamentary Labor Party on key international issues. Albinski explained that:

To foreclose the possibility of conflict between himself as Prime Minister and a separate Foreign Minister, to keep control over a

35 Lloyd and Reid, op. cit., pp. 19-21.
36 This was the first Labor cabinet in 23 years. Not since October 1929 had a Labor government formed a new government as a result of an election. None of the Parliamentary Labor members had been ministers and only Kim Beazley Snr., Clyde Cameron and Fred Daly had been members of Parliament in the Curtin-Chifley government of 1941-49. Whitlam, The Whitlam Government..., op. cit., pp. 24, 750-4. However, most cabinet Ministers had experience in the relevant portfolios in opposition. McMullin, op. cit., p. 339.
37 See McMullin, ibid., p. 341.
fractious party, to insure that his conceptions of foreign policy would prevail, he found merit in assuming the portfolio himself.38

Direct control over foreign policy was seen to be vital in charting a new and important course after years in opposition.

Whitlam identified two other reasons for the efficient management of international affairs: first, the judgement that the essence of a sound foreign policy rested with the intelligent anticipation of change, and second, in foreign as in domestic matters, the programs had been thoroughly analysed and established in public acceptance.39 This reflection by Whitlam acknowledged the need to accept change as a part of international affairs and pointed to the lack of understanding about change that characterised the previous Liberal and Country Parties governments.

One of the problems for Whitlam was the difficulty of performing as both Prime Minister and Foreign Minister and the question was raised as to how long Whitlam could combine the two jobs. As Altman commented in July 1972, 1973 'even a man of his undoubted talents will find it hard to be another Chifley and Evatt at the same time'.40 Thus, Whitlam handed the Foreign Affairs portfolio to Senator Willesee on 6 November 1973. This seemed to be at a convenient time for Whitlam as the important foreign policy changes had been instituted and Willesee had gained sufficient standing within the Parliamentary Labor Party to assume a senior Ministerial role. The new Minister for Foreign Affairs had been the government foreign affairs spokesperson in the Senate and had assisted with the administrative elements of the portfolio as the Minister assisting the Foreign Minister and as Special Minister for State.41 It was clear that Whitlam would continue to exercise prominence over foreign policy as Willesee's predecessor and as Prime Minister. Whitlam's power on international affairs was also illustrated when acting as Foreign Minister, without great reluctance, whenever Willesee was overseas.42

However, some unresolved questions remained about the transfer of the Foreign Affairs portfolio to Senator Willesee. It seemed that Deputy Prime

Minister Lance Barnard, the Minister for Defence, was expected to obtain the job, 'to whom it had been previously promised and who wished to undertake it.' The reason provided for overlooking Barnard was that the important government initiative of reorganising the Department of Defence was not yet completed. Further, Whitlam may have reassessed the options for the Foreign Affairs portfolio and preferred Willesee, but more importantly, Whitlam's failure to honour a pledge to a political ally and long-standing friend demonstrated the importance the Prime Minister attached to foreign policy. Senator Willesee was seen as an even more trusted and dependable colleague able to work with Whitlam as a continuing decision-maker on foreign policy.

In a key statement on foreign policy, Senator Willesee extended elements of the Labor Party policy speech with regard to foreign relations and Labor principles. The Foreign Minister deliberately set the Labor agenda against the 'selfish realism' of the previous government. It was made clear that the Whitlam government's opposition to underdevelopment, colonialism and racism could be understood with reference to the Labor Party principles of justice, peace and the promotion of political, social, and economic progress. The Labor Platform was explicitly linked with the Whitlam government's opposition to segregation and discrimination on the grounds of race, gender or ethnicity.

Further, the Foreign Minister argued that Australia should reappraise the understandings of aid and trade with developing countries. Indeed, Senator Willesee offered the idea of marrying development aid with trade and financial reforms. It was acknowledged that the government's support for these arguments could lead to benefits for Australia in the world economy. Senator Willesee also linked this issue to Australia's support for the United Nations as the appropriate forum for this type of debate and advocated the UN's role in facilitating these changes.

In sum, Whitlam conducted the work of the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister for the first eleven months of the Labor government. In effect, Whitlam was ensuring that the initiatives of foreign affairs, which were outlined in the Labor Party Platform and the policy speech, were implemented with minimal interference. Whitlam also determined that Senator Willesee would continue to implement the program on foreign affairs with a continuing influence for the Prime Minister. The personal authority of Whitlam on foreign

43 Albinski, op. cit., p. 61.
44 Willesee, op. cit., p. 7.
45 ibid., p. 8.
affairs also implied that the Prime Minister was responsible for the coherence and direction of the Labor government’s initiatives on international relations.

While Whitlam was able to dominate foreign affairs issues, there were several forums where the Prime Minister, and Foreign Minister, could have been challenged on, or might have faced opposition to, particular international initiatives. These included the Parliament, cabinet, Labor Party caucus, Parliamentary committees, bureaucracy and the electorate.

The Labor Party principles were able to be translated into policy initiatives because the Whitlam government was able to avoid the Parliament, particularly the hostile Senate, on questions of foreign policy. This was not possible on many domestic issues which required amendments to legislation or indeed new legislation. Nevertheless, as Collins explained, the Parliament at the time of the Whitlam Labor government was an important forum for debate on foreign policy if not for decisions. Moreover, Whitlam confirmed that the consideration and implementation of foreign policy was the area most free from obstruction by the Senate and as a result, was seen as the field in which the Labor government was most able to implement change.

As foreign policy was understood to be within the powers of the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister, the Labor cabinet tended not to be closely involved in decisions on international issues. Whitlam, in consultation with Willesee, decided upon aspects of foreign policy, with due reference to the Labor Party Platform and policy speech, and subsequently Whitlam would inform the cabinet. Moreover, Albinski showed that the Prime Minister was driving the changes in foreign policy. For example, decisions regarding the Baltic states and South Africa’s membership of the United Nations were taken independent of cabinet and in the face of misgivings on the part of senior Labor colleagues. However, Albinski also pointed to instances of cabinet intervention on key issues, for example in 1975, to approve stronger trade-related measures against South Africa. Whitlam was keen to avoid potentially heated debates within the cabinet on foreign policy issues. Thus, cabinet was relegated to the


49 Albinski, op. cit., p. 68.
role of ratifying foreign policy initiatives rather than examining and deciding on proposals.  

Within the Labor Party, the Parliamentary caucus traditionally held an important place in the process of debate and decision-making. The collective principles of the Labor Party determined that the caucus expected to be involved in decisions on both domestic and foreign policy issues. Nevertheless, the Labor caucus understood the tradition that foreign affairs remained within the power of the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. This position was accepted to a point because the caucus also understood its role in needing to restrain the leadership of the Labor Party, especially Whitlam.

In this context, two incidents are illustrative. First, caucus members presented a petition to withhold recognition of the new Chilean military regime which had overthrown the elected government led by Salvador Allende. Unfortunately for the signatories, Australian recognition had been announced earlier and the caucus reluctantly supported this position in retrospect in order to maintain the impression of government unity. Second, the caucus appealed to the cabinet to examine more closely the measures against the minority regime in South Africa. The resultant decision to close one consulate may have occurred without the pressure from caucus because senior ministers had been moving toward a more rigorous position. In effect, the caucus needed to rely on the authority of the Labor Party Platform and the policy speech as the foundations of foreign policy because the Parliamentary Labor Party was not able to debate international topics nor contain the decisions of the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister on particular foreign affairs issues.

The Parliamentary committees related to foreign affairs completed some useful but ineffectual work as the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister decided not to employ the recommendations of various reports. Millar noted that Whitlam

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50 ibid., pp. 286-7. Further, Whitlam established a cabinet committee on foreign affairs and defence, with Whitlam as chair, but this committee did not meet often and was not a factor in the construction of foreign policy. Indeed, at a meeting of this committee, Barnard presented a draft statement on the US military facilities in Australia, with the support of Whitlam. There was concern within the ALP about the US bases and the draft statement was moved through the cabinet committee to the caucus which referred it to cabinet. In the end, Whitlam ensured that the statement was not discussed within cabinet. See Lloyd and Reid, op. cit., p. 142.

51 Albinski, op. cit., p. 314.

52 ibid. Also, caucus power was severely restricted by standing party rules which stated that ministers would bring to the agenda items for discussion, thereby limiting debates to legislative matters and excluding the executive actions such as foreign policy decisions. See also Weller, op. cit., p. 43 on the ALP caucus and Whitlam, and see generally D.J. Ball, Political constraints on defence and foreign policy making, paper presented at the Australasian Political Studies Association conference, Canberra, July 1975.
saw 'no mileage in increasing the capacity of the Labor backbenchers or the Opposition to propose initiatives or ask embarrassing questions'. This account implied that Whitlam discouraged the work of the Parliamentary committees in order to retain control over foreign policy. However, Whitlam gave the impression of taking seriously the Parliamentary committees when outlining the decision to broaden the terms of reference of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence in March 1973. Nevertheless, similar to other Parliamentary structures, the committees had a negligible influence on foreign policy.

The bureaucracy, in particular the Department of Foreign Affairs, appeared to play a secondary role in policy development as Whitlam directed the implementation of the Labor Party agenda. Further, there was little obstruction from the Department of Foreign Affairs, indeed Bilney claimed that the Department was keen to change 'some of the nonsenses in Australian foreign policy'. As Foreign Minister, Whitlam demonstrated a faith in the public service to provide impartial advice and built a personal rapport with the Foreign Affairs officers. Whitlam remained close to the Department after relinquishing the Foreign Affairs portfolio which Freudenburg claimed affected Willesee's relations with both Whitlam and the Department of Foreign Affairs. Also, the Whitlam government added a new element to the policy process by appointing personal staff to each Minister. The introduction of Ministerial staff suggested greater control of policy implementation by the Labor government and less influence over policy decisions by the bureaucracy.

On a wider scale, the electorate played an indirect role in supporting specific foreign policy objectives and deciding priorities through popular pressure and publicised expectations. Specifically, church-based groups campaigned at

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53 Millar, op. cit., p. 159.
55 Bilney, op. cit., p. 35.
particular times to readjust policies regarded as morally untenable. Primarily, these related to denouncing racism in southern Africa and fitted with the causes of other political groups that argued for more vigorous Australian action against apartheid, such as halting air services with South Africa, discontinuing the activities of the trade commission and severing trade with the apartheid economy. Moreover, the opposition to Australia's continuing relations with South Africa fitted with elements of the Labor Party at the branch level. This type of pressure may have moved the Whitlam government toward tightening its position on trade and flights from Rhodesia and South Africa. 59

It seems that, on foreign affairs issues, the forums which may have placed limitations upon Whitlam's policy agenda did not emerge as obstructions. Due to the influence of the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister, the Parliament, cabinet, Labor Party caucus, Parliamentary committees and Department of Foreign Affairs did not appear to restrict the foreign policy agenda. In part, the electorate, specifically some community and action groups, provided an element of influence on foreign affairs issues but this pressure seemed to support the Labor direction rather than challenge the policies. Again, this examination reinforces the position that the Prime Minister, with the Foreign Minister, was an important factor in the construction of foreign policy initiatives, with little hindrance from the Parliament or the Labor Party. This conclusion is predicated on the base influence of the Labor Party Platform and the policy speech which provided a clear vision and some details on foreign policy. Thus, while Whitlam conformed to the Platform and policy speech, there were few reasons for the Labor Party caucus or cabinet to challenge the Prime Minister on foreign affairs.

Conclusion

The Labor Party was well-prepared for government by 1972. Whitlam and the Labor Party had analysed the domestic and international environments and had constructed a comprehensive set of policies. In particular, Whitlam had developed a critical understanding of many foreign policy issues. In contrast to the static policies of the Liberal and Country Parties, the Labor Party was able to demonstrate through the 1972 election campaign that it was time for change.

Following the election, the Whitlam Labor government immediately implemented many policy decisions which had been promised to the electorate. The image of change was facilitated by the duumvirate, the new cabinet and by Whitlam as Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. This analysis outlines the domestic context of Whitlam's agenda to change Australia's image in the region and in international forums.
In the initial days and weeks of government, Whitlam, as both Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, initiated many changes to Australian foreign policy. Some of the changes were substantial, such as realigning Australia at the United Nations and starting discussions to recognise China, while others were more symbolic. Whitlam also ensured that Australia was seen by the international community to oppose racial discrimination and colonialism. In this chapter, I show that Whitlam made many changes to foreign policy but maintained the central assumptions of Australia's international relationships.

In terms of relations with the United States, the Whitlam government was critical of US actions in Vietnam while simultaneously attempting to maintain the basis of Australia's alliance with the US. This alliance involved the US military facilities in Australia which seemed to shape Australia's ability to respond to issues in the Indian Ocean. The Whitlam government's position in the United Nations on the idea of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean region and the development of the island of Diego Garcia was somewhat tainted by Australia's continuing support for the US bases, particularly the facilities at North West Cape. Nevertheless, Whitlam constructed a new position for Australia in the United Nations by aligning with the developing countries on
many issues. Similarly, the Commonwealth provided a forum for Whitlam to reinforce Australia's links with the developing countries, especially in relation to international economic reform and in opposition to the minority governments in southern Africa. In both places, Whitlam established an anti-racist and anti-colonial foreign policy for Australia.

From these general issues of Australian foreign policy, debates arose on the extent of change instituted by Whitlam. Various commentators raised questions on whether the Whitlam government changed the basis of Australian foreign policy, or whether Whitlam merely altered the perception of Australia through adjustments in style. Within this discussion, I argue that Prime Minister Whitlam initiated significant changes to Australian foreign policy that were more than alterations in style. These debates, and the content of Whitlam's foreign policy on the general international issues, remain important for the examination of the Whitlam government's relations with developing countries, in particular, relations with the Asia Pacific region and with Africa.

Initial changes to foreign policy

The immediate changes to Australian foreign policy instituted by Whitlam as both Prime Minister and Foreign Minister set the tone and approach of the Labor government's foreign policy. Following the 1972 federal election, Whitlam and the deputy leader of the Labor Party, Lance Barnard made many changes to foreign policy based on the Platform and policy speech. In summary, the decisions relating to foreign policy included:

- reaffirmation of the intention to establish a more independent foreign policy for Australia;
- reconfirmation of the promise to support the move toward independence for Papua New Guinea;
- withdrawal of remaining Australian troops in Vietnam and the release of all draft resisters in Australia;
- direction to the Australian Ambassador in Paris to open talks regarding Australia's recognition of China and the recall of the Australian Ambassador to Taiwan;
- instruction to vote in favour of two resolutions at the United Nations on sanctions against Rhodesia, direction to the New South Wales government to close the Rhodesian Information Centre, cancellation of the Australian
passport of the diplomatic representative of Rhodesia in South Africa, and halt to wheat exports to Rhodesia;

• exclusion of racially selected sporting teams from Australia and prevention of these teams from travelling through Australia;

• contribution to international birth control programs, grant of rice aid to Indonesia, and announcement of new contributions to the United Nations funds for Southern Africa; and

• decision to ratify the international conventions on racial discrimination and nuclear arms.1

Significantly, the change of voting pattern at the United Nations was the first action taken at a meeting in the afternoon of Sunday 3 December 1972. This imperative emerged from the impending debate and vote on resolutions centred on sanctions against Rhodesia in the General Assembly, on which Australia’s representatives had previously cast an unacceptable vote, that is, unacceptable in Whitlam’s terms. Whitlam was determined that, on 7 December, Australia would be among the supporters of the resolutions concerning Rhodesia.2 The decision to alter Australia’s vote was a deliberate demonstration at the highest level of the change the position of Australia at the United Nations.

These actions emphasised the Labor government’s priority in opposing discrimination and started the broader policy approach of attempting to rid Australia of a racist image and establishing a new respectability for Australia in international forums.3 From this, Whitlam was seen to profess an ideology of internationalism and anti-racism, not merely non-racist.


2 In the Assembly in 1971, Portugal, South Africa and Britain had been the only nations to oppose the resolution, Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States had been among the nine abstaining and 102 others had supported them. Whitlam, op. cit., pp. 15-16. See also J. Camilleri, In Search of a Foreign Policy, Arena, nos 32-33, 1973, p. 67 and, for a personal interpretation from the UN in December 1972, see Gordon Bilney, The Whitlam Government: Some personal reflections, in Fabian Society, The Whitlam Phenomenon: Fabian papers. McPhee Gribble with Penguin, Fitzroy, 1986, pp. 27-8. See generally, Claire Clark, Labor’s policy at the United Nations, Australia’s Neighbours, no. 89, February – March 1974.

3 E.G. Whitlam, Australia’s Foreign Policy: New Directions, New Definitions, Twenty-fourth Roy Milne Memorial Lecture, Australian Institute of International Affairs, Brisbane, 30 November
In addition, and more for domestic consumption, the Whitlam government announced the withdrawal of all Australian involvement in Vietnam. This entailed the immediate return of the remaining Australian Army Assistance group, the release of all draft resisters from jail, termination of selective national service and an end to all military aid to South Vietnam. These decisions had some basis in public expectations created by the Labor Party in opposition and during the election campaign.

The immediate changes reflected an understanding that particular policy positions needed alteration without delay. Nevertheless, considering the powers available to Whitlam and Barnard, the record of initial change was modest. As Lloyd and Reid commented, 'nothing was done that was downright eccentric or excessively self-indulgent.'

The energetic new Labor cabinet elected by caucus on 18 December 1972 initiated many reforms in the first months of government. The further changes to foreign policy included several significant reforms relating to Australia's relationship with the Asia Pacific region, developing countries, and Africa. These changes included:

- recognition of, and establishment of diplomatic relations with, nations with communist governments, embracing North Korea, North Vietnam, East Germany and Poland;
- at the same time, emphasising the value of ANZUS and the importance of the alliance and close partnership with the United States;
- regional focus in support of the ASEAN plan for a zone of peace in South East Asia, condemnation of French nuclear tests in the Pacific, an acceptance of financial responsibility for assisting the island states of the South Pacific, and announcing a substantial contribution to the Asian Development Bank;
- emphasis on the redirection of Australian foreign policy with the proposal of a new non-ideological and non-military regional association encompassing the nations of East and South East Asia, the South Pacific, ASEAN, China and Japan, but not the Soviet Union, or the United States;
- relocation of Australia among the nations committed to ending colonialism and racial discrimination, especially in southern Africa, and redirection of voting in the United Nations with indications of Australia not simply considering the opinions of the US and Britain, but seeking the views of

4 Camilleri, op. cit., p. 67.
nations such as Canada, India, Japan, Indonesia, and particular African states;
• commitment to developing nations in concluding Australia's colonial role in Papua New Guinea and guaranteeing additional economic assistance, reassessing and increasing the aid program to ensure benefits to the intended recipients, and instituting preferential tariffs for exports from developing countries; and
• promotion of the treatment of Aboriginal peoples in an attempt to abandon racist attitudes which could be judged internationally.6

These early foreign policy changes were initiated in a short period of time and some were radically different from the previous Australian policy positions. These alterations were directly informed by the Labor Party Platform and policy speech, and set the tone for the Whitlam foreign policy. With the immediate and necessary reforms of foreign policy completed or underway, the Whitlam Labor government was able to enter the Parliament in early 1973 with a new international image for Australia.

the United States

A significant achievement for the Whitlam government was to reject the rhetoric of the previous Liberal and Country Parties governments and to expand Australia's view of the world. One important question was whether Australia's new foreign policy was merely an adjustment within existing constraints or a reformulation which operated outside established relationships. The relationship with the United States was the key aspect of foreign policy which tested this question. While the Labor government was critical of the US in relation to the conflict in Vietnam, Whitlam chose to conform to the established strategic alliance on the issue of US bases in Australia. This selective analysis is developed further in relation to manoeuvres in the Indian Ocean, Australia at the United Nations and the debate on the extent of change in foreign policy.

There was little potential for conflict between Prime Minister Whitlam and the recently returned administration in Washington. Moreover, Whitlam's political outlook was not predicted to clash with the United States government over time and Whitlam was not one within the ALP to be suspicious of United States policy and purposes. For example, Whitlam had defended Australia's relationship with the United States in the 1966 Evatt Memorial lecture and this position was carried into government:

The United States alliance is essential. Co-operation with the United States must be maintained . . . More than any other country in the area Australia is able and bound to interpret the United States to the countries of the region and to interpret those countries to the United States.  

At the time of this statement, Whitlam may have been attempting to reassure the United States about the Labor Party leadership and trying to highlight the moderate elements of the ALP when anti-US sentiment was on the rise. Indeed, Whitlam attempted to establish a close relationship between Australia and the United States. At the ALP National Conference in July 1973, Whitlam repeated the government's commitment to the ANZUS treaty in direct contrast to more radical Labor Party arguments for an independent foreign policy.  

Significantly, Whitlam's address to the Labor Party delegates at the conference immediately preceded the Prime Minister's first visit to the United States. Whitlam received an interested welcome in Washington as measured by the number of hours accorded by the President, Secretary of State, and Senate Foreign Relations Committee, among others. As one might have predicted on Whitlam's first visit to the US as Prime Minister, contentious issues were avoided and Whitlam may have tried to build confidence and reassure the US administration about the Australian Labor Party's more critical quarters.

Only two weeks later, Prime Minister Whitlam commented that President Nixon's authority had been weakened by allegations surrounding the illegal

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8 E.G. Whitlam, Australia - Base or Bridge?, H.V. Evatt Memorial lecture 1966, University of Sydney Fabian Society, 16 September 1966, p. 5.
9 Camilleri, op. cit., pp. 69-70.
entry into the Democrat Party Office in the Watergate building. Further, in December 1973, Whitlam agreed with Jim Cairns, who was in Hanoi, that the United States would continue to seek control over the Saigon government and over Vietnam in general. Goldsworthy offered a credible analysis that Whitlam agreed with this position and possibly saw Cairns' comments as a 'useful way of signalling' particular attitudes to the United States without officially sanctioning this critique through Foreign Affairs channels.\(^{11}\)

Thus, the Whitlam Labor government appeared to be sending mixed messages within the established relationship with the United States. Indeed, the Nixon administration may have been confused by the variety of statements by their Australian friends. However, the overriding assumptions of the US leadership may have simplified any combination of signals to accord with their suspicions about the Australian Labor Party and the Whitlam government in particular.

Notwithstanding the pre-conceived understandings of the Whitlam government by the United States, the Labor government appeared comfortable with the traditional 'narrow and unimaginative' security alliance with the United States.\(^{12}\) While instituting relatively independent initiatives on some international issues, the Labor government remained part of the US military system. A sound argument could be made that a more independent Australian foreign policy would have required a distancing from an automatic acceptance of United States foreign policy. In the end, Whitlam seemed to sustain a precarious balance between strategic alliance and targeted reform.

This balancing act could be witnessed in relation to Vietnam. Australia's alliance with the United States was both defined and distorted by the intervention in Vietnam.\(^{13}\) The politics of war shaped the Whitlam government's perception of Australia's relationship with the United States and cast US perceptions of the Whitlam government's role in the alliance.

The central dilemma for the Australian Labor Party on foreign policy was 'how to oppose the US intervention in Vietnam without opposing the United States, and how to denounce the war without denouncing the US'.\(^{14}\) As deputy leader and later leader of the Labor Party, Whitlam had been consistent in valuing the alliance with the United States while apparently struggling with the insidious elements of the conflict in Vietnam. Whitlam allowed greater criticism of the

\(^{11}\) ibid.
\(^{12}\) As described by Altman, op. cit., p. 5.
\(^{13}\) Whitlam, The Whitlam Government..., op. cit., p. 29.
\(^{14}\) ibid., p. 36.
US once in government, when one can assume the imperative of winning an election had passed and the need for reassuring the Australian electorate was partially satisfied.

At the time of the Whitlam government's election, Australia's military presence in Vietnam had been reduced to an embassy protection unit overshadowed by the deaths of five hundred Australian personnel. The new Labor Prime Minister acted swiftly to alter Australian policy toward Vietnam:

Immediately on taking office, I instructed our ambassador in Paris, Alan Renouf, to make contact with the Deputy-General of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Vo Van Sung. On 26 February 1973, I was able to announce the establishment of diplomatic relations with Hanoi, at level of ambassador. Australia continued to recognise the Government of the Republic of Vietnam and did not alter its diplomatic relations with, or its representation in, Saigon.15

While this diplomatic action appeared to demonstrate significant change with regard to relations with Vietnam, questions have been raised as to what extent this altered Australia's relationship with the United States. Camilleri argued that Australia was not embarking on a new conception of foreign policy but reacting against the policies of the previous governments, especially with regard to Vietnam.16 The withdrawal of Australian military personnel and the establishment of diplomatic relations with Hanoi, it was argued, were 'symbolic gestures rather than elements in a re-orientation of Australian diplomacy.'17 Camilleri's argument represented a disappointment among some parts of the Australian electorate that wanted the Whitlam government to challenge the basis of the relationship with the US and embark on an independent foreign policy.

A major issue for Australia in the relationship with the United States was the bombing of Hanoi as ordered by President Nixon.18 On 20 December 1972, Prime Minister Whitlam sent a personal message to President Nixon through the appropriate channel of the Australian embassy in Washington expressing concern at the course of events in Vietnam. This statement caused considerable conjecture regarding the tone and content as well as the extent to which the

15 ibid., p. 42.
17 ibid.
18 Over the 1972 Christmas period, more bombs were dropped on North Vietnam in three weeks than in the previous three years. Whitlam stated that the US decision was intended not to coerce Hanoi but to convince Saigon, presumably about the United States' commitment to the South Vietnamese regime. Whitlam, The Whitlam Government..., op. cit., p. 42.
The new Australian Prime Minister was prepared to criticise the US administration. The question whether Whitlam made a genuine attack on US policy in Vietnam or felt obliged to make polite comment is a matter of interpretation and remains unresolved. For this reason, and because the message was only reproduced by Whitlam in 1985, I present the text at length here:

I am deeply concerned by the breakdown in the negotiations with the North Vietnamese and the resumption of heavy and widespread bombing of North Vietnam.

The breakdown of the negotiations has been a bitter blow to me, to the Australian government and, I believe, to the Australian people as a whole. The election campaign that has just ended brought me into first-hand contact with public opinion in this country at every level and I know what hopes were pinned on reaching a cease-fire agreement. The disappointment caused by the recession of that prospect, coupled with anxiety about the resumption of the bombing, is producing a feeling of grave concern in this country. I continue to believe, as I am sure you do yourself, that the only practicable way to end the long-standing conflict in Vietnam is by means of negotiations. I question most earnestly whether the resumption of bombing will achieve the result that I know you desire, the return of the North Vietnamese to the negotiating table in a more forthcoming frame of mind.

I am well aware of the difficulties and frustrations which Dr Kissinger and the other American negotiators have experienced in dealing with the North Vietnamese. We admire the patience and resolve that they have shown. I know that your Government wants a cease-fire on honourable terms. In these circumstances I believe that the best means open to me to convey to you the depth of my own feelings, and to assist you towards reaching the conclusion for which you have worked so hard and so long, is to approach the heads of government of some of our neighbours in the Asia/Pacific area to join me in addressing a public appeal to both the United States and to North Vietnam to return to serious negotiations.

It is of particular concern to me that my first personal message to you on a matter of substance since assuming office as Prime Minister of Australia should not be misconstrued. I want to reassure you, therefore, that I look forward to a period of positive cooperation between our two countries on a wide range of matters in the years ahead and that, on this particular question of Vietnam, I am moved as much by a positive and, I hope, helpful desire to put negotiations back on the rails as by feelings of distress at one particular aspect of your Government's policy.
I do not intend to release the text of this message, but I may be obliged, in order to satisfy public opinion in Australia, to make some public reference to my having sent a message to you.19

From a distance, this personal statement appeared to incorporate both words of direct criticism and phrases of generous reassurance. As for the lasting impressions of a formal note between heads of government, Prime Minister Whitlam would have been aware that a rebuke on policy, especially the extent of concern on the bombing of North Vietnam, would emerge immediately at first reading and last longest in reflection. However, Whitlam chose to access the appropriate diplomatic channels for communication to ensure serious consideration of the content or to mollify the direct criticism of the text. Also, the acknowledged appropriate follow-up discussions with the Secretary of State and the US Ambassador in Australia quelled immediate fears and provided a constructive environment for other issues relevant to the alliance. Further, these consultations may have warned of anticipated criticisms from various elements within Australia, including groups aligned with the Labor government. Nevertheless, the reassurances from Australia may have been more effective with another US President and now seem only useful as historical qualifications of Whitlam’s explicit critique.

As one might expect, President Nixon was angry to receive a critical letter from Australia, a significant and consistent supporter of the United States in Vietnam. The criticism was escalated when Whitlam government Ministers Cairns, Cameron and Uren successively talked about ‘murderers and maniacs in the White House’.20 Whitlam claimed to be successful in the short term in constraining these Ministers to issues related to their portfolio responsibilities but admitted that ‘it was some time before the Government’s view on Vietnam could be rationally considered by the US Administration’.21 Leaving aside the question whether any issue could be ‘rationally considered’ by the Nixon administration, the related concern was whether the suspicions of the United States leaders about the Whitlam Labor government were ignited prior to this incident and what impact this diplomatic skirmish had on the continuing political and strategic relationship.

19 ibid., pp. 42-3. See also Sydney Morning Herald, 22 December 1972.
Part of the relationship with the United States was the issue of military facilities in Australia. The Whitlam government did not contemplate fundamental change in the defence relationship with the United States. Indeed, Camilleri accused the Prime Minister and the Labor cabinet of political contortions on the question of the bases which reflected the contradictory premises on which Australian foreign policy was founded.22

The Labor Party’s formal opposition to all foreign-owned, foreign-controlled and foreign-operated bases on Australian territory contrasted with the policies of the Whitlam government.23 While the Minister for Defence and Deputy Prime Minister Barnard had suggested the possibility of disclosing the purposes of the military installations, it was subsequently announced that the Australian government was precluded by existing agreements from divulging information on Pine Gap and Nurrungar. In response to pressure from within the Labor Party, Barnard affirmed in Parliament the government’s intention to renegotiate several agreements covering the bases with the United States.24

Minister Barnard explained that Pine Gap and Nurrungar related to satellites, that these bases were not part of a weapons system and they could not be used to attack any country.25 These narrow descriptions may have been accurate and sufficient for the Parliament but Barnard’s exposition did not represent the military significance of the bases to US strategic communications systems. As Camilleri explained, the installations tied Australia ‘more firmly than ever into the American defence perimeter’.26

Prime Minister Whitlam also mentioned the bases in a longer announcement on a range of international issues. Explained in the context of Australia’s attitude to nuclear testing, Whitlam stated that the United States Air Force detachment at Amberley and the Joint Geological and Geophysical Research Station at Alice Springs collectively possessed technical facilities to monitor the testing of

22 Camilleri, In Search of a Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 70.
25 Barnard, CPD, HR, vol. 82, 28 February 1973, p. 69. See also Camilleri, In Search of a Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 70.
26 Camilleri, ibid., p. 71.
nuclear devices in the atmosphere, on the surface and underground.\textsuperscript{27} Further, Whitlam asserted that the facilities at Pine Gap and Nurrungar related to satellites and were useful only for analysing data.

The more difficult bases to justify as part of Labor Party policy were the proposed Omega navigational installation and the North West Cape Naval Communications Station. The Whitlam government was certainly consistent in committing to retain all US military facilities established by previous Australian governments and would move toward building the Omega station agreed in principle by the McMahon government.\textsuperscript{28} On this, Whitlam endured a celebrated rebuff from the Labor Party at the July 1973 Federal Conference. A move to allow the Parliamentary members, that is, Whitlam and the cabinet, to determine the issue was narrowly defeated, including four ministers voting against. The motion not to build the Omega station was easily defeated causing a compromise outcome. Agreement was reached that Omega should be built, subject to evidence that it could not be used for hostile acts without Australian consent.\textsuperscript{29}

However, the Labor Party conference failed to raise the more serious issue of the other US bases in Australia. To this extent, Whitlam successfully avoided a contentious debate on the role and future of Pine Gap, Nurrungar and North West Cape, among others. Also, the discussion on Omega seemed divorced from the general context of Australian military relations with the United States and served to deflect attention from the implications of Australia's defence policies.\textsuperscript{30}

The more sensitive issue was the facility at North West Cape. This was an established military base which was known to be in constant contact with United States ships and submarines in the Indian Ocean.\textsuperscript{31} The importance of the North West Cape station was brought to notice during the 1973 Yom

\textsuperscript{27} Whitlam, CPD, HR, vol. 84, 24 May 1973, p. 2648.
\textsuperscript{28} Omega formed part of a proposed United States network of navigational systems to be used by ships and aircraft. Significant for later events, the opposition spokesperson for Defence in 1971, Lance Barnard had attacked the McMahon Parliamentary statement by insisting that Omega had a major military purpose. See McMahon answer to question from Barnard, CPD, HR, vol. 71, 18 March 1971, p. 1074 and Minister for Shipping and Transport, Nixon answer to question from Barnard, CPD, HR, vol. 72, 7 April 1971, pp. 1547-8. See also Camilleri, In Search of a Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 71 and see generally, D.J. Ball, Some military uses for Omega, Pacific Defence Reporter, vol. 3, 12, June 1977 and Alan Roberts, The Case for Omega: Some critical comments, May 1973, unpublished paper.
\textsuperscript{29} Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 107. The decisions on the nature and function of the Omega project were left to the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence.
\textsuperscript{30} Camilleri, In Search of a Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 72.
\textsuperscript{31} Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 107.
Kippur war when the base was put on emergency alert without reference to the Australian government. The Whitlam government could not or chose not to repudiate the North West Cape Agreement of 1963 which had been negotiated under the ANZUS Treaty. Whitlam settled for the need to renegotiate the agreement to provide for greater Australian control over the base. This accorded with the stated foreign policy objectives of a more independent stance coupled with a commitment to the United States security alliance. United States Ambassador to Australia, Marshall Green, obviously aware of the political context, was hinting as early as June 1973 that the United States considered that the agreement was negotiable.

In January 1974, Defence Minister Barnard visited Washington with the primary purpose of renegotiating the terms of agreement on the North West Cape facility. Concessions granted by the United States suggested an effort was made to placate the Australian government. However, there were significant qualifications to this initiative. At North West Cape, the fundamental structures remained unquestioned and unchanged. The Australian second-in-command would have no authority over the US staff and Australia would have no access to the US communications building. This implied that Australia would have no access to the information passing through the facility. The United States had conceded tangential elements of responsibility while maintaining the vital aspects of military autonomy in Australia. The renegotiation demonstrated an ability by the Whitlam government to gain concessions from within the relationship with the United States but the amendments failed to enforce the extent of change demanded in the Labor Party Platform.

Whitlam failed to explain how particular national interests were protected by Australia's increasing commitment to the United States' global security strategies. The issue of the US bases in Australia demonstrated the Labor government's inability to modify the fundamental tenets of the strategic

32 Whitlam, The Whitlam Government..., op. cit., p. 48. The government was advised of the alert 'moments later', said US Ambassador Green, according to Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 107, but Whitlam did not acknowledge this qualification.
33 Goldsworthy, ibid.
34 Subsequently, North West Cape was to operate as a joint facility, enabling Australia to participate in its management, operation and technical control. An Australian Deputy-Commander was to be appointed, along with thirty-five Australians in 'key supervisory positions' and a separate communications centre would be operated exclusively by the Royal Australian Navy. Further, the Amberley and Alice Springs facilities would come under sole Australian management. Whitlam, The Whitlam Government..., op. cit., p. 48 and Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 107. See also W. MacMahon Ball, op. cit., p. 3.
relationship between Australia and the United States. The government could have adopted a stronger position on the bases given a more sincere commitment to a progressive and independent foreign policy for Australia.

Finally, Australia's relations with the United States were central to the foreign policy of the Whitlam Labor government. This selective analysis of the relationship shows that elements of change were often qualified by reassurances of alliance and support. Prime Minister Whitlam was critical of the United States on the intervention in Vietnam and the bombing of Hanoi. However, Whitlam's attitude toward the United States bases in Australia demonstrated a continuing commitment to the strategic alliance. In total, a potentially difficult relationship appeared to operate effectively at the diplomatic level for both the Whitlam government and the United States administration.

the Indian Ocean region

Connected to the Whitlam government's relationship with the United States, and with particular relevance to the US bases in Australia, the Indian Ocean region was a key strategic issue in the 1970s. The region was the focus of increasing military tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union. For Australia, the region tested the relationship with the US and illustrated the Whitlam government's attitude on the Soviet Union. The Indian Ocean region was also an arena for Australia to build links with developing countries, often in the context of the international power struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union.

These relationships were connected to Australia's position in the United Nations on the idea of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean region and the development of the island of Diego Garcia. These issues illustrated the Whitlam government's difficult international position given the continuing alliance with the United States and the accommodation of strategic facilities, especially the US base at North West Cape. Within the complex web of international diplomacy which characterised the Indian Ocean region, this discussion begins to incorporate Australia's relations with developing countries and, in particular, involved the views of African nations with an interest in the Indian Ocean region.

36 The Indian Ocean region was a loosely defined area which included the littoral states of Africa, South Asia, parts of South East Asia and Australia, and the island territories.
In terms of defence and foreign policies, the Whitlam Labor government aimed to reduce the intervention of military powers in both the Indian and Pacific Ocean regions. While conceding that the United States and the Soviet Union would remain interested in the Indian Ocean region, Prime Minister Whitlam advocated a role for Australia in reducing tension and conflict. This could be described as a compromise position or more kindly, a gradual move away from conservative understandings of security and defence which relied upon defence alliances and military action.37 Certainly, Whitlam emphasised the role of the United Nations in the Indian Ocean region and attempted to use diplomatic channels on the issues of a zone of peace and Diego Garcia.

In relation to the proposed zone of peace in the Indian Ocean, Whitlam became involved in the debate over the predicted and actual escalation of naval forces of the United States and the Soviet Union in the region. Whitlam supported a United Nations resolution to declare a zone of peace and advocated Australian participation on the UN ad hoc committee on the Indian Ocean.38 Also, in early 1974, Australia made representations to the US and Soviet governments encouraging serious dialogue on mutual restraint and a reduction in forces in the Indian Ocean.

Whitlam would have been aware of a number of obstacles to these objectives. While endorsing the idea of a zone of peace, India conducted a nuclear test and Iran was engaged in rapid military acquisition. In principle, the United States and the Soviet Union were also opposed to escalation but blamed each other for the pace of naval activity and for destabilising the military balance in the Indian Ocean.39

The Prime Minister restated the government's position at the United Nations General Assembly on 30 September 1974 that 'Australia is strongly opposed to

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37 Whitlam, Roy Milne Lecture, op. cit., p. 5.
the Indian Ocean becoming a ground for competition, much less confrontation between the great powers. Whitlam explained that it would be difficult for the United States and the Soviet Union to consider questions relating to the deployment of their forces in the Indian Ocean in isolation from capabilities in other areas and from general issues of mutual balance and restraint. Rather, Australia expected discussion of the Indian Ocean to form part of the continuing bilateral exchanges on arms control.

The position of the Whitlam government on the zone of peace appeared to create tension within the Australian relationship with the United States. This was particularly evident regarding the strategic and security elements of the alliance in the Indian Ocean region. Whitlam may have envisaged Australian support for a neutral, peaceful zone as a general aspiration rather than a specific commitment which could transform relationships in the context of the Indian Ocean. The problem remained how Australia would continue to cooperate with the United States in establishing and maintaining military installations for broader security arrangements.

In critique of Whitlam’s position on the Indian Ocean, Camilleri explained that the Labor government refused to challenge key aspects of the alliance with the United States. Camilleri also cast doubt on Whitlam’s commitment to the creation of a zone of peace and neutrality in the Indian Ocean. Australia’s support for the proposal in the United Nations and the region appeared to be neutralised by the accepted participation in the ANZUS Treaty, the retention of US strategic facilities in Australia, and involvement in the Five Power Defence arrangement linking Britain, New Zealand, Malaysia, Singapore, and Australia.

This criticism of the Whitlam government needed to be tempered without detracting from the fundamental tension surrounding the proposal for a zone of peace. It seemed Whitlam and colleagues understood that the neutrality of the Indian Ocean was a noble and achievable goal distinct from the considerations of global security politics. Alternatively, Whitlam may have incorporated the zone of peace into a conception of the relationship with the

41 See W. MacMahon Ball, op. cit., p. 2.
42 Camilleri, In Search of a Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 74.
43 ibid. See also Senator D. Willessee, Australian Foreign Policy in the 1970s, chapter 1 in B.D. Beddie, ed., Advance Australia - Where?, Oxford University Press with the Australian Institute of International Affairs, Melbourne, 1975, p. 10.
United States and the relations with Indian Ocean regional nations. The initiation of the proposal through a vehicle such as the United Nations suggested an international diplomatic perspective from the Australian government which preceded the strategic and security agendas of regional agreements and alliances.

The associated dilemma for the Whitlam government was the development of military facilities at Diego Garcia. This British island in the Indian Ocean had served as a base for the United States which proposed to upgrade the facilities to provide greater military support. In its last months, the Heath government in Britain agreed to the US plans, however the subsequent Wilson Labour government was unhappy about the commitment. The Australian Labor government apparently sided with the British Labour Party in opposition to the United States proposal.

Initially, the US Defence Department had asked the Congress for additional funds to transform Diego Garcia into a base capable of re-fuelling and servicing warships. This would facilitate a larger and more frequent naval deployment in the Indian Ocean without weakening the forces in the Pacific. Interestingly, this plan appeared understated compared with the request to Britain. Permission was sought from Britain for an upgrading of facilities to the point where the United States could accommodate B-52 bomber aircraft and air tankers and could refuel and service warships and nuclear submarines. This position accorded with an aim to increase the overall US deployment in the area.

The proposed escalation of US military capacity in the Indian Ocean at this time emerged from contemporary international events and from strategic

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44 Diego Garcia is situated 5100 kilometres north west of Perth.
45 The information on Diego Garcia is inconsistent. Albinski claimed that it is a group of islands where the US had enjoyed air and naval privileges. Whitlam stated that Britain, without consulting other Commonwealth countries, had detached Diego Garcia from Mauritius and leased it to the US. One assumes this is connected to Ball's explanation that the British had granted the United States the right to build military facilities at Diego Garcia in 1966. Further, Goldsworthy offered that the British island was a US military communications station. Of course, none of this information is referenced in the texts. See Albinski, *Australian External Policy...*, op. cit., p. 254; Whitlam, *The Whitlam Government...*, op. cit., p. 157; W. MacMahon Ball, op. cit., p. 3; and David Goldsworthy, Foreign Policy Review, *Australian Quarterly*, vol. 46, 3, September 1974, p. 107.
46 Ball, op. cit., p. 3, quoted Whitlam from March 1974: 'I think I may say without any qualifications that every littoral state hopes there will be no great power rivalry in the Indian Ocean'. Nevertheless, Albinski, op. cit., p. 255, stated that the Wilson Labour government acceded to the request in May 1974 allowing for 'modest' refurbishment.
47 Ball, op. cit., p. 3.
considerations with reference to the Soviet Union, the Middle East and South Asia. In particular, the United States were restricted to airfields at the Portuguese Azores for supplying Israel during the Yom Kippur War. Thus the proposed airfields in the Indian Ocean could have facilitated US action in the Middle East from the East and South East.

The United States had increased its naval presence in the Indian Ocean region in response to small naval missions by the Soviet Union beginning in the late 1960s. The military rivalry provoked anxiety amongst littoral states in anticipation of the United States deploying nuclear submarines capable of launching long-range missiles from the north west corner of the Indian Ocean. Ball claimed that it was in the interests of the Soviet Union to seek the support of the littoral states to persuade the US to reduce military capacity in the Indian Ocean. It was more likely that the Soviet Union would seek to balance the US military presence in the region.

The question of balancing forces in the Indian Ocean depended upon understandings of established patterns of Soviet and US naval movements in the region. Significantly, US Ambassador Marshall Green explained to the Australian press that the objective was balance not escalation because the Soviet navy was much stronger than the US in the Indian Ocean. There was also an expectation that the Soviet presence would increase with the reopening of the Suez Canal. Similar notions were expressed by Kissinger to Whitlam in Washington in May 1975. Whitlam was assured that, after gaining legislative support for the development of Diego Garcia, the United States would discuss the proposals with Indian Ocean littoral nations.

The Whitlam government was in a dilemma on these issues. The Prime Minister had restated Australia's adherence to ANZUS and accepted continuing United States operation of the North West Cape facility. As the plans for Diego Garcia were part of the same strategic defence system as North West Cape, it was contradictory to baulk at the US proposal. However, Australia had agreed enthusiastically with India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Tanzania and other littoral states that the Indian Ocean should become a zone of peace.

50 W. Macmahon Ball, op. cit., p. 3.
The combination of initiatives demonstrated a tension within Australian policy-making which could be reduced to the juxtaposition between the Barnard-Tange defence position favouring the United States and the Whitlam-Renouf foreign policy toward the region.\(^{53}\) This variance was illustrated by the Department of Defence proposal to announce Australia's support for the United States on Diego Garcia in January 1974. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Don Willesee rebuked the Department of Defence headed by Minister Barnard and Secretary Tange with a statement on 8 February:

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\text{While as we understand it the measures proposed for making Diego Garcia a support facility are not elaborate, it is clear that the building up of facilities by any Great Power in the Indian Ocean, or the introduction of additional naval forces, does not contribute to the achievement of the long term objectives which the Australian Government and Governments of other countries in the region have set for themselves.}^{54}\]

Whitlam supported Foreign Minister Willesee in prioritising the foreign policy considerations rather than the defence policy aspects of the issues related to the Indian Ocean.

In conclusion, relations with the United States improved over the period which suggested excellent work by Whitlam and Willesee in the face of criticism from within the Labor Party and from the Liberal Party. A closer examination leads to the conclusion that the Whitlam government managed events and relationships reasonably well because the alliance with the United States was not challenged. Indeed, this outcome showed the importance of Whitlam's view on the relationship with the US within the Labor government.

**the United Nations**

Prime Minister Whitlam embraced the United Nations as an international forum in which to display the new policy approach of Australia. Within the UN structures, the Labor government supported the agendas of, and forged new relationships with, the developing countries. Australia was noticeable in


\(^{54}\) Whitlam, *The Whitlam Government...*, op. cit., p. 157. Whitlam explained that the Department of Defence could be obtuse in its attitude towards the countries of the region. The Diego Garcia incident was preceded by the Department arranging to participate in SEATO exercises in the South China Sea at the time of the Prime Minister's visit to China. The exercises had to be abruptly cancelled.
standing against the minority governments of South Africa and Rhodesia and in supporting resolutions on independence for colonial territories. Also, the Whitlam government attempted to resolve the difficult issue of self-determination for the Cocos Islands. Essentially, the Australian stance at the United Nations was an important factor for relations with the United States, and with the nations of Asia, the Pacific, the Indian Ocean, and Africa.

As mentioned, immediately upon attaining office on 2 December 1972, Whitlam issued instructions to the Australian delegation at the United Nations to switch from the cautious approach of the previous Liberal and Country Parties governments to a progressive and principled stance which emphasised Australia's identification with the states of Africa, Asia and the Pacific. On 3 December 1972, the Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs suggested that Australia should abstain on several resolutions in the UN General Assembly during the week. Whitlam thought otherwise:

To abstain would be to pass up the opportunity to demonstrate at the highest international level that there was indeed a new Government in Australia, with new policies and new attitudes.

A number of issues were to be brought before the General Assembly to which Australia's representatives had cast an abstention vote at the committee stage and Whitlam was determined to change Australia's position. The impact of these changes was magnified due to the obvious shift in voting from committee to plenary in the one session which attracted greater attention than changes between sessions.

Thus, on 12 December 1972, Australia changed position to support a resolution on the right of peoples to self-determination and the granting of independence to colonial countries. Australia also voted in favour of a series of resolutions focused on decolonisation for non-self-governing territories. This included a resolution calling for a timetable to be established for the self-determination and independence of a number of small territories, including the Cocos

58 Australia had opposed the resolution in the General Assembly in 1971 and in committee in 1972. In supporting the resolution, Australia joined with Fiji, members of ASEAN and India, and moved away from Britain, France and the United States. See Whitlam, The Whitlam Government..., op. cit., p. 69.
(Keeling) Islands, which would cause some difficulties for the Whitlam government during 1973. To supplement Australia's new position in the General Assembly, Whitlam announced new contributions to the UN Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa, the UN Trust Fund for South Africa and the UN Fund for Namibia. Australia again demonstrated a changed approach in rejoining the Committee on Decolonisation from which the previous government had withdrawn. Prime Minister Whitlam justified this 'because resumption of membership was consistent with the Government's policy of demonstrating Australia's continuing concern for the problems of decolonisation'.

The change in Australia's foreign policy was evident at the United Nations if not yet obvious at home. Whitlam explained that:

> When the Assembly rose on 19 December the whole world knew that henceforth in the UN Australia would no longer pay exclusive regard to the voting intentions of Britain and US but, while not disregarding their voting intentions, would also consider the views of countries in the Indian and Pacific Oceans such as Canada, Japan, Indonesia, India and Tanzania.

For the Labor Party in Australia, the swift alterations in voting invoked a return to the last Labor government of the 1940s when H.V. Evatt championed the causes of small nations at the United Nations and provided support for decolonisation and self-determination. The Whitlam government also

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59 Clark, The United Nations, op. cit., p. 128. See also Clark, Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., pp. 16 & 129. On 14 December 1972, Australia supported resolutions, first, on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries by the specialised agencies; second, on Activities of Foreign Economic Interests impeding the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Peoples in Southern Rhodesia, Namibia and Territories under Portuguese Domination; and third, on Small Territories, which included American Samoa and Guam, Brunei, Gilbert and Ellice Islands and Solomon Islands, Cocos (Keeling) Islands and New Hebrides. Portugal, South Africa, Britain and the United States were the only nations to vote against the first resolution, France joined them in voting against the second and France, Portugal, South Africa and Britain alone voted against the third. In plenary in 1971, and in committee in 1972, Australia had abstained on all three questions.


64 Clark, Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 131.
provided explicit support for the United Nations similar to Evatt and dissimilar to the Liberal and Country Parties governments. Consequently, the Labor government utilised the United Nations General Assembly, and the committees and agencies, with energy and enthusiasm. Also, the Whitlam government's commitment to the United Nations was demonstrated through the ratification of international conventions and active participation in numerous UN bodies concerned with economic and social matters.65

Prime Minister Whitlam showed a personal interest when addressing the United Nations General Assembly on 30 September 1974. Whitlam emphasised the loyalty of Australia and the Labor Party to the world organisation and its ideals. The Prime Minister highlighted the threats to international hopes of closing the gap between the developed and the developing nations.66 Whitlam restated the commitment of Australia to a progressive and activist role within the United Nations and other international forums.

During the term of the Whitlam Labor government, the United Nations dealt with many difficult issues. Australia’s position on the details of these matters illustrated the level of commitment toward topics of importance for developing countries, particularly the countries of Africa. The question of Guinea Bissau is a useful example. In mid 1974, the Minister for Foreign Affairs highlighted the vote by Australia to admit Guinea Bissau to the World Health Organisation and thereby treat this as recognition of the newly independent West African nation. Senator Willesee continued that:

we have given expression not only to the fact that Guinea Bissau possesses the attributes of statehood but to our support for the legitimate aspirations of black Africans still denied their inalienable right to self-determination and independence.67

However, Australia’s response in the United Nations a year earlier had been markedly more guarded. Following a unilateral declaration of independence

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65 Albinski, Australian External Policy..., op. cit., p. 161 and Clark, The United Nations, op. cit., p. 158. The content of these activities coincided with the Labor Party agenda for domestic reform. Within the United Nations, Australia was active in the Economic and Social Council, the Governing Council for Environmental Programs, the preparatory committee for the World Food Conference in 1974, and the consultative committee for International Women’s Year in 1975.
67 Willesee, op. cit., pp. 5-6.
from Portugal on 24 September 1973, the self-proclaimed liberation government of Guinea Bissau had gained recognition from approximately half the members of the United Nations, including all the African states. The subsequent resolution in the General Assembly welcoming the independence of Guinea Bissau was adopted, notwithstanding Australia's abstention with 29 others and seven against.68 Australia supported the discussion of claims by Guinea Bissau but abstained from voting so as not to imply recognition. Australia argued that Guinea Bissau did not fulfil the criteria for determining sovereign status.69

It was not until after the coup in Portugal in April 1974 and the commitment from the new government that the Portuguese territories could determine their own future that Australia implied recognition through the World Health Organisation and announced formal recognition in August 1974. The process conformed to the recognition practice among the nations of South East Asia and was unlike the procedure adopted by the United States and European nations.70 The dilemma remained that the Whitlam government was not prepared to join with the African states in immediate recognition of a liberation government, instead preferring to be guided by the formal rules of recognition as stated by the United Nations. This prioritising of the international diplomatic path over the political principle of solidarity with the African nations signalled a tension in the diplomatic outlook of the Whitlam government.

The perception of policy difficulties also arose over the Cocos Islands. As mentioned, the Whitlam government supported a United Nations resolution which called for the establishment of timetables for the self-determination and independence of a number of small territories, including the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.71 The Prime Minister defended the decision to vote in favour of the resolution as part of the changed approach of Australia at the United Nations. Whitlam declared in the Parliament that:

it is true . . . that the Australian Government . . . took a different attitude on all colonisation and colour questions from that taken by

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69 Albinski, Australian External Policy..., op. cit., p. 103.
71 UN General Assembly Resolution 2984 (XXVII) incorporated into CPD, HR, vol. 84, 17 May 1973, pp. 2262-3. The Cocos (Keeling) Islands are situated in the Indian Ocean 2400 kilometres north west of Perth with an area of 13 square kilometres and a population under 1000. The Islands were ceded to Australia by Britain in 1955. For over a hundred years, the Clunies-Ross family had enjoyed special privileges on the islands and there was an exceptional interdependence between the Malay community and the Clunies-Ross administration. Albinski, ibid., pp. 104-5.
its predecessor ... the overall intention of these resolutions was one which Australia should support as all her neighbours do and as the great majority of the countries of the world do.\textsuperscript{72}

The issue of the Cocos Islands should have remained inconsequential given the context in which Australia had developed a more constructive approach in the United Nations. However, there was some interest from the Parliamentary opposition and from critics elsewhere in the anticipated contradictions in the Whitlam government's decolonisation policy.

Whitlam's approach on the issue of the Cocos Islands confirmed the Labor government's commitment to the welfare of dependent people and their rights of self-determination. Meanwhile, the Liberal and Country Parties used the involvement of the United Nations in the future of the Cocos Islands as a source of criticism of the Whitlam government. Prime Minister Whitlam did not envisage independence as an appropriate option for the small island territory but decided to review the status of the Cocos Islands through the United Nations Committee on Decolonisation.\textsuperscript{73}

At the General Assembly session in late 1973, the Cocos Islands and the Tokelau Islands were considered separately from the other small territories.\textsuperscript{74} For the Cocos Islands and the Tokelau Islands, the General Assembly agreed to dispatch a Visiting Mission and requested the UN Committee on Decolonisation to seek the most appropriate methods of implementing the Declaration on Granting Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples of 1960.\textsuperscript{75} The consensus adopted by the committee did not specify a timetable for self-determination and independence. This provided an important distinction in relation to the 1972 UN resolution on establishing timetables for the independence of small territories.


\textsuperscript{73} See Albinski, ibid., p. 104.

\textsuperscript{74} New Zealand was responsible for the Tokelau Islands. The Cocos and Tokelau Islands were also considered with the encompassing resolution in 1972.

\textsuperscript{75} Clark, The United Nations, op. cit., p. 145. Clause 2 of the Declaration refers to the right of self-determination and Clause 5 refers to 'the transfer of all powers to the people of non-self-governing territories without any conditions or reservations ... in order to enable them to enjoy complete independence and freedom'.

In August 1974, a delegation representing the Committee on Decolonisation visited Australia and the Cocos Islands. The Australian Prime Minister indicated that the Labor government intended to honour the relevant UN resolution and fully supported the right of the people to determine the future of their islands. Whitlam also canvassed the possibility of the government of Australia remaining responsible for the Territory's international relations following self-government, similar to a system agreed between New Zealand and the Cook Islands.

The report of the Visiting Mission to the Cocos Islands highlighted the feudal relationship between the Cocos Malay community and the landowner Clunies-Ross. However, the relationships between the Australian government and the community, and with Clunies-Ross, remained unclear. The report made specific recommendations, including the need to change the practice by which Clunies-Ross was able to designate the members of the Island Council. The report of the Mission stressed that this authority should be replaced by free elections, which:

are the only means to enable the people to express freely their wishes and to advance towards self-determination in accordance with the United Nations Charter and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

The Visiting Mission also advocated changes to the relationship between Clunies-Ross and the community regarding issues of sovereignty, landownership, justice, education, and the currency system. These constituted major reforms for the organisation of the community on the Cocos Islands.

In May 1975, the Whitlam government created the position of Administrator in place of the Official Representative. Also, the Special Minister of State, Senator Douglas McClelland visited the Cocos Islands in August 1975 but was unable to persuade Clunies-Ross to initiate significant reforms. Upon return, and in line with the recommendations of the UN Mission, Senator McClelland introduced legislation which would limit the power of the Clunies-Ross family and increase the official Australian presence on the islands, providing the
community with more opportunities for consultation and social reform. However, early independence for the Cocos Islands would have been inappropriate for reasons of internal power structures, a limited economy and the wishes of the people.

In addition, the Australian government recognised that the Cocos Islands were valuable for a number of reasons. The islands were important as an international stock quarantine facility and were significant for security and surveillance purposes. Their location in the Indian Ocean situated the Cocos Islands in an area of increasing naval rivalry and international attention. The major landing strip on the Cocos Islands was regularly used by Australian, British, New Zealand and US military aircraft.

Despite the work of the United Nations and Minister McClelland, the Liberal and Country Parties maintained their criticism of the Labor government on this issue and were able to establish an inquiry in September 1974. The Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence investigated the role and involvement of Australia and the United Nations in the affairs of sovereign Australian Territories. Somewhat surprisingly, the Committee’s report was in agreement with the approach adopted by McClelland and the Labor government. The chair of the Committee highlighted an additional element to the issue.

Throughout the inquiry the Committee has paid considerable attention to the welfare of the Cocos Islanders and it is clear to us that substantial changes are required to allow the Cocos Island community adequate opportunity to develop socially, economically and politically as an entity independent or the Clunies-Ross Estate. Mr Clunies-Ross informed the Committee that, as a result of economic and governmental pressures, he had decided to sever the family’s connections with the Islands and to negotiate the transfer of his assets to a Cocos Island Community Co-operative. The

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81 ibid. In September 1975, the Minister tabled a Lands Acquisition Ordinance to enable the compulsory acquisition of land on the Cocos Islands and appointed an Interim Advisory Council until it could be replaced by an elected Council. Despite opposition from Clunies-Ross, the Interim Council met in October 1975. Also in October, the Minister gazetted ordinances giving the Administrator power to determine the conditions of workers and to take responsibility for education, the sale of food and drugs, and other matters. Clunies-Ross was also directed not to continue the use of plastic tokens as currency. Clark, The United Nations, op. cit., pp. 146-7.

82 Albinski, Australian External Policy..., op. cit., pp. 105-6. See also Willessee, answer to question, CPD, Senate, vol. 60, 1 August 1974, p. 694. For more, see Canberra Times, 14 February 1974; Sydney Morning Herald, 8 August 1974; National Times, 2 September 1974; and Australian, 4 September 1975.

83 Inquiry referred by Senator Sim, Western Australia. See CPD, Senate, vol. 62, 3 December 1974, p. 3013.
Committee believes that serious consideration should now be given to acquisition of the entire estate for this purpose. We believe that the establishment of an island co-operative would assist significantly in the creation of an integrated community with a sense of responsibility and purpose, and concur with the view that acquisition of the estate is the most practical means of giving effect to the reforms which are desired for the benefit of the Cocos Island people.84

The United Nations General Assembly noted that the Australian government had initiated particular administrative and legislative changes in the light of the Visiting Mission's report.85 The subsequent effectiveness of reforms on the Cocos Islands and the position of Clunies-Ross with regard to the community is a separate matter.

To return to the United Nations forum, in early 1975, Australia announced the candidacy of Senator Willesee for the presidency of the UN General Assembly's 30th (1975) session. Apparently, the idea arose from the Department of Foreign Affairs with enthusiastic support from Whitlam and somewhat less excitement from Willesee.86 The Liberal Party suggestions of Labor aggrandisement at the UN appeared to be baseless as members of the 'Western European and Other' group, which included Australia and whose turn it would be to provide an Assembly President, were not lobbied for support. Also, the argument that some countries such as Britain and the United States were unhappy about Australia's new approach at the UN, and thus failed to endorse the nomination of Willesee, appeared to be false.87 If successful, Australia would have been the first nation to be elected to the post twice, following Evatt's inaugural Presidency in the 1940s. Willesee's candidacy emerged from a largely disinterested 'Western European and Others' group which, as individual members, were preoccupied with other matters. However, the Australian nomination was withdrawn in mid-1975 when the Prime Minister of Luxembourg became a candidate.88

84 Senator Primmer (ALP, Victoria), chair, Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, CPD, Senate, vol. 65, 30 September 1975, p. 780. The Committee's report was presented on 30 September 1975. The Committee also included Senators Cormack (LP, Victoria), Devitt (ALP, Tasmania) [from 3 October 1974], Drury (LP, South Australia) [to 3 October 1974], Mcintosh (ALP, Western Australia), Maunsell (CP, Queensland), and Sim (LP, Western Australia).
85 Clark, The United Nations, op. cit., p. 147.
86 See Albinski, Australian External Policy..., op. cit., p. 162. See also Nation Review 27 September-3 October 1974.
87 Clark, The United Nations, op. cit., p. 129.
88 Australian, 20 February 1975.
In total, the Whitlam government clearly signalled a change in Australia's position at the UN with significant alterations in voting on decolonisation in the first days of office. More generally, Australia aligned with developing countries in UN votes rather than adhere to the voting pattern of the US and Britain. Specifically, the Whitlam government supported the self-determination of the peoples of the Cocos Islands and acted in a constructive manner within this UN relationship. Importantly, the efforts of the Whitlam government at the UN resulted in a perception that Australia was moving toward an anti-racist and anti-colonial foreign policy position. This stance within the UN General Assembly sent signals to the nations of Asia, the Pacific and Africa that Australia was now an ally.

the Commonwealth

In comparison with the United Nations, the Commonwealth of Nations was a less opportune forum for the expression of the Whitlam government foreign policy. Yet, the Labor government embraced the Commonwealth as a diverse international institution which offered formal lines of communication with many developing countries.99 Also, the structure and purpose of the Commonwealth suited the Labor Party agenda and objectives. The forum provided the opportunity for smaller powers such as Australia to be easily noticed, and possibly to exert influence beyond their international standing. For Whitlam, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings in 1973 and 1975 were the obvious points of contact with other leaders. Through the Commonwealth forum, Whitlam was able to demonstrate that the Labor government was committed to opposing discrimination and injustice, especially in southern Africa.

The Whitlam government invoked the Labor Party Platform to announce that the Commonwealth was important as an 'an active instrument for justice and peace and for political, social and economic advancement throughout our region and also in Africa and the Caribbean'.90 Based on the network of diplomatic contacts within the Commonwealth, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Willesee, made a successful goodwill tour of seven African countries in June and July 1973. This was the first time that an Australian

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99 Matthews, op. cit., p. 28. See also Millar, op. cit., p. 408.
Minister had conducted a tour of East and West Africa. This trip also reinforced the Whitlam government's anti-racist international position.91

Subsequently, Prime Minister Whitlam attended the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Ottawa in August 1973. At this meeting, Australia cultivated links with, and provided support for, the leaders from Africa and the Caribbean. Moreover, Whitlam set out to demonstrate the diversification and new regional emphasis of Australian foreign policy.92 Further, the most significant issue to emerge from the conference was Australia's overt attack on the role of multinational corporations. This fitted the Labor government's nationalist agenda for resources industries and aligned Australia with the developing countries as commodity exporters.93

Following the Ottawa conference, Whitlam explained Australia's role in the Commonwealth to the Parliament and detailed Australia's support for various Commonwealth agencies. These included the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation and the Commonwealth Foundation, the new Commonwealth Youth Program, and the proposals for a Commonwealth Development and Export Bank and an institute for the applied study of government.94 Whitlam was criticised by the Liberal and Country Parties for encouraging contacts with the leaders of developing countries at the expense of Australia's relationships with 'true and trusted friends'.95 This debate merely demonstrated the distance between the government and the opposition on foreign policy issues in 1973.


92 Goldsworthy, Australia and Africa..., op. cit., p. 64. Whitlam's official dinners during the conference did not include Britain, instead there was one dinner for the Pacific leaders, one for the Caribbean leaders and another for the African leaders.


Whitlam also participated at the CHOGM in Kingston in May 1975. The meeting was dominated by the interests of the African and Caribbean leaders. The Commonwealth resolved that violence was inevitable in Rhodesia while the minority regime remained and that sanctions were needed to place greater pressure upon both South Africa and Rhodesia. On this, Whitlam suggested that the Commonwealth Secretariat should investigate the further restriction of flights to and from South Africa.96 Whitlam also agreed to assist with financial aid to Mozambique in compensation for the costs incurred in implementing sanctions against Rhodesia.97

At the Kingston meeting, the African and Caribbean leaders focused on the need for a 'new economic order' which entailed threats of more commodity producer cartels to control the price of exports. Prime Minister Whitlam cautiously aligned Australia with these demands, both as a commodity exporter and an ally of the developing countries.98 Linked to the economic questions, Whitlam again argued that multinational corporations should be brought under the same government controls as national companies.99 This idea was incorporated into the terms of reference for an expert committee of the Commonwealth to examine methods of transferring resources and technology from industrial nations to the developing countries.100

It was clear that Whitlam provided support for the leaders of the developing countries through the Commonwealth and this placed some diplomatic distance between Australia and Britain. The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings provided brief opportunities to discuss international issues while offering a network of contacts for further consultation. Significantly, the work of the Whitlam government through the Commonwealth reinforced the change in Australian foreign policy on issues of discrimination and racism. That is, Whitlam opposed the minority governments of South Africa and Rhodesia, and supported the demands of developing countries in the Asia Pacific region through the Commonwealth.

96 Sydney Morning Herald, 8 May 1975 and Age, 8 May 1975. See also Australian, 5 & 8 May 1975; Financial Review, 2 May 1975; Age, 30 April & 2 May 1975; and Age, editorial, 8 May 1975.
97 This was the first time that the Commonwealth had resolved to assist a non-Commonwealth country. Age, editorial, 8 May 1975.
100 The expert committee was to examine a series of ideas to reform international financial institutions, increase food production, and review commodity agreements in an effort to strike a new balance between consumer and producer nations. Australian, 7 & 8 May 1975.
As an adjunct to the Whitlam government's position in the United Nations, this was important for the projection of a new image of Australia in international debates.

the question of change

During the tenure of the Labor government, political debate focused on the style of the Whitlam foreign policy and raised questions about the extent to which Australia's external relations had changed from the previous Liberal and Country Parties governments. As one might anticipate, particular commentators described the Whitlam foreign policy as a complete rejection of established relationships while others argued that Whitlam had changed only in style and not substance. On the question of change, the issues were more complicated than suggested by this dichotomy.

The point of departure for this debate was the public announcements by Prime Minister Whitlam and subsequently by Foreign Minister Willesee. Whitlam made a sharp distinction in the 1973 Roy Milne Memorial Lecture when outlining the preoccupations of the Liberal and Country Parties governments' foreign policy. In the dominant environment of the conflict in Vietnam, Whitlam explained, foreign policy was debated within the framework of the alliance with the United States and the attempt to contain China. Thus, Whitlam placed a high priority on the need for change:

Clearly, the foreign policy debate and foreign policy decisions can never again be so limited, so restricted, so distorted. In that liberation, I find the chief distinction of my Government's foreign policies - and the greatest challenges and opportunities for the future.101

Willesee also chided the previous era of foreign policy when 'unreasoning fear' dictated Australia's perception of international events.102 At that time, Willesee claimed, Australia sought not to appear to differ with allies, attempted to deny the existence of the People's Republic of China and retained forces in a 'remote civil war in Vietnam'.103 Willesee derived some satisfaction that this era had passed and that debate on the future course of foreign policy could operate in a 'more rational way, less oriented to narrow political advantage'.104 Willesee

101 Whitlam, Roy Milne Lecture, op. cit., p. 3.
102 Willesee, op. cit., p. 3.
103 ibid.
104 ibid., pp. 2-3.
believed that Australian foreign policy had gone through a period of important and substantial change since the December 1972 federal election.

The Prime Minister also advocated the notion of change by illustrating the increased efforts with nations of the South East Asia region, the United Nations, the Commonwealth, and with China, and the attention and effort committed to Australia's previously neglected relations with New Zealand and the South Pacific, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Latin America. Whitlam engaged some government critics by emphasising the association between gesture and substance as the hallmark of Australia's new foreign policy. The process of deliberately strengthening, updating and developing political connections was a signal for the new aspect of foreign policy.

A key statement of qualification to this perceived change in foreign policy style was the Prime Minister's explanation of structural constraint, and therefore policy restraint:

On 2 December the nation changed its government, but did not and could not by that act change the essential foundations of its foreign policy. Australia's national interests did not change. Australia's international obligations did not change. Australia's alliances and friendships did not change. Nonetheless, the change is real and deep because what has altered is the perception and interpretation of those interests, obligations and friendships by the elected government.

Whitlam seemed to have an understanding of these 'essential foundations' and 'national interests' but did not explain the content of these concepts. Presumably, Australia's 'international obligations' involved the alliance with the United States, the position in the United Nations and the Commonwealth, and role in the Asia Pacific region. Whitlam's emphasis of 'national interests' was held out as indicative that change in foreign policy would be minimal. Alternatively, this type of statement by Whitlam was devalued by others arguing that change would be significant and destructive.

As early as 1973, Camilleri argued that the substance of Australian foreign policy had not changed under the Whitlam Labor government. The updating of policy on China and the critical relationship with the United States could be

seen as relatively uncomplicated and expected reactions to the excessively conservative foreign policies of the previous Liberal and Country Parties governments. Camilleri also highlighted the continuity of acquiescence to the United States on the military facilities in Australia. This argument dampened expectations of change from the Labor government. The significant qualification in this analysis was an acknowledgment of the changes on issues of racism and the realignment of Australia's position at the United Nations. Camilleri expressed the radical yet realistic view that fundamental change would be required in the domestic economy and society of Australia before substantial change could be expected in foreign policy.

Building on the argument of Camilleri, Bull's view of the Whitlam government became a dominant position among academic commentators. Bull focused on the new perception of Australia's role in the world and distinguished between the means through which policy was pursued and the interests which formed the foreign policy. Further, Bull argued that change was clear regarding the means and modalities of Australian foreign policy but not obvious in the Whitlam government's perception of basic interests and obligations.

Essentially, Bull argued that the Whitlam government made no substantial change to Australian foreign policy. This position conceded that necessary adjustments had been made in an altered international environment with reference to the critical views of Catley and McFarlane. On the United States, Bull emphasised the compliance of the Labor government on the US installations while downplaying the protests over the US bombing of Cambodia. Also, on China, this explanation drew upon the changing international environment and the acceptance of Australia's new policy toward

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108 Camilleri, A New Australian Foreign Policy?, op. cit., pp. 11-12. See also Camilleri, In Search of a Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 65.
109 Camilleri, In Search of a Foreign Policy, ibid., pp. 66-7.
112 Bull, ibid., pp. 31-2, stated that:

"if one focuses upon ends rather than means it is difficult to find fault with the thesis of two Marxist critics of the Labor government - Bruce McFarlane and Robert Catley - that there has been no essential change... Australia's role in the world under the rule of the 'technocratic Laborites' and 'capitalist renovators' has been to assist in the implementation of President Nixon's 'Pacific Rim Strategy' by serving as a springboard of neo-imperialism in South-East Asia.

See also Robert Catley and Bruce McFarlane, From Tweedledum to Tweedledee: The New Labor Government in Australia - A Critique of its Social Model, Australia and New Zealand Book Company, Sydney, 1974."
China by the Liberal and Country Parties in the Parliament. Further, Bull sustained this argument by devaluing the publicly proclaimed changes in Australian foreign policy.

On Australia's relations with developing countries, both Bull and Camilleri conceded that Whitlam had made a significant change in policy. It was claimed that this aspect of Whitlam's foreign policy, more than other elements, expressed the Labor Party's distinctive ideology and divided the Labor government from the Liberal and Country Parties. Bull explained that:

Our geographical circumstances give us a special stake in the development of a global order that can accommodate the demands of the Third World for justice and change. Mr Whitlam's attempts to remove 'the racist taint' and to demonstrate support for Third World aspirations in the U.N. are an essential part of the working out of this special relationship.

Moreover, the determination with which Whitlam condemned racism, particularly as manifested in southern Africa, could be seen as a significant and independent shift. However, Bull and Camilleri questioned the nature of this new relationship by stating that the rhetorical commitments of the Whitlam government in criticising Rhodesia and South Africa did not involve an economic contribution. Indeed, as concluded by Goldsworthy:

An anti-colonialist and anti-racist stance by the new Australian government is meaningless unless attitudes towards Africa are rapidly and firmly enunciated and acted upon.

Nevertheless, in critique of misplaced expectations, MacCallum asked in June 1973 whether Camilleri, for example, proposed that Whitlam should 'sever diplomatic relations with South Africa and Rhodesia, cut off all trade, and start a war of liberation'? 

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113 Bull, op. cit., p. 32.
114 ibid., pp. 32-3.
115 Bull, Age, 30 July 1973. See also Goldsworthy, Australia and Africa..., op. cit., p. 60.
116 Bull, The Whitlam Government's Perception..., op. cit., pp. 32-3 and Camilleri, A New Australian Foreign Policy?, op. cit., p. 12. Subsequent to this debate, additional funds were distributed to Africa and elements of trade were altered to bolster the diplomatic manoeuvres. See also Richard Higgott, Australia and Africa 1970-80: A Decade of Change and Growth, Africa Contemporary Record, vol. 14, 1981, p. 221.
117 Goldsworthy, Australia and Africa..., op. cit., p. 60, added that this connection of ideas was implicit in Whitlam's statement on Senator Willesee's tour of Africa, in Australian Foreign Affairs Record, May 1973, pp. 365-6.
The alternative argument that the change in foreign policy under Whitlam was significant and substantial linked several distinct interpretations. Barclay announced that:

Australian foreign policy since 1972 had undergone an alteration in style and direction probably unprecedented in the experience of any sovereign state which had not been subjected to a domestic political revolution.¹¹⁹

This understanding reflected an enthusiasm for the changes implemented by the Whitlam government.

Adopting a similar line on the extent of change but from the conservative side of politics, B.A. Santamaria claimed that 'we [Australia] have not even become neutral. We have simply changed sides'.¹²⁰ This crude analysis was dismissed in academic debates of the time but it was a position espoused by many reactionary commentators wishing to inflame the dangers of allowing the Labor Party to govern.

Owen Harries offered a more sophisticated conservative critique of the Whitlam foreign policy which attempted to be balanced in criticism while concluding in ruinous tones. Harries explained that the Whitlam foreign policy may be seen as an 'eccentric interlude' which served a 'useful function in breaking up the rigidities' established during the previous Liberal and Country Parties governments.¹²¹ This uncharacteristically considered view emerged from the political environment when the Labor government was under siege from all sectors in late 1975 and the prospects of political survival were rapidly diminishing.

A somewhat ignored, yet useful, analysis by Murphy also claimed that significant changes were undertaken by the Whitlam government.¹²² This argument for change was close to the criticisms of Bull and Camilleri in outlining Whitlam's ability to alter the perception of Australia in the region and promote the image of Australia as an independent nation. Murphy stated that Australian foreign policy did change substantially through a transformation of Australian perceptions about international relations and external understandings about Australia.

¹²⁰ B.A. Santamaria, Point of View, in News Weekly, 2 May 1973, p. 16 and television broadcast. Thanks to Gillian Evans for locating this reference.
¹²¹ Owen Harries, Australia's Foreign Policy under Whitlam, Orbis, Fall 1975, p. 1100.
The primary issue of debate remained whether the foreign policy of the Whitlam government was limited to image and style, and thereby lacked substance. This debate centred on the perceived discrepancies between the rhetorical structuring of image by the Whitlam government and the substantive changes in foreign policy. As Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Whitlam reiterated the Labor Party vision to create a new style for Australian foreign policy which would project an image of independence:

The change of Government provides a new opportunity for us to reassess the whole range of Australian foreign policies and attitudes. I shall be reassessing these policies with the general intention of developing more constructive, flexible and progressive approaches to a number of issues. Our thinking is towards a more independent Australian stance in international affairs and towards an Australia which will be less militarily oriented and not open to suggestions of racism; an Australia which will enjoy a growing standing as a distinctive, tolerant, co-operative and well regarded nation not only in the Asian and Pacific region but in the world at large.123

This statement could be understood in terms of a more sophisticated relationship with the United States, including a termination of the dependent military and economic position of Australia within the alliance. However, the actions of Prime Minister Whitlam were perceived by some as establishing a closer identification with US diplomacy.124 As part of the same foreign policy agenda, Whitlam was attempting to project a new image for Australia in the Asia Pacific region, in international forums, and with particular developing nations. The statements on independence were not divorced from the continuing link with the US, and this understanding of Australian foreign policy was not separate from the task of improving relations with developing countries through the United Nations and the Commonwealth.

The initial changes in foreign policy could also be seen as an incoherent, even reactionary set of policy modifications. However, an accusation of a fragmentary approach to foreign policy by Whitlam implies a lack of clear objectives, which was not the case. Prime Minister Whitlam operated with a comprehensive policy statement which was based on a detailed Labor Party Platform. In terms of a reactionary approach, immediate alterations were

122 D.J. Murphy, New Nationalism or New Internationalism..., op. cit., p. 17.
124 Camilleri, In Search of a Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 69. Students of conspiracy theories may analyse this Labor tactic as an attempt to reassure the United States military establishment for the purposes of Whitlam’s desire to remain in power. These advocates claim vindication in the dismissal of the Whitlam government by extraordinary political means.
required in specific areas in response to the policies of the Liberal and Country Parties governments. The Whitlam agenda on foreign policy was coherent but the implementation of changes was impacted upon by more practical considerations. One constraint may have been the frenzy of government and, thereby, the desire to produce a coherent foreign policy may have been subsumed by the volume of work.

The problem of unfulfilled image was resolved in part with the appointment of Senator Willesee to the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs in November 1973. The watchful Senator Willesee continued to advocate the foreign policy principles as documented in the Labor Party Platform and policy speech. However, changes under Willesee were not highlighted to the same extent as the initial reforms implemented by Whitlam. The image of the Labor foreign policy was established early in the administration of policy and this understanding of the direction of government remained during Willesee's term as Foreign Minister.

At a different level, the Labor government attempted to claim that foreign policy was operating in an atmosphere of bipartisanship. Senator Willesee flaunted the reasonableness of the Labor position in a gesture of incorporation of the Liberal Party in opposition. However, Andrew Peacock as spokesperson on foreign affairs was anxious to differentiate the Liberal and Country Parties from the Whitlam government position. Peacock's foreign policy statement of April 1974 rejected the Labor vision of a flexible international role for Australia in the era of détente, the assumption of regional leadership, and the development of alliances with developing countries as resource producers. The Liberal Party endorsed the evolution of elements of foreign policy, particularly the recognition of China, North Vietnam, and East Germany. However, within a largely consensual debate, Peacock highlighted a considerable difference of emphasis. Specifically, it was claimed that Labor's relations with the United States included a hostile component which reflected disunity within the Whitlam government. Also, new relationships with China and North Vietnam suffered from unacceptable compromises in political

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128 Andrew Peacock, Opposition Foreign Policy: Alternatives or Bipartisanship, in Beddie, op. cit., pp. 174-5. W. MacMahon Ball, op. cit, p. 4, supported this analysis.
principles. The Liberal Party was critical of the inconsistent manner in which the 'even-handed' policy was implemented regarding nuclear testing and the Middle East. Peacock concluded that the continuity in some areas of foreign policy should not diminish the 'essential incompatibility between the Government's and the Opposition's approach to foreign policy'.

In conclusion, the question of change was answered in many different ways which tended to relate closely with the hostile political debate during the Whitlam government. Certainly, Whitlam and Willsee advocated the need for change and indeed claimed that the Labor government had shifted Australian foreign policy in both substance and style. Some commentators suggested that this position was an exaggeration in terms of the extent of change while others warned of the dire consequences of such radical change. Most analyses conceded that the improvement in relations with developing countries, especially in the Asia Pacific region, and the recognition of the demands of developing countries, especially on southern Africa, was an important change in Australian foreign policy.

There are four issues to be highlighted in concluding the question of change. First, expectations of reform reached a high point with the election of the Whitlam Labor government: The range of anticipated alterations to Australia's foreign policy could not be completed and indeed, with the expectations of an independent Australia, would not be initiated by the Whitlam government in its political context of parliamentary and bureaucratic constraints. On this, Camilleri conceded that an independent path would take political courage, clarity of objectives and a diplomatic approach to the political education of the Australian citizenry. Thus, some expectations for change in Australian foreign policy were unfulfilled.

Second, the international political environment offered the Whitlam government an opportunity to transform Australia's foreign relations. The diplomatic strategies employed by the United States with regard to China and the Soviet Union provided the context for an image of change in foreign policy.

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130 Camilleri, In Search of a Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 79.
As stated by Bell, the Whitlam approach to international politics 'owed a good deal to atmospherics'.¹³¹ Thereby, Whitlam was able to implement change in Australian foreign policy due, in part, to the altered global strategic environment.

Third, the interpretation of political history without sufficient distance tended to distort analysis of policy decisions. In explanation, conservative critiques of the Whitlam foreign policy, which focused upon the politicising of Australia's international position, ignored the previous policies which demonstrated a greater extent of overt political opportunism and political narrowness in decision-making. The hostility displayed toward Whitlam on domestic political issues precluded an acknowledgment that the Labor government had transformed debate on foreign policy away from ideological contests and toward informed discussion.

Fourth, without the benefit of hindsight and in the context of world politics in the early 1970s, it appeared inconsistent for the new Australian government to affirm the importance of the alliance with the United States while offering robust criticism of US policy in Vietnam.¹³² However, this position was consistent with the Labor Party Platform and fitted Whitlam's longstanding approach to foreign policy.

For its time, the Whitlam government introduced significant change to Australia's position in international debates. Where expectations for further change in foreign policy were unrealistic, these expectations were not fulfilled. Notwithstanding the domestic debate on the extent of change, the Labor government was able to refocus the perception of Australia in international forums and within international relations.

Conclusion

The general foreign policy issues co-ordinated by the Whitlam Labor government offer an illustrative context for analysis of policies relating to developing countries and in particular African nations. The Whitlam foreign policy explicitly rejected the fears of the previous Liberal and Country Parties governments and attempted to forge a new approach to Australia's foreign relations. There was swift change in specific elements of foreign policy

¹³¹ Bell, op. cit., p. 117.
¹³² See Harries, Australia's Foreign Policy under Whitlam, op. cit., pp. 1090-1.
immediately upon election of the Labor government in December 1972. This initial set of actions set the tone for the Whitlam foreign policy.

The Whitlam government formulated a reliant while critical relationship with the United States. This balance was occasionally unsettled by the continuing conflict in Vietnam and Australia's role in global security arrangements. In total, Australia's relations with the United States were founded in an overt commitment to the alliance with sporadic attempts to reform this historic bond. Moreover, the Indian Ocean region proved illustrative of tensions within the Whitlam government's foreign policy. In the context of the proposal for a zone of peace and the plans for Diego Garcia, the Whitlam government appeared to manage the potential conflicts in policy with considerable skill.

At the United Nations, Prime Minister Whitlam sent a clear signal that Australia would be adopting a new voting pattern and a different international position. Australia aligned with the developing countries in the UN to support decolonisation issues. Also, within the Commonwealth, the Whitlam government reinforced Australia's commitment to recognising the interests of developing countries. In essence, Whitlam made many significant changes to Australian foreign policy while maintaining the fundamental tenets of Australia's international relationships.

The general discussion on Whitlam's initiatives in foreign policy provide a background for the analysis of Australia's relations with developing countries. Again, the wider context of foreign policy is vital for the analysis of distinct parts of international relations and the understanding of Australia's policy formulation on specific questions.
The Whitlam government made significant changes to Australia's foreign policy in order to forge more constructive relationships with developing countries. This approach was based on the anti-colonial and anti-racist principles embodied in the Labor Party Platform. In this chapter, I analyse Whitlam's approach on the Asia Pacific region, in particular the proposal for an Asia Pacific forum. I examine Australia's recognition of China, the diplomatic struggles on Cambodia, and the debate on Vietnam. It is also important to discuss the Whitlam government's response to the situation in East Timor through 1975 and the changes to Australian aid administration and aid policy, especially in reference to Papua New Guinea. In total, I argue that Whitlam aligned Australia with the interests of the developing countries and that this shift was central to the Whitlam government's position on Africa.

Immediately upon assuming government, Whitlam made several changes to domestic and foreign policy which moved Australia closer to the interests of developing countries. Symbolically, Whitlam instructed the Australian delegation at the United Nations to change Australia's vote on key resolutions to oppose the minority regime in Rhodesia. With immediate
impact, Whitlam relocated Australia in the General Assembly to align with the nations committed to ending colonialism and racial discrimination. Whitlam reaffirmed the Labor Party intention to establish a more independent foreign policy for Australia, withdrew Australian troops from Vietnam, moved toward recognising China, prioritised the Asia Pacific region for Australian foreign policy and promised to end Australia's colonial role in Papua New Guinea. In addition, the Labor Party policy on immigration was implemented which meant non-European New Zealand immigrants would be admitted to Australia without restriction and Aboriginal peoples would no longer be required to obtain a permit to leave Australia. While these changes seemed sensible, even perfunctory in updating Australia's position, the speed and commitment to change on these issues was vital in constructing a different approach for Australia with developing countries. Indeed, as Higgott commented, Whitlam's strength was to 'realise the amount of goodwill to be gained from supporting the developing nations in their battle against racial discrimination and colonialism'. For Whitlam, the most important aspect of Australian foreign policy was the relationship with the Asia Pacific region.

Asia Pacific region

Whitlam described Australia as outside of South East Asia. This statement indicated an understanding that Australia has a different colonial history to the neighbouring countries. Whitlam seemed to defer to the sensitivities of the Asia Pacific region by not regarding Australia as a natural member of Asia and by not automatically situating Australia within South East Asia. Nevertheless, Prime Minister Whitlam promoted the idea of an Asia Pacific forum for greater cooperation in the region.

In terms of regional structures, the Whitlam government was open about downgrading the importance of the South East Asia Treaty Organisation which was based on anti-communist defence objectives. The cultural and economic Asian and Pacific Council was also characteristically anti-

communist with membership including South Korea, South Vietnam and Taiwan. Neither forums fitted Whitlam's vision for regional cooperation.4

In preference, the Whitlam government supported the Association of South East Asian Nations. Given that this organisation included Indonesia, ASEAN was an important avenue for the Whitlam government in developing closer relations with the region in general.5 ASEAN demonstrated the possibilities for regional co-operation and for close economic links among neighbours. Moreover, Whitlam understood that ASEAN provided the potential for a larger regional association.

From the early days of government, Whitlam advocated the establishment of a regional Asia Pacific forum. The Prime Minister promoted this idea of a wide association of states within 'an organisation. genuinely representative of the region, without ideological overtones'.6 Whitlam was careful to indicate that an Asia Pacific grouping would not imply absorbing or abandoning ASEAN.7 Further, Whitlam used the analogy of the Commo: Wealth as a relatively unstructured forum 'where it is possible for heads of government regularly to exchange views which are of mutual interest'.8

The Whitlam government offered a number of ideas for the construction of an Asia Pacific regional forum. It was suggested that the membership could include the ASEAN countries, other South East Asian countries such as Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Burma, with China and Japan, and Australia and New Zealand. The group would not include the Soviet Union or the United States, while the position of countries in South Asia remained

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5 The members of ASEAN were Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines. On the Australia-Indonesia-ASEAN connection, see J.A.C. Mackie, *Australia's Relations with Indonesia: Principles and Policies I*, *Australian Outlook*, vol. 28, April 1974, pp. 11-13. On ASEAN, see *Canberra Times*, 19 April 1974, and *Age*, 10 & 16 October 1975.
7 Australia was vigorous in supporting ASEAN within the debate on a wider regional association. For example, in 1974, Australia was the first nation to support collective all-ASEAN economic development projects in addition to continuing economic and technical assistance to ASEAN's members on a bilateral basis or through international aid agencies. Later in 1974, Canberra was the site of the first ASEAN Secretaries-General Conference held outside the ASEAN capitals. Albinski, op. cit., p. 95.
8 Whitlam quoted in Albinski, ibid., p. 92.
unclear. Importantly, Whitlam argued that the construction of the forum should proceed slowly and that the impetus needed to emerge from the countries of Asia rather than from Australia.9

Prime Minister Whitlam claimed that a regional community could break down long-standing preoccupations with ideological conflicts.10 This fitted with the Labor Party's approach on international issues and emerged from the Labor Party's philosophical outlook as explained in the Platform. The investment of time and energy by Whitlam on the notion of an Asia Pacific forum demonstrated Australian initiative in building a more independent foreign policy and attempting to advance Australian credibility and influence in the region. Potentially, the Asia Pacific forum might have become a springboard for declaring a zone of peace and for facilitating greater economic co-operation in the region.11

Before Whitlam had the opportunity to promote the grouping in the region, ASEAN Ministers rejected the idea.12 The members of ASEAN were resistant to Australian initiation of an idea for cooperation in the Asia Pacific region, suspecting that Australia's intentions were to promote relations with Japan and China rather than to emphasise the region as a whole. Not surprisingly, China was officially supportive of the Whitlam idea which could extend the influence of China into South East Asia. Japan was more circumspect on a regional grouping which could delay the development of bilateral relations with China. New Zealand was supportive of the forum while trying to claim the idea for themselves.13

The Whitlam government continued to promote the idea of an Asia Pacific forum in a reassuring manner. Prime Minister Whitlam confirmed that the forum would not supersede ASEAN and that Australia would not act

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for China in South East Asia.\textsuperscript{14} After the initial reaction, ASEAN became more favourable to the idea but remained guarded. Also, as the most powerful state within ASEAN, Indonesia was aware that a larger forum implied less influence in the region.\textsuperscript{15}

Camilleri was critical of the Whitlam government for advancing the idea of a regional organisation without ideological influence while Australia remained in military alliance with the United States.\textsuperscript{16} This was a valid criticism because the Whitlam government had not moved to change the basis of the relationship with the United States. However, the security alliance with the United States may have provided a reason for the members of ASEAN to support the regional grouping, with no objection from Japan on this issue, and an emerging relationship between China and the United States.

In sum, the idea of an Asia Pacific grouping was discussed in the region but the shape of the forum was not decided. The Whitlam government relied upon the members of ASEAN to provide the initiative for the idea and to continue to promote the value of the forum. In the end, Whitlam’s proposition for an Asia Pacific forum lapsed for want of sufficient support in the region at the time.

China

Whitlam had displayed a longstanding interest in China and recognised the importance of China in the Asia Pacific region. The Labor Party’s support for China had been assisted by the United States’ reproachment with China in 1971-72. The Whitlam government’s relations with China changed Australian foreign policy and this new position had implications for Australia’s relations with ASEAN.

Within days of the 1972 election, Whitlam directed the Department of Foreign Affairs to begin negotiations for diplomatic recognition of the People’s Republic of China through the Australian and Chinese

\begin{footnotes}
\item[14] See Whitlam, answer to question, CPD, HR, vol. 96, 2 September 1975, p. 897. See also Werner Draguhn, ASEAN: Relations with the People’s Republic of China, Intereconomics, no. 6, June 1974.
\end{footnotes}
Ambassadors in Paris. Mutual recognition with China was achieved with remarkable speed by 22 December 1972. Whitlam announced that:

The Australian Government recognises the Government of the People’s Republic of China as the sole legal Government of China, acknowledges the position of the Chinese Government that Taiwan is a province of the People’s Republic of China, and has decided to remove its official representation from Taiwan before 25th January 1973.17

This was stronger than the Canadian formula of 1970 which 'took note' of China's position on Taiwan but not as strong as that adopted for some other states which acknowledged Taiwan to be 'an inalienable part of the territory of the People's Republic of China'.18 This action was not unexpected given the clear policy statements of the Australian Labor Party prior to the December 1972 election. Also, recognition of China was a clear rejection of the racist basis of the Liberal and Country Parties' foreign policy.19 As Albinski explained, the normalisation of relations with China showed that the 'nasty past lay behind, a good and sensible future ahead. At last, things had been set right.'20

It was clear that the early recognition of the People’s Republic of China by the Whitlam government helped to build the emerging trading relationship with Australia. Minister Cairns led an official trade mission to China in May 1973 which translated into the signing of the Australia-China Trade Agreement in July 1973 on long-term commodity arrangements. This was the first Chinese contract with Australian iron ore suppliers.21

Australian relations with China were clarified at the time of Whitlam's official visit in October-November 1973. There were substantial points of agreement on a diverse range of issues, with some predictable differences, notably on Cambodia. A central outcome of the visit was a further trade

17 Whitlam, The Whitlam Government..., op. cit., p. 58. Further, Whitlam announced the appointment of Dr. Stephen Fitzgerald, a scholar in Chinese and a former External Affairs officer, who, as an academic, had accompanied Whitlam to China in 1971, as Australia's first Ambassador to the People's Republic of China.
19 Whitlam, The Whitlam Government..., op. cit., p. 26. Whitlam explained that 'the foundation of the Liberal policies was fear of foreigners; its focus was fear of communism; and, because these fears in turn focused so sharply on China and the Chinese version of communism, they were rooted in racism'.
20 Albinski, op. cit., p. 151.
agreement on new long-term arrangements for the sale of Australian sugar and wheat to China.\textsuperscript{22} Also, there was productive discussion on immigration to Australia, cultural and scientific exchanges, and a role for Australian diplomacy between ASEAN countries and China. Symbolically, Whitlam was able to speak at length with Zhou Enlai, Deng Xiaoping joined these discussions, and it was arranged for Whitlam to meet with Mao Zedong.\textsuperscript{23}

Further, China appeared to value the diplomatic connections with Australia which offered greater contact with the United States and other nations. This was reflected in the seniority of China’s Ambassador to Australia, Wang Kuo Ch’uan who matched the rank of the US Ambassador Marshall Green.\textsuperscript{24} In addition, Whitlam was critical of the anti-China rationale of the SEATO military alliance and had withdrawn Australia from naval exercises scheduled for the time of the visit to China.\textsuperscript{25}

On a separate issue, the Labor government was silent on China’s nuclear testing agenda while bringing France before the International Court of Justice over nuclear tests in the Pacific Ocean. As China did not acknowledge the jurisdiction of the ICJ, Australia did not join China to the action. This technical distinction fuelled the impression that the Whitlam government was less critical of China. Certainly, China was seen to be more

\textsuperscript{22} Camilleri, In Search of a Foreign Policy, op. cit., pp. 68-9 argued that the three year trade agreement was in keeping with Australian vested economic interests as interpreted and promoted by previous Liberal-Country Parties governments for more than a decade. Further, David Goldsworthy, Foreign Policy Review, Australian Quarterly, vol. 46, 1, March 1974, p. 110, explained that the trade deals favoured China as Australia had offered prices for the wheat and sugar below current market levels. Goldsworthy also noted that there were reports that the Australian wheat and sugar marketing authorities had not been consulted on these deals, thought them unnecessary in a period of high demand, and felt that the cost of the concessional terms should be borne by the foreign aid program.

\textsuperscript{23} Whitlam, The Whitlam Government..., op. cit., pp. 59-60, recalled the visit with Mao:

> In discussing our political philosophies I ventured the opinion that his party advocated revolution and mine evolution. He said 'Ah, Darwinism!'. I agreed and he asked, 'Is Port Darwin named after Darwin?' I thought so. He then asked 'Did Darwin visit Australia?' I thought not. He could not have planned nor I expected such an exchange. On return home I checked that Charles Darwin had visited Sydney and gone as far inland as Bathurst in 1836 in the course of his voyage around the world in HMS Beagle and that Darwin was named by the captain of the Beagle on its visit there in 1839. I sent a self-criticism to Mao.

\textsuperscript{24} Also, the Chinese Ambassador to Australia technically outranked China’s Ambassador to Japan. Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 111.

\textsuperscript{25} ibid. See also Whitlam, The Whitlam Government..., op. cit., pp. 56 & 157.
important within Australian foreign policy than France, which was not disputed by Whitlam.26

In sum, Whitlam needed to balance Australia's position on China with policies toward ASEAN. This was a difficult task given the animosity among countries in the Asia Pacific region. It could have been predicted that Australia's stance would cause difficulties on specific issues, notably Cambodia.

Cambodia

The Whitlam government's position on the recognition of Cambodia was part of the complex diplomatic web of relations between the United States, China, ASEAN, and the competing forces in Cambodia. Whitlam was determined to shift Australia's support away from the Lon Nol government in Cambodia and toward the alternative leader, Sihanouk, but this would have been contrary to the United States' position. Australia was challenged again when this issue was discussed at the United Nations. By 1975, it appeared that the diplomatic debates had achieved little as Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge were about to take control in Cambodia.

After meeting with Prince Norodom Sihanouk in 1965 and again in 1968, Whitlam constructed Labor Party policy on the recognition of Cambodia:

I was outraged at the American support for the usurpation by Lon Nol in March 1970 and the invasion by the forces of South Viet Nam the following month. I resolved that when we came to government we would distance ourselves from Lon Nol.27

Nevertheless, the Whitlam government maintained Australia's recognition of the Lon Nol government in Cambodia. Whitlam decided to wait until the political situation in Cambodia became more clear.28 Certainly, there was a difficulty in continuing to recognise the 'impotent and farcical regime of Marshal Lon Nol' which retained control of less than

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26 Albinski, op. cit., pp. 144-7 and Whitlam, The Whitlam Government..., op. cit., pp. 611-13. In political terms, the distinction was made that France tested the nuclear devices in the Pacific Ocean whereas China at least used their own territory for the tests.
27 Whitlam, ibid., pp. 49-50. Whitlam's views on Cambodia hardened when, as a guest of Sihanouk, Whitlam ascertained that 'the Australian Secret Intelligence Service was acting as a surrogate for the US Central Intelligence Agency'.
28 Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 110.
ten per cent of Cambodian territory in spite of enormous US support.\textsuperscript{29} It appeared that Whitlam did not want to antagonise the United States on this particular diplomatic issue. Notwithstanding this position, Australia withdrew from an international aid program for Cambodia on the grounds that the real purpose of this scheme was to bolster the Lon Nol government.\textsuperscript{30}

Simultaneously, Australia was faced with the complex problem of the representation of Cambodia at the UN General Assembly. In 1973 and 1974, member states supporting Prince Norodom Sihanouk and the Royal Government of the National Union of Cambodia challenged the credentials of the delegation of the Government of President Lon Nol. To the surprise and perhaps annoyance of countries in South East Asia which supported the Lon Nol regime, Australia abstained on a vote to defer the item.\textsuperscript{31} Whitlam was caught between the desire to support Sihanouk and the pressure from the US and ASEAN to maintain support for the Lon Nol government.

However, at the UN in 1974, Australia supported a successful ASEAN resolution which avoided the issue of representation and called for conciliation between the two parties in Cambodia. Australia's vote effectively opposed efforts to displace the Lon Nol regime and may have reflected some successful lobbying by Indonesia and Japan.\textsuperscript{32} Prior to this, the Lon Nol government had fallen and Prince Sihanouk had been reinstated, albeit temporarily, as Head of State.\textsuperscript{33}

In a reflection on the complex diplomatic negotiations, Whitlam explained that 'Lon Nol had fled and Kissinger's clever policy on Cambodia was about to end in genocide under Pol Pot'.\textsuperscript{34} The position of Whitlam in preferring to support Sihanouk appeared to be vindicated against the failure of the United States policy of support for Lon Nol in Cambodia. However, Australia had not supported Sihanouk at the UN and Whitlam was

\textsuperscript{29} Camilleri, In Search of a Foreign policy, op. cit., p. 68.
\textsuperscript{30} Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 110. Previously, in the 1973 budget, the Whitlam government discontinued Australia's uninviting of Cambodia's currency while continuing to insure the currency of Laos. See Whitlam, The Whitlam Government..., op. cit., p. 50 and Albinski, op. cit., pp. 130 & 181.
\textsuperscript{32} Albinski, op. cit., p. 131. The argument was that the abandonment of the Lon Nol government would assist the cause of insurgent movements in the region and delay a negotiated settlement in Cambodia. See also Whitlam, CPD, HR, 2 August 1974, pp. 1107-8.
\textsuperscript{33} Clark, The United Nations, op. cit., p. 134.
\textsuperscript{34} Whitlam, The Whitlam Government..., op. cit., p. 50.
criticised for the distance between rhetoric and action on Cambodia. In particular, the contrast could be drawn between the Labor government's immediate recognition of China and the reluctance to openly recognise the Sihanouk forces in Cambodia.

Vietnam

Another key issue for the Whitlam government was the policy on South Vietnam, and thereby on North Vietnam. There was considerable debate on issues of recognition and aid to both countries. The Whitlam government struggled with this foreign policy issue and, in the end, changed Australia's position.

Immediately upon gaining office, Whitlam withdrew the remaining Australian troops and criticised the actions of the United States in Vietnam. While Australia recognised the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in North Vietnam and the Government of the Republic of Vietnam in South Vietnam, there was a debate on whether Australia should also formally recognise the Provisional Revolutionary Government in South Vietnam. As an early indication in this debate, Whitlam was firm in opposing the PRG at the 1973 Labor Party federal conference and thus the move toward recognition was initially defeated.

Within the government, Cairns claimed that the maintenance of diplomatic arrangements with the Thieu government in South Vietnam meant the preservation of a discredited regime and postponed a political settlement which would include the Provisional Revolutionary Government. It was argued by Cairns and similar critics that the Paris Agreements had recognised the government in South Vietnam and had also recognised the PRG as an established administrative and political force in the region. Thus, as a start to reconstructing relations, Prime Minister Whitlam was pressured from within the Labor government to extend diplomatic recognition to the Provisional Revolutionary Government in South Vietnam.

35 See ibid., pp. 21 & 42-3.
36 See Albinski, op. cit., p. 127.
37 ibid., pp. 127-8. See Whitlam, CPD, HP, vol. 89, 2 August 1974, p. 1114. It was argued that Australia should support the participation of the PRG at an International Committee of the Red Cross Weaponry Conference, and thereby recognise the standing of the PRG as the
Whitlam rejected these criticisms and, in response, argued that the Paris Agreements did not imply that the PRG was entitled to diplomatic recognition. Minister Willesee explained that the Paris Agreements included an illustrative statement whereby 'signature of the Act did not constitute recognition of any party in any case in which it had not previously been accorded'. Thus Australia would not recognise the Provisional Revolutionary Government in South Vietnam but would maintain informal contacts with the PRG. While the Whitlam government was critical of the Thieu regime, Willesee argued that maintenance of relations with the South Vietnam government could influence the movement toward free elections and a political settlement in South Vietnam.

To complicate this issue, members of ASEAN preferred that Australia did not change diplomatic relations with South Vietnam. The dilemma for Whitlam was that to recognise the PRG would feed into the criticisms of the Liberal and Country Parties that the Labor government was succumbing to radical pressures, but to maintain policy would incur further pressure from the proponents of PRG recognition such as Cairns. Indeed, the maintenance of policy threatened to invoke a formal Labor Party demand for recognition of the PRG which could have involved an electorally damaging factional debate on the issue. By late 1974, about half of the Labor Party caucus, including several Ministers, supported the argument for PRG recognition. The Whitlam government did not appear to be inflexible on the issue and proceeded to loosen the policy without launching into recognition.

At the ALP federal conference in February 1975, the Labor Party's Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee, which Whitlam chaired, recommended that resolutions proposing PRG recognition be discharged. Nevertheless, a motion proposed by Cairns on the floor of the conference that favoured recognition was passed by a single vote. Not to be dissuaded, the opponents of recognition were able to pass amendments to the Cairns motion and, with some procedural slight of hand by presiding chair Hawke, the original alternative government of South Vietnam. See also Willesee, CPD, Senate, vol. 61, 16 August 1974, p. 1066.

38 This was an important provision, required by North Vietnam, the PRG, USSR and China, as these parties did not recognise the South Vietnam regime, and by the US, France, Britain and Canada, which did not recognise the PRG. Willesee, CPD, Senate, vol. 61, 16 August 1974, p. 1066.

39 Willesee, CPD, Senate, vol. 61, 16 August 1974, p. 1066.

motion was negated. This was not an exemplary display of how the Labor government formulated policy on complex issues.

Apart from the issue of recognition, Australian relations with Vietnam centred on the provision of economic assistance. Where the previous Australian governments had distributed a significant aid program to South Vietnam, the Labor government wanted to allocate aid on a more even basis, which implied a substantial improvement in the level of assistance to North Vietnam. Indeed, the Whitlam government was pressured from within the Labor Party to stop aid to South Vietnam.

With reference to a proposed multilateral aid operation for South Vietnam under the aegis of the World Bank, the Minister for Foreign Affairs demonstrated the new policy that:

Australia would not be attracted by a consultative group for South Vietnam alone, but that we should also need to be satisfied that a parallel arrangement could be organised for North Vietnam.

As this situation was unlikely, Australia would not join in preferential treatment for South Vietnam when, as explained by Minister Willesee, 'we are trying to establish some balance in aid allocations between North and South'. Subsequently, the Whitlam government allocated economic assistance to North Vietnam in 1973-74. However, in this first year, Australian aid to South Vietnam totalled $3.5 million while aid to North Vietnam was $0.6 million. Further, in October 1975, Australia sent aid valued at $2.4 million to communist South Vietnam. Despite clear Ministerial direction, little progress was made on further aid flows to North Vietnam during the Whitlam government.

44 Willesee, CPD, Senate, vol. 61, 16 August 1974, p. 1066.
45 Willesee, CPD, Senate, vol. 60, 1 August 1974, p. 695.
The debates within the Labor government on North and South Vietnam revealed serious tensions but also demonstrated Whitlam's influence over foreign policy. The debates on recognition and aid seemed inconsequential given the effective reunification of Vietnam from 30 April 1975. Nevertheless, the changes to policy placed Australia in a favourable position to improve relations with Vietnam after 1975.

**East Timor and Indonesia**

While the Whitlam government was enthusiastic in promoting relations with Indonesia, the shifting conflicts within East Timor caused considerable difficulties for this alliance. The Labor Party, and particularly Whitlam, were caught between support for Indonesia, including a recognition of Indonesia's interest in East Timor, and support for the principle of self-determination for East Timor. This difficult issue had implications for Australia in the Asia Pacific region and for Australia's relationships with developing countries, especially in the United Nations.

Whitlam had cultivated friendly relations with Indonesia through the 1960s. In discussing Australia's relations, Whitlam wrote in 1967:

> The new Government of Indonesia is well disposed towards this country. It is our obligation and in our interest to see that we render all the political, diplomatic and economic support we can. If the coup of 18 months ago had succeeded, as it nearly did, we would have had a country of 100 million dominated by communists on our border.

> We can only imagine the additional and crippling sums we would now be spending on defence.47

This reflected Whitlam's preference for a non-communist government in Indonesia and intimated Whitlam's energy for Australian relations to focus on the Asia Pacific region. As Prime Minister, Whitlam visited Indonesia in February 1973 'to demonstrate the political and economic interest which Australia would now take in the region'.48 The visit built upon the frank

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47 See Whitlam, as the new leader of the ALP, statement in *Australian*, 18 February 1975.
relationship between President Suharto and Whitlam and foreshadowed regular meetings between the two leaders.\textsuperscript{49}

The Portuguese colony of East Timor was not a prominent issue until 25 April 1974 when the Caetano regime in Lisbon collapsed and was replaced by a new government committed to decolonisation.\textsuperscript{50} This had obvious implications for Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau and Sao Tome and Principe. East Timor was not expected to be one of the difficult territories in which to establish an administration compared to the internal problems of the other colonies.

Political parties quickly emerged in East Timor based on quite different understandings of the political transition to independence. The significant groups were UDT, which favoured Timorese rule in association with Indonesia, Fretilin, which argued for independence, and Apodeti, advocating integration with Indonesia.\textsuperscript{51} The option of East Timor's integration with Australia was also raised.

Australia attempted to assist with the political development of East Timor. Prime Minister Whitlam, Foreign Minister Willesee and acting Foreign Minister Morrison had discussions with various representatives of Portugal, Indonesia, and the East Timor parties from mid-1974 into 1975. In addition, Cairns visited Jakarta in January 1975 and six Labor Party Members of Parliament visited East Timor in March 1975. Importantly, Prime Minister Whitlam and President Suharto agreed that Portugal should be encouraged to maintain its authority in East Timor in order to provide additional time to prepare for independence. Despite a brief collaboration, UDT and Fretilin competed for control of East Timor during 1975.\textsuperscript{52} On 10


\textsuperscript{50} During the 1960s, the question of Timor was seldom discussed. The western half of Timor formed part of Indonesia and the eastern half had been controlled by Portugal since the sixteenth century. At the United Nations, the General Assembly and the Committee on Decolonisation mentioned East Timor as part of the annual review of all territories under colonial administration. Clark, The United Nations, op. cit., p. 147.

\textsuperscript{51} The groups were Uniao Democratica Timorense, Frente Revolutionaria de Timor Leste Independente, and Associacao Popular Democratica Timorense.

\textsuperscript{52} In January 1975, UDT and Fretilin had formed a coalition. However, UDT ended the partnership in May due to perceived radical influences within Fretilin. Relations between the parties deteriorated quickly as Fretilin associated with the Frelimo Marxist government.
August, UDT attempted to gain control, occupying the police headquarters and ordering the arrest of Fretilin leaders. This signalled the start of a civil war in East Timor, with the last remaining Portuguese presence, the Governor, transferring administration off-shore to the island of Atauro.

Separate talks were initiated between representatives of Australia, Indonesia, and the East Timorese groups without success. On 28 November 1975, Fretilin, which seemed to be the dominant party in the civil war, issued a unilateral declaration of independence and proclaimed the Democratic Republic of East Timor. Immediately, UDT, Apodeti and others proclaimed integration with Indonesia. A simple democratic solution was not conceivable in the short term.

The debate within Australia focussed upon two central tenets of the Whitlam government's foreign policy. A balance had to be reached between constructive relations with Indonesia and the principle of self-determination in East Timor. The elements were not in conflict until late 1975. Indonesia had insisted that there was no claim over East Timor but had also displayed signs of concern about an independent East Timor which would create an unacceptable security risk. The Indonesian problem with East Timor linked with popular secessionist movements on other fronts of Indonesia.53 The Whitlam government's position in 1974 and into 1975 was challenged from within the Labor Party, criticised by the Liberal and Country Parties, and confused by conflicting advice.54 Whitlam seemed to retreat from an 'Indonesian solution' and tended to emphasise the requirement of self-determination.

In the Parliament on 26 August 1975, the Prime Minister explained the state of affairs in East Timor and outlined the options for Australia. Whitlam informed the House that the Portuguese Governor in East Timor and the government in Lisbon had issued appeals for international forces to end the fighting, including suggestions that Australia and Indonesia might help with the evacuation of foreign workers from East Timor. The Prime Minister was prepared to offer humanitarian assistance but restated that the Labor government remained opposed to Australian military involvement. Further, Whitlam distanced Australia from the debate over East Timor, understanding the principal actors in the territory to be Portugal and the

of Mozambique and UDT maintained contact with Portugal and Taiwan in preferring integration with Indonesia.

East Timorese people in terms of future resolutions and Indonesia as an important observer with significant interests in East Timor.55

Whitlam also alluded to a set of options for East Timor which included Indonesia. The first line of argument explicitly excluded Australia from assuming a role in East Timor. Understandably, the Labor government did not want to adopt a colonial position in the context of other efforts to devolve Australia from former territories. Whitlam stated that the immediate responsibility rested with Portugal and this required active intervention.56 Unfortunately for Whitlam, Portugal had relinquished responsibility for East Timor which raised questions over the roles of Indonesia, Australia and others.

This led to the Prime Minister's second line of argument that the Labor government recognised Indonesia's interest in East Timor. To this end, Whitlam stated that:

We understand Indonesia's concern that the territory should not be allowed to become a source of instability on Indonesia's border. Portuguese Timor is in many ways part of the Indonesian world and its future is obviously a matter of great importance to Indonesia.57

This statement was tempered by Whitlam's reassurances that Indonesian policy respected the right of self-determination of the people of East Timor and reiterated Indonesia's denials of territorial ambition toward Portuguese Timor. Indeed, Indonesia agreed only to intervene at the request of Portugal and then only to restore conditions which would allow an orderly process of self-determination to begin. Whitlam committed Australia to practical help in mediating and assisting Portugal to end the conflict in East Timor.58

For some, this was interpreted as Australia's endorsement of action by Indonesia in East Timor. A number of Pacific nations were apparently concerned about substituting Indonesia for Portuguese colonial rule, and

the combination of these elements was not helpful for Australia in advancing regional co-operation. Also, there were serious differences of opinion on East Timor within the Australian bureaucracy. The Department of Foreign Affairs advocated self-determination with possible association with Indonesia. At the same time, the Department of Defence hesitated to encourage Indonesia in any way and the Australian intelligence services worried that their warnings about Australian support for an Indonesian solution were consistently ignored.\(^59\)

Australian relations with Indonesia through 1975 were unsettled by particular events. First, parts of the Labor Party openly supported the agenda of Fretilin in East Timor, particularly members of the federal Parliamentary Labor Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee. Second, Australia's credibility with Indonesia was diminished due to the activities of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service in East Timor. On 16 October 1975, Senator Willesee announced to the Parliament that an Australian citizen in East Timor, Frank Favaro, was not acting for Australia in any capacity. Favaro owned a hotel in Dili and had provided transport to a visiting Australian Parliamentary delegation known to support Fretilin. A few days later, Willesee learnt that Favaro had been recruited by ASIS earlier in the year. Whitlam was concerned that the Indonesian government almost certainly knew this role.\(^60\)

At the end of October 1975, Senator Willesee again addressed the Parliament on Portuguese Timor. By this time, Indonesia had established a military presence in East Timor, albeit without attempting to take control. The Minister for Foreign Affairs was critical of most actors involved in East Timor, demonstrating the intransigence of the situation and the frustration of the Whitlam government. Willesee was critical of Portugal in escaping responsibility for East Timor but was positively scathing of the East Timorese leadership:

That the situation in Portuguese Timor has come to its present pass is, of course, cause for deep regret. It reflects, above all, the immaturity of Timor's own aspiring political leaders, who in less than eighteen months have succeeded in wrecking Portugal's decolonisation program, sharply polarising political opinions

\(^{59}\) Albinski, op. cit., pp. 107-8.
\(^{60}\) Whitlam, *The Whitlam Government...*, op. cit., p. 111. As a result, the head of ASIS was replaced.
through the territory, and finally plunging the territory into violent civil war.\textsuperscript{61}

Willesee reiterated the importance of the principle of self-determination for the people of East Timor. This was followed by an obvious warning to Indonesia that their military presence in East Timor was not warranted and that Indonesia should pursue any perceived interests through diplomatic means. Again, this was qualified by a recognition of Indonesia's particular concern for East Timor.\textsuperscript{62}

In the last weeks of government, Whitlam maintained a distant but concerned position while Indonesia continued to infiltrate more directly into the East Timor conflict. The Labor Party caucus urged Whitlam not to sanction the Indonesian intervention which may have caused the Prime Minister to be more cautious in public pronouncements on East Timor.\textsuperscript{63} Further, it seems that, by October 1975, the Whitlam government was simply hoping for a negotiated settlement between the parties in East Timor.

At the end of the Whitlam Labor government, there was an increasing Indonesian presence in East Timor with little prospect of a democratic outcome. Indonesia may have reacted to the dismissal of the Whitlam government in November 1975 by more seriously considering a swift solution to the conflict in East Timor. This speculation suggests that the position of the Whitlam government on East Timor may have been a deterrent to Indonesia deciding to occupy the territory earlier in 1975.

**Papua New Guinea**

The role of Australia in the independence process of Papua New Guinea was an important element of the Labor Party agenda and the international perception of the Whitlam government. The conclusion of the territorial relationship with Papua New Guinea equated with South Africa and Rhodesia as the primary issues of colonialism through which the Whitlam government demonstrated a new foreign policy for Australia. Importantly, the negotiations with Papua New Guinea were subject to United Nations


\textsuperscript{63} See Albinski, op. cit., p. 314.
resolutions and were of considerable interest to members of the United Nations General Assembly.64

The Whitlam government accepted the timetable of 1 December 1973 for self-government for Papua New Guinea. The next stage of independence was projected for December 1974 and thus various administrative functions were devolved to the PNG government.65 However, Australia faced some problems with the autonomy of Papua New Guinea, including a postponement of the independence date. The PNG House of Assembly could not agree on the terms of the constitution and, subsequently, the Australian government was rebuked by PNG officials for promoting independence with undue haste.66 Nevertheless, the UN General Assembly was able to adopt a resolution for the termination of the trusteeship agreement for New Guinea and was further informed that Papua New Guinea would accede to independence on 16 September 1975.

At a personal level, Prime Minister Whitlam visited Post Moresby and Goroka as a guest of the PNG Chief Minister on 18-20 February 1973. This early visit to Papua New Guinea was a clear demonstration of Whitlam’s commitment to the independence process and a distinct promise of support from the Australian government. Whitlam declared that:

Papua New Guinea will have the first call on our substantially increased foreign aid program. We shall be working with the Papua New Guinea Government through a specific and

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65 Clark, The United Nations, op. cit., p. 145. The UN resolutions at this time noted the steps towards independence although these pronouncements also stressed the need for continuing localisation and political education and the preservation of cultural heritage.

guaranteed program . . . Australian aid will be allocated solely through the Central Government of Papua New Guinea . . . 67

Whitlam assured Papua New Guinea that the plan for independence could proceed based upon the Australian commitment of at least $500 million in economic and social aid over the three year period commencing 1974-75. This promise was linked to Australian support for the Papua New Guinea aim to move quickly toward self-reliance.68

A significant interruption to the maturing relationship between Australia and Papua New Guinea was the dispute over the border. In the Torres Strait, the designation of several small islands located nearer the PNG shores was in dispute. The inhabitants preferred Australian citizenship but the issue needed to be resolved through negotiations between PNG, Australia and the state of Queensland. However, while the islands were notionally controlled by the Queensland government, Premier Bjelke-Petersen believed that talks were unnecessary, even when the government of PNG and Prime Minister Whitlam wanted to organise discussions.69 The intransigence of the Bjelke-Petersen government was also based on the continuing conflict over domestic issues with the Whitlam government.70 Rather than pursue the border problem in the International Court of Justice, where Queensland would have no standing, Whitlam and Chief Minister Somare resolved to discuss a Torres Strait Treaty. Nevertheless, members of the PNG House of Assembly became disgruntled with the difficulties created by the Queensland government and thus a settlement of the border issue was postponed.71


68 Albinski, op. cit., p. 179 and ADAA, ibid., p. 10. See ADAA, Annual Report 1975-6, op. cit., p. 5. There was some resistance to independence for PNG, especially in the Highlands, due to a fear that Australian aid would be reduced and particular groups would dominate the territory. See also Liberal and Country Parties criticisms, CPD, HR, vol. 88, 14 March 1974, pp. 428-38.

69 Bjelke-Petersen was resting on the established boundary of Queensland which had been set within three miles of the Papuan coast.


While the aid allocation to PNG remained a large percentage of the Australian aid budget, attention focused on the nature and effectiveness of this program. 72 Australian aid to PNG included general budget support and a development grant to support sectors of the government such as agricultural development, education and health. Australian aid as a proportion of total PNG public expenditure steadily declined from 52 percent in 1970-71 to 40 percent in 1974-75. 73 By 1975-76, the relationship was based on a new five-year commitment to provide a minimum of $180million per year in aid from Australia. 74 The Whitlam government also began to transfer Australian assets in Papua New Guinea to the PNG government with the costs met from special aid grants totalling $48.6million. Australians working in the PNG public service, teaching service and police force transferred to direct contract employment with the PNG government. 75

With the achievement of self-government and subsequently independence, the relations between Papua New Guinea and Australia required a fundamental change. The objectives of the new aid relationship were to:

facilitate and promote the economic and social development of Papua New Guinea; to assist that country to achieve its goal of self-reliance; and to enable it to plan its own development on the basis of resources available to it including those provided from Australia. 76

This would entail a transformation of the structures that represented the previous colonial administration.

72 From 1960 to 1970, the share of Australian official economic aid allocated to Papua New Guinea rose from approximately 50 percent to 70 percent. Associated with the relative increase in aid to Papua New Guinea was a shift away from South Asia in favour of South East Asia. Evans, op. cit., p. 131. See also Anthony Clunies-Ross, Foreign Aid, chapter 6 in Gordon Greenwood and Norman Harper, eds, Australia in World Affairs 1966-1970, Cheshire for Australian Institute of International Affairs, Melbourne, 1974, pp. 3-4 & 8, Millar, op. cit., pp. 374-5 and ADAA, First Annual Report, op. cit., p. 7.

73 ADAA, ibid., p. 10.

74 In addition, Australia would provide a contribution to the Wabo hydro-electric feasibility study, an independence gift, payment of termination benefits to former Australian employees of the Papua New Guinea government, the cost of completing airport construction works at Port Moresby and Nadzab, and continued educational assistance under the Australia-Papua New Guinea Training and Education Scheme. ADAA, Annual Report 1975-6, op. cit., pp. 4-5. See also Millar, op. cit., p. 375.

75 In order to meet PNG's need for skilled labour, the Australian government had employed persons on transfer or secondment from public employment in Australia. These employees comprised the Australian Staffing Assistance Group (ASAG) and the Australian government undertook to provide sufficient financial assistance to meet the costs of employing former members of ASAG until 30 June 1978 on equivalent conditions. ADAA, First Annual Report, op. cit., p. 10. See also ADAA, Annual Report 1975-6, op. cit., p. 5.

76 ADAA, Annual Report 1975-6, ibid., p. 4.
The changing relationship with Papua New Guinea was important for the Whitlam government in demonstrating an appreciation for appropriate initiatives for a constructive and supportive relationship with a newly independent country. Both countries were attempting to adjust from a colonial relationship to a partnership between sovereign states. For the Australian government, this provoked the foundation of the Australian Development Assistance Agency at the time of self-government in Papua New Guinea on 1 December 1975. Discussions began on how the aid relationship might operate in the long-term.77

In the end, Whitlam introduced the Papua New Guinea Independence Bill into the Parliament on 20 August 1975. The transition in PNG was assisted by Australian staff and the Whitlam government was seen to facilitate a smooth process for independence. On PNG independence day, Australia’s membership of the Trusteeship Council was formally terminated. As promised, Whitlam had acted to end Australia’s colonial relationship with PNG and provided support for the independence process.

Aid policy

The Whitlam government attempted to reform the administration of Australian aid and tried to alter the basis for aid policy. While the Labor Party policy speech for the 1972 election did not mention development assistance, there were several actors within the Whitlam government who were aware of the important issues related to Australian aid. The aid profile was part of the Whitlam government’s plan to build more constructive relationships with developing countries. In relation to the administration of the aid program, the Labor Party supported the notion of a separate aid agency and there was an associated argument that stressed the need to separate aid policy from foreign policy. An aid agency was established by the Whitlam government but this structure was frustrated by bureaucratic manoeuvres, especially by the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Prior to the election of the Whitlam government, the Australian aid program was conceived and administered within the Department of Foreign Affairs. The aid program was used by the Department of Foreign Affairs as an instrument and adjunct of international diplomacy while

Treasury, the Department of Education, and the Department of Trade and Industry made contributions to specific elements of the programme.\footnote{The relationship with Papua New Guinea was administered separately by the Department of External Territories. The Foreign Affairs aid programs amounted to only 27 percent of aid expenditures. The Treasury maintained general control of the economic responsibilities associated with the aid program and had direct responsibility for Australia's relations with the international financial institutions related to aid policy, particularly the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. Also, the Department of Education administered the Commonwealth Co-operation in Education Scheme and retained the authority for sponsored trainees under all aid schemes. The Department of Overseas Trade, among others, provided specifically skilled staff for aid programs. The Department of Trade and Industry, among others, provided staff for aid programs. See Millar, op. cit., p. 376, T.B. Millar, The Making of Australian Foreign Policy, chapter 8 in B.D. Beddie, ed., \textit{Advance Australia - Where?}, Oxford University Press with the Australian Institute of International Affairs, Melbourne, 1975, p. 152, and Viviani and Wilenski, op. cit., pp. 6-7.}

In April 1972, a sub-committee of the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs was established to examine Australia's aid policy. The committee was chaired by H.B. Turner with William Morrison acting as chair in the final weeks of the inquiry. In the October 1972 report of the committee, the influence of Morrison and the minority Labor Party members was demonstrated with recommendations on the need to increase the evaluation and review of Australian aid, and improve many aspects of aid including quality, representation, tariff preferences, expertise, and education.\footnote{Joint Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, \textit{Report on Australia's Foreign Aid}, October 1972, pp. vii-x.} While not recommending the establishment of a separate aid agency, the report was a clear critique of the administration of aid by the Department of Foreign Affairs.

As advocated by the Labor Party, the argument for a separate aid agency focused on the need to combine the delivery of aid in one administrative unit while creating some distance between aid policy and the Department of Foreign Affairs. Whitlam showed enthusiasm for the notion of a separate aid agency. Indeed, Whitlam highlighted the role of Morrison within the government as a key to coordinating policy advice on aid issues.\footnote{Whitlam, \textit{The Whitlam Government...}, op. cit., p. 95 Throughout the years of the Whitlam government, Morrison had the primary ministerial responsibility for carrying out the government's policy on PNG. Namely, Morrison was Minister for External Territories, then Minister assisting the Minister for Foreign Affairs in matters relating to PNG, with this title later altered to 'matters relating to the Islands of the Pacific', quoting the Australian Constitution. In June 1975, Morrison was appointed as Minister for Defence. See also Viviani and Wilenski, op. cit., p. 6.} However, the Department of Foreign Affairs remained opposed to a separate agency, claiming to be concerned about the potential for aid policies
to deviate from foreign policy advice and arguing that aid policy should remain in the control of those concerned with foreign policy.81

Rather than immediately establishing a separate agency, Whitlam opted for an inquiry into aid administration. A taskforce of officials, drawn from the four departments responsible for elements of Australian aid, was instructed to report on the options for a unified aid administration.82 After considerable debate, the taskforce identified five different administrative options which extended from a mere expansion of the Aid Branch within the Department of Foreign Affairs to a separate Department with its own Minister.83 The Minister for Foreign Affairs continued to oppose a separate aid agency and the only active support for the agency emerged from the relatively unimportant Department of External Territories, led by Minister Morrison. Indeed, the plans for an aid agency may have been discarded if not for the commitment in the Labor Party Platform and the efforts of the Prime Minister's office.84

Prime Minister Whitlam sought the advice of former public servant and international aid expert, Sir John Crawford, who had been critical of Australia's aid program. Crawford favoured a statutory authority and provided the Prime Minister with further legitimacy for the separate agency proposal. However, Whitlam made concessions to the departmental views, presumably to gain their co-operation, and these compromises became important in the subsequent operations of aid administration. First, the Director of the agency would be subject to the direction of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and second, Treasury would remain responsible for representation and relations with the World Bank.85

81 See Viviani and Wilenski, ibid., p. 7.
82 The concept of a taskforce was intended to gain the experience of individuals rather than departmental positions. However, the taskforce operated with representatives of the departments, similar to the intractable method of inter-departmental committees. The Department of Foreign Affairs nominated two senior career diplomats as chair and deputy chair of the taskforce. Inevitably, the process of discussion resembled a contest between the interests of departments. Viviani and Wilenski described the taskforce report as 'a barren work, left waste by the internecine warfare stirred by the territorial imperatives of the Departments concerned'. Viviani and Wilenski, ibid., pp. 8-9.
84 Viviani and Wilenski, op. cit., pp. 10-11. Peter Wilenski in the office of the Prime Minister continued to promote the idea of a separate aid agency against a tide of bureaucratic resistance.
85 ibid., p. 11.
The Prime Minister's position was reinforced through a change in the Labor Party Platform at the July 1973 federal conference. Whitlam had initiated an amendment through the Labor Party Foreign Affairs Policy Committee which inserted a more specific statement on aid administration into the Platform:

The Labor Government will establish a statutory Development Assistance agency responsible to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and responsible for Australia's project, training and similar activities and relations with international development institutions.86

After approval by cabinet in September 1973, the Australian Development Assistance Agency Bill was introduced in the Parliament on 12 March 1974 and was not passed by both Houses until December 1974. Although no longer responsible for the area, Prime Minister Whitlam presented the second reading speech. This statement was intended to clarify the issues in dispute and resolve continuing tensions between departments. The speech was unequivocal that the Agency was to have responsibility for all of Australia's bilateral and multilateral aid programs and reiterated the Labor government's intention of upgrading and improving all aspects of aid policy.87 The Prime Minister also explained that the actions of the Director-General would be subject to the directions of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and this meant that the Agency would be required to consult with the Department of Foreign Affairs.88 The compulsory liaison and reporting to the Department of Foreign Affairs placed limits on the work of the aid Agency.

In a constructive tone, the Prime Minister concluded the speech in the House with an outline of expectations for the Agency:

The Government believes that the Agency will contribute to the achievement of a more efficient aid administration, to a comprehensive and systematic approach towards the increasingly complex range of Australia's aid activities, and not least to the formulation of aid policies which will take up the challenges of the future. The Government will look to the Agency for the development of innovative policies responsive to the needs for economic self-reliance and social justice in developing countries. It will expect the Agency to maintain the high standards set by Australia in some fields of our aid and to develop expertise in

87 Whitlam, CPD, HR, vol. 88, 12 March 1974, p. 278.
other fields appropriate to our resources. We look to an aid program in which the community will feel involved, and of which the community will be proud.\textsuperscript{89}

This statement clearly envisaged a change from the Foreign Affairs approach to the administration of aid.

The Australian Development Assistance Agency Bill was passed with bipartisan support in both the House of Representatives and the Senate in 1974. The general support for the Agency implied a gradual resolution of bureaucratic tensions but the conflicts merely reduced to a continuing battle between the new Agency and the Department of Foreign Affairs.\textsuperscript{90}

An interim office of the Australian Development Assistance Agency was established as part of the Department of Foreign Affairs.\textsuperscript{91} During the establishment period, distinct sections of the Agency were developed based on the origins of the staff and, while located in different buildings, the bureaucratic separation of Foreign Affairs officers from the External Territories staff caused serious internal conflict.\textsuperscript{92} The tenuous relations between the Agency and the Department of Foreign Affairs further deteriorated over the proposed direction of Australian aid policy. The new Agency distributed a policy paper which discussed aid and development while ignoring the connection between aid and foreign policy, and did not examine the relationship between aid policy and commercial policy. On these points, the Agency was criticised by the Departments of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Treasury. However, the Agency staff had the support of the Development Assistance Advisory Board in arguing for an extensive re-examination of aid policy.\textsuperscript{93} Despite the high level from which the

\textsuperscript{89} Whitlam, CPD, HR, vol. 88, 12 March 1974, p. 279. See also McClelland, CPD, Senate, vol. 61, 22 October 1974, pp. 1841-2.

\textsuperscript{90} See Millar, \textit{Australia in Peace and War}, op. cit., pp. 376-7. At the point of legislative establishment of the aid Agency, Viviani and Wilenski, op. cit., p. 15, observed that various government departments 'seemed determined to strangle the agency at birth'.

\textsuperscript{91} The Agency incorporated the former Foreign Affairs aid branch and sections of the former Department of External Territories. Officers involved in aid activities in the state offices of the Departments of Foreign Affairs, Education and Labour and Immigration were transferred to the ADAA. Some aid responsibilities were transferred from the Treasury. ADAA, \textit{First Annual Report}, op. cit., p. 41.

\textsuperscript{92} The continuing conflict focused on the staff, with regard to how many staff and from where should the staff be recruited, and thereby control of the Agency. It seems that bureaucratic opportunism dictated that Foreign Affairs became a strong proponent for more staff for the Agency. Viviani and Wilenski, op. cit., pp. 13-15. See also H.W. Arndt in response to Millar, The Making of Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 171.

\textsuperscript{93} The Board was established in early 1975 to provide advice to the Minister and the Agency on matters related to Australia’s development assistance. ADAA, \textit{First Annual Report}, op. cit., p. 42. The Board was chaired by Sir John Crawford and included Alan Renouf (Secretary,
government recruited members, the Board was relatively ineffective in combating the persuasive and persistent arguments of the Department of Foreign Affairs on the direction of aid policy.

The Agency can be credited with one significant bureaucratic victory on aid policy toward Papua New Guinea.94 A dispute arose over the balance between continued budgetary assistance and the level of project aid to PNG. Morrison, as the Minister assisting the Minister for Foreign Affairs in matters relating to Papua New Guinea, initiated the debate by advocating the need for project aid which would provide greater control over the expenditure of aid funds. The Agency preference for budgetary support endured over the view of the Department of Foreign Affairs thereby avoiding the imposition of an expanded project aid program. The Prime Minister announced that Australian aid to the new government of Papua New Guinea would continue as direct budgetary assistance in grant form.95

In the end, the intransigence of the Department of Foreign Affairs, assisted by the Treasury, caused bureaucratic delays in the implementation of the Labor Party plan for aid administration. It was not until mid 1975 that the new Agency was beginning to develop a coherent aid policy and this was expressed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Senator Willesee seemed to adopt the Agency's position in offering a new perspective on aid which significantly demoted the influence of foreign policy considerations. The Minister stressed the positive elements of Australian aid and suggested the need for reform in the quality of aid, the volume, and the social welfare effects of aid.96

Further, the aid Agency re-examined the place of aid in Australia's foreign relations and reconsidered the basic purposes of aid, including the volume and distribution of aid, funds to multilateral agencies, links between aid and trade, and tied or grant aid. Specifically, the first report of the ADAA

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94 Viviani and Wilenski, op. cit., p. 21. Australian assistance to PNG continued to occupy a separate position within the ADAA. This was due to the quantitative and qualitative difference from other aid. The aid program to PNG was almost half of the total Australian aid and was allocated on a block grant basis as untied budget support assistance.

95 Whitlam made this announcement at a meeting in Sydney in February 1974. See ibid., p. 22.

96 Senator Don Willesee, Minister for Foreign Affairs, New Directions in Australia's Development Assistance, address at the Australian Institute of International Affairs conference on Australia, Papua New Guinea and South East Asia, Melbourne, 9-11 May 1975.
explained that:

policies have been formulated which are aimed at increasing the quality, quantity and effectiveness of our aid, and which reaffirm the Government's belief that aid, properly directed, can make a worthwhile and effective contribution to development in recipient countries.97

It was proposed that aid policy should concentrate upon development strategies which benefited the poorest groups. The implications for policy change were significant with different methods of aid delivery being employed to raise productivity and living standards of the poor, particularly in rural areas, and with emphasis on health, education and employment. This philosophical change required a dialogue with the developing countries to reach agreements on aid and, coupled with the restructuring of aid administration, reflected the agenda of the Labor government to emphasise the social and economic elements of foreign policy.

A central aspect of the debate was the total volume of aid. This element was affected by the push for a developmental philosophy and the dominance of foreign policy considerations. The Whitlam government rhetoric for a greater level of development assistance did not eventuate. Indeed, it was argued that Australia was able to be more generous toward developing countries but had consistently maintained a low level of aid, even at times of success within the domestic economy.98 The Labor Party was committed to the UN target of 0.7 percent of Gross National Product for official development assistance but Viviani and Wilenski claimed that Treasury did not accept this goal and was careful to distance the political statements on aid from the budget process.99 ADAA officials sought to ensure an expansion of aid allocations and to reinforce the commitment to the UN target at every opportunity.

In fact, the Whitlam government made significant increases in the level of aid in total dollar terms:

97 ADAA, First Annual Report, op. cit., p. 2. See also Albinski, op. cit., p. 178.
99 Viviani and Wilenski, op. cit., p. 23.
Australian development assistance summary, 1972 to 1976  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Aid Budget ($m)</th>
<th>% Change</th>
<th>% of GNP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>200.5</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972-73</td>
<td>218.8</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
<td>260.8</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974-75</td>
<td>328.1</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-76</td>
<td>346.9</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, the stagnant levels of GNP percentage over the period of the Whitlam government did not reflect the acclaimed dollar increases for each year.

An example of the difficulties encountered in attempting to increase the level of aid was the debate on the 1975 budget. The aid Agency, supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs, engaged in the 1975 budget negotiations with the aim of securing a substantial increase in the aid allocation. This argument was based on projected steps toward the UN target, an allowance for inflation, and the need to increase the component for Papua New Guinea. The position of the ADAA was opposed by Treasury, which gained support from the Prime Minister and the new Treasurer, Bill Hayden, who sought to restrain government expenditure. The change of outlook for the 1975 budget was precipitated by difficulties with the domestic economy, uncertainties in the international economy, and to some extent, a shift in the economic objectives of the Whitlam Labor government. Indeed, the level of Australian aid was reduced due to the explicit economic choices by the Whitlam government.

Separate from the contest over the level of aid, debates continued within the aid program over the distribution of assistance. Bilateral aid, as opposed to multilateral aid, dominated the Australian aid profile. Significantly,

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100 Figures from ADAA, *Annual Report 1975-76*, op. cit., p. 34. While there were dollar increases in aid in 1972-73 and 1973-74, the level of inflation determined that these increases did not translate into increases in the percentage of GNP for aid. This table represents actual figures which differ from the allocated amounts used by Albinski, op. cit., pp. 178-9. On particular elements of aid, see also ADAA, *First Annual Report*, op. cit., Millar, *Australia in Peace and War*, op. cit., pp. 375-6, and Evans, op. cit., p. 138.

Australian bilateral aid was distorted by a regional concentration on Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and the other members of ASEAN:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>PNG</th>
<th>South East Asia</th>
<th>South Asia</th>
<th>Pacific</th>
<th>Africa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
<td>177.1</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974-75</td>
<td>168.8</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-76</td>
<td>211.9</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Little effort was expended to justify the geographic distortions of the aid profile. Clearly, the historical relationship with PNG would continue to dominate the Australian aid program. The prevailing argument remained that Australia should confine aid to countries important to the defence and economy of Australia. Similar to the position of previous Liberal and Country Parties governments, this view necessarily opposed aid allocations to the poorest people in the poorest countries of the Pacific and Africa. The official justification for the profile of Australian aid was that the limited size of the aid budget necessitated regional concentration to achieve a perceived level of effectiveness.103

The narrow distribution of Australian aid was mollified to some extent by the allocation of funds to multilateral agencies. Indeed, the balance between bilateral and multilateral funding within the aid program was an issue of debate in the Labor government. Whitlam and colleagues had been enthusiastic about the notional target of twenty percent for multilateral aid within the aid program. However, it seemed that Whitlam was influenced by the Department of Foreign Affairs argument that the government had greater control over bilateral aid.104 Also, the Department of Foreign Affairs may have instilled doubts about the administration of aid through the World Bank and similar organisations in order to maintain a large percentage of bilateral funding in the aid program.

102 Derived from table on bilateral aid, ADAA, Annual Report 1975-6, ibid., pp. 35-38. These amounts may be marginally higher when adding the small aid allocations. For example, African countries tended to be allocated small amounts. For example $0.1 million, which would increase the low level of aid to Africa by a significant amount. The increase in aid in 1974-75 to South Asia did not represent a shift in regional concentration, rather the increased funds were food aid to Bangladesh and India through a UN fund, which was disbursed by bilateral means.

103 ADAA, First Annual Report, op. cit., p. 5.

104 See comments following W.R. Croker, Australia and the Region, chapter 5 in Beddie, op. cit., p. 97.
In contrast, the aid Agency advocated the allocation of funds to multilateral agencies which could mobilise capital and expertise on a scale which Australia could not attempt. Also, Australian contributions to multilateral agencies could provide assistance to developing countries beyond the regions of concentration of bilateral aid. In the end, the Whitlam government made large increases in the proportion of aid funds channelled through multilateral institutions.

Substantial funds were channelled to the lending facilities of the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. Australia also endorsed the establishment of the Development Committee of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which sought specific initiatives to improve the channelling of multilateral funds. Further, during 1975, Australia agreed to contribute to two new multilateral initiatives, namely the World Bank Intermediate Financing Facility and the IMF Oil Facility Interest Subsidy Account which was established to reduce the cost of borrowing finance by those developing countries most seriously affected by the oil crisis. Australia also supported various United Nations agencies through multilateral assistance, including $150,000 to a UNICEF project in Zambia as humanitarian assistance to African liberation movements.

In addition, Australia contributed to the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation and the Special Commonwealth Program for Assisting the Education of Rhodesian Africans. Further, the Whitlam government continued to support the activities of the South Pacific Commission, including voluntary contributions for special projects in the economic, social and health fields.

105 ADAA, First Annual Report, op. cit., p. 5. Australian contributions to multilateral organisations almost trebled in 1974-75 to over $50 million, representing 15 percent of official development assistance. A similarly proportioned increase for 1975-76 again demonstrated a greater flexibility in aid policy and a continuing recognition of the value of consortially organised aid efforts. Albinski, op. cit., p. 182. See also Evans, op. cit., p. 134, for a critique of multilateral aid in general, and Millar, Australia in Peace and War, op. cit., p. 375, on the balance of bilateral and multilateral aid.


109 ADAA, Annual Report 1975-6, ibid., p. 28.
A related issue was the question of trade access by developing countries into the Australian economy and the influence of trade objectives within the aid program. Similar to the Liberal and Country Parties, the Labor Party clearly linked trade with aid policy.\textsuperscript{110} Important for developing countries was the Labor government decision in 1973 to implement a 25 percent reduction in tariffs on all imported goods. This was a significant change in policy for the Australian economy. The tariff reduction seemed to have a positive effect upon the level of imports from developing countries.\textsuperscript{111} Specifically, an increase in the level of imports from ten independent African countries in 1973-74 could be attributed to the new system of tariff preferences.\textsuperscript{112}

Linked to the reduction of tariffs was an export promotion scheme, created by the Department of Overseas Trade, to assist developing countries in utilising the Australian market.\textsuperscript{113} However, this scheme was under-utilised because the value of goods from developing countries did not reach the available quota. Further, the Whitlam government needed to deal with difficult domestic economic conditions, which led to arguments for greater protection for Australian industries and thus an argument for import quotas. Treasurer Cairns favoured the protectionist measures and, in the end, the Labor government chose options which accorded with the appeals of the manufacturing industries and trade unions.\textsuperscript{114}

In addition to the issue of trade was the debate on aid in grant form in preference to loans or tied aid. The established policy of the Australian

\textsuperscript{110} See Albinski, op. cit., p. 208.
\textsuperscript{111} In 1972-73, the share of Australia's total imports from developing countries rose to 9.1 percent, in 1973-74 to 12.4 percent, and for the first half of 1974-75 the share was 18 percent. ibid., p. 210. See also Whitlam, \textit{The Whitlam Government...}, op. cit., pp. 190-96, for an outline of the events surrounding the decision to reduce tariffs.
\textsuperscript{113} Albinski, op. cit., p. 209. A Trade Preference Scheme was introduced in 1965 to assist developing countries but the exceptions list was long because no imports were permitted if an Australian industry was threatened. There was considerable overlap of labour-intensive industries in textiles, clothing and consumer goods between Australia and the relevant developing nations. Thus the initiative was unhelpful in its original form. Evans, op. cit., pp. 139-40. See also P.J. Lloyd, \textit{The Australian Tariff Preference Scheme for Developing Countries, Journal of World Trade Law}, May-June 1970, P.J. Lloyd, \textit{The Value of Tariff Preferences for the Developing Countries: Australian Experience, Economic Record}, vol. 47, 117, March 1971, and P.J. Lloyd, Australian Tariff Preferences for LDCs, \textit{Intereconomics}, no. 11, 1972. Also, in 1973-4, provisions were constructed to enable developing countries to purchase Australian wheat on specially extended credit terms. In addition, the government assumed liability for credit sales to developing countries.
\textsuperscript{114} See Cairns, address to the ALP Conference, Terrigal, 4 February 1975, quoted in Albinski, op. cit., pp. 210-11.
government was to provide aid in grant form. The preference for grant aid, however, tended to constrain the growth in total aid funds. The Treasury’s desire to control increases in volume seemed to be a trade-off for using grant aid which was favoured by the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Australian multilateral aid was largely untied and the Whitlam government was moving to progressively release parts of bilateral aid. However, proposals to untie further aid encountered opposition from the Department of Trade which argued that aid should assist exports. In the case of Papua New Guinea, the aid remained tied through the large component spent on salaries for Australian staff and the purchase of equipment in Australia. The aid Agency favoured untied aid as a quality issue in the transfer of resources to developing countries. However, by late 1975, there had been little movement to untie elements of bilateral aid.

Overall, the Whitlam government made substantial changes in aid policy notwithstanding the considerable contest on the details. The bureaucratic struggle for control over the administration of aid demonstrated the importance of the aid program within the foreign affairs structures. In practice, the Whitlam government moved aid policy some distance from foreign policy by reviewing the basis for aid allocations. Specifically, the volume of aid increased but most aid was concentrated on South East Asia, especially Papua New Guinea. Australia’s commitment of multilateral aid provided a wider distribution of funds and demonstrated the Whitlam government’s engagement with developing countries through the United Nations and the Commonwealth. Whitlam was partially successful in facilitating greater trade from developing countries which was particularly important for relations with the Asia Pacific region. As an element of foreign policy, Australia’s aid profile was reshaped to support the international agenda of the Whitlam government.

115 ADAA, First Annual Report, op. cit., p. 5. Tied aid meant that the recipient country must purchase goods from Australia.
116 Viviani and Wilenski, op. cit., p. 25.
117 Evans, op. cit., p. 137. The effectiveness of aid was significantly lower when tied as Australia was not the cheapest source of supply on the world market. The loss of purchasing power was estimated at over twenty percent with tied aid. See ADAA, First Annual Report, op. cit., p. 5, Albinski, op. cit., p. 182 and Viviani and Wilenski, op. cit., p. 25.
Conclusion

The Whitlam government attempted to build constructive relationships between Australia and developing countries. In pursuit of this objective, Whitlam developed the Labor Party principles to adopt an anti-colonial approach to international issues. The initial changes to foreign policy instituted by Whitlam, such as the change in Australia's voting pattern at the United Nations, provided an immediate indication of the direction of the Labor government's foreign policy.

Whitlam invested considerable energy in forging new relations with the countries of the Asia Pacific region, including a proposal for an Asia Pacific forum for greater cooperation. A central component of Whitlam's agenda was the recognition of China and thereby the building of a constructive relationship with the People's Republic. This act was not unexpected but it did cause further diplomatic problems for Whitlam in relation to the struggles over recognition in Cambodia. On this, Australia seemed to be influenced by the United States and ASEAN to maintain recognition of the Lon Nol regime. Whitlam also struggled to lead the Labor government on recognition issues in Vietnam and notably the Prime Minister did not acknowledge the position of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam. Simultaneously, Australia provided aid to North Vietnam for the first time.

In a difficult balancing act, Whitlam offered support to Indonesia while advocating self-determination for East Timor. Australia's position on East Timor was overwhelmed by events in the territory and by the shifting Indonesian position. Also, Whitlam promoted the independence of Papua New Guinea and supported the transition process with a long term aid commitment. The Australian aid program was collated and revised to underpin the emerging relations with developing countries, although the shift in aid policy involved considerable administrative debate.

In total, the Whitlam government made significant changes to Australia's foreign policy toward developing countries and, in terms of the Asia Pacific region, China, and Papua New Guinea, altered Australia's fundamental approach. The new relationships with developing countries were part of Whitlam's attempt to establish an anti-racist and anti-colonial foreign policy. Australia's improved relations with developing countries in general provided a crucial context for Whitlam's foreign policy toward Africa.
chapter 5

Whitlam foreign policy and Africa

The shift in Australian foreign policy to support the interests of developing countries was central to the Whitlam government's relations with Africa. The link between these foreign policy issues was Whitlam's aim to establish an anti-racist and anti-colonial position for Australia. In this chapter, I analyse the Whitlam government's strong diplomatic opposition to apartheid while Australia continued to trade with South Africa. I examine Whitlam's action to reverse Australia's voting pattern in the United Nations to act against the minority regime in Rhodesia. Also, I highlight Australia's aid to Africa which supported Whitlam's diplomatic efforts, including the decision to provide aid to African liberation movements. This chapter is central to the thesis in showing the extent of change in Australia's relations with Africa from the Liberal and Country Parties' governments to the Whitlam government. Also, this chapter offers the key points of comparison with Fraser's foreign policy on Africa.

The basis for the Whitlam government position on Africa was the Labor Party Platform, which opposed the minority regimes in South Africa and
Rhodesia and supported the notion of sanctions. In addition, Whitlam promised in the policy speech that the Labor government would not allow racially selected sporting teams to visit or transit through Australia. This brief promise was primarily aimed at South Africa in the context of controversial tours by racially exclusive sporting teams to Australia and New Zealand in 1970-72.

Immediately after the 1972 election, Whitlam changed Australia’s position in the United Nations General Assembly debate on Rhodesia. On 7 December, Australia voted in favour of resolutions, with Britain and the United States opposed, to demand majority government in Rhodesia, to call on Britain to take stronger measures against the minority regime in Rhodesia, to advocate more stringent sanctions, and to request the Security Council to consider sanctions against Portugal and South Africa.

Furthermore, Whitlam instructed the New South Wales government to close the Rhodesia Information Centre in Sydney and cancelled the Australian passport of Air Vice-Marshal Hawkins, diplomatic representative of Rhodesia in South Africa. Whitlam subsequently reiterated that racially selected sporting teams would be excluded from Australia and that Australian wheat exports to Rhodesia would cease. New contributions to the United Nations funds for Southern Africa were announced along with the appointment of the next Australian High Commissioner to Tanzania.

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4 Claire Clark, ed., *Australian Foreign Policy: Toward a Reassessment*, Cassell, North Melbourne, 1973, p. 16, explained that these exports had been previously exempt from sanction on humanitarian grounds but Whitlam stated that the exports were no longer justifiable on this basis.
The initial changes to Australian foreign policy set the tone for the Whitlam government's relations with Africa. As an indication of the degree of change, the Rhodesian Prime Minister Smith deplored the 'new climate of hostility' from Australia and the South African Prime Minister Vorster declared that the National Party would still be in power in South Africa 'when Whitlam was only an unpleasant memory in Australia'. On the other hand, the Tanzanian Foreign Minister Malecela, the Nigerian Head of State Gowon, and a visiting judge from Ghana approved of Australia's new outlook, describing Whitlam's policies as 'very helpful' and 'very progressive'. The shift in policy centred on Australia's relationships with South Africa and Rhodesia, and on Australian aid to Africa.

South Africa

The Whitlam government's opposition to the apartheid system was tested in relation to South Africa's membership of the United Nations and Australia's trade relationship with the apartheid economy. Prime Minister Whitlam acted in accordance with the Labor Party Platform and public expectation in offering firm opposition to the minority regime in South Africa. However, this strong international, anti-racist position was undermined by Australia's peculiar pattern of voting at the UN and by Australia's continuation of trade with South Africa.

At the United Nations, Whitlam pursued a deliberate agenda to change Australia's position, including Australia's stance on South Africa's continued participation. Some members of the United Nations argued that expulsion was warranted given South Africa's persistent violations of the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In response, it was argued that international exclusion should be avoided because this option would exacerbate political conditions in South Africa and set a serious precedent for the United Nations.

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At the UN session in late 1974, the question of expulsion of South Africa was considered in the Credentials committee, General Assembly, Security Council and again in the General Assembly. In the first instance, on 30 September 1974, the UN Credentials committee, which included strong African representation, ruled against the credentials of South Africa. This meant that South Africa would be denied membership of the United Nations. This view was endorsed by the General Assembly in a vote of 98 to 23.9

Australia voted against this move in the General Assembly on the technical grounds that the Credentials committee should simply determine the actual form of credentials. Thus Australia was seen to support the participation of South Africa, or at least prefer an alternative method for exclusion. However, Australia supported the subsequent proposal to refer the question of South Africa to the Security Council.10 At the time, Prime Minister Whitlam foreshadowed that Australia would vote in the Security Council to expel South Africa.11

In Parliament, the Labor government explained its position in the face of criticism and questions from the opposition. Foreign Minister Willesee outlined an African draft resolution calling for the expulsion of South Africa from the United Nations that had been lodged with the Security Council. At first, Senator Willesee argued that South Africa had persistently violated the principles and resolutions of the United Nations and that, on balance, the 'Australian delegation should support the move because of the moral considerations involved'.12 However, it seemed that Senator Willesee expected the veto to be employed by one or more members

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of the Security Council which made it easier for Australia to adopt a strong position against South Africa.

Subsequently, Foreign Minister Willesee utilised the adjournment debate in the Parliament to argue against the views by the Liberal and Country Parties which supported South Africa’s continued participation in the United Nations. The Labor government did not accept the argument that expulsion would worsen the conditions of apartheid but anticipated that this position would be argued in the Security Council. Willesee explained that the Whitlam government remained consistent in its anti-racist stance and this linked directly to the vote to expel South Africa. Senator Willesee also rejected claims that Australia could not exclude South Africa given the poor policy record on Aboriginal peoples. Again, Willesee explained that the Labor government was attempting to present a consistent position against racial discrimination both within Australia and abroad and thus would continue to condemn South Africa in the United Nations.13

Albinski suggested that Australia’s vote on the question of South Africa in the Security Council was primarily decided by Whitlam with some misgivings from Willesee. The Prime Minister determined that Australia would not compromise on the issue and therefore would not abstain.14 At the time of the vote, the key question remained whether Australia would vote to exclude South Africa simply because the veto of permanent members of the Security Council would be invoked. Albinski argued that this was not the overwhelming factor in Australia’s decision as a veto was not guaranteed.15 In effect, the conviction of the Whitlam government against the apartheid regime was the most important factor in determining Australia’s vote in the Security Council.

The Security Council voted ten to three to expel South Africa. While Australia had voted in favour, the veto of the United States, Britain and France allowed South Africa to remain a member of the United Nations.16 With this vote, Australia gained considerable support from the developing

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15 ibid., pp. 116-7.
16 Goldsworthy, The Whitlam Government’s African Policy, op. cit., p. 4 and Clark, The United Nations, op. cit., p. 153. Permanent members have veto over any question in the Security Council and it would require only one permanent member to cast a negative vote for the motion to be rejected.
nations of Africa and Asia but lost support from some European nations.17 The issue was pursued in the United Nations General Assembly on 12 November 1974 where the President, Algerian Foreign Minister Bouteflika ruled that the 'repeated rejection of South Africa's credentials signified that the members of the United Nations refused to allow the participation of the delegation of South Africa'.18 This reversed the decisions of previous General Assembly Presidents on this matter and was overwhelmingly supported 92 votes to 22 with 19 abstentions. Thus, after several attempts, South Africa was excluded from the United Nations.

Interestingly, Australia voted against the ruling of the General Assembly President on the procedural point that challenging the credentials of a member country in this manner was insufficient grounds to deny participation in the forum. While providing a consistent approach on the procedural questions in the United Nations, Australia voted against the expulsion of South Africa in the General Assembly after voting in favour of the proposition in the Security Council. On the fundamental question of South African participation in the United Nations, one might have expected the Whitlam government to ignore the technical processes on an issue which was forcefully articulated within the Labor government and strongly argued among members of the UN General Assembly.

It was also interesting that the United States advised South Africa not to withdraw from the United Nations because the next Assembly President was likely to be an Australian and therefore more sympathetic to the participation of South Africa.19 This implied that the changes initiated by Whitlam to Australia's international position, especially on issues of racism and discrimination, were not seen as significant. Alternatively, the United States may have been confident in its capacity to influence the Australian government to the point of supporting South Africa in the General Assembly. Also, the US understood that Australia, even with a Labor government, would uphold the procedural traditions of the UN and thereby not act to exclude South Africa through a ruling of the President of the Assembly.

Australia's position at the United Nations in opposition to apartheid was undermined by the continuing trade relationship with South Africa. This economic connection was important for some of the Labor Party constituency in order to maintain employment in Australian industries which exported products to South Africa. For Whitlam, this was a difficult situation because the Labor Party's anti-racist principles clashed with the imperative to promote Australian economic interests. Moreover, Cairns, as Minister for Overseas Trade, was placed in the awkward situation of following the Labor Party Platform in opposition to racism while charged to 'assist Australian exporters and manufacturers to find markets abroad'. In July 1973, Minister Cairns attempted to explain the position of the Labor government:

"You can't stop trade with countries just because you don't like their policies. If we did that, we would stop trading with just about every country except Sweden and Switzerland."

Prime Minister Whitlam clarified that Australia would not unilaterally prohibit trade with South Africa but would support economic sanctions in the United Nations or elsewhere which would place pressure upon the minority government of South Africa. The support for sanctions depended upon agreement by South Africa's other major trading nations.

Australia had become a significant exporter of cars, spare parts, and machinery to South Africa and an importer of industrial diamonds and asbestos materials. The level of imports was overshadowed by the

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22 Cairns quoted in Australian, 27 July 1973. Minister Cairns continued to explain that 'the Government was reviewing trade with South Africa because of its apartheid policies. We may withdraw Government support for trade with South Africa'.

23 See Whitlam in Millar, op. cit., p. 415 and Goldsworthy, Australia and Africa..., op. cit., p. 62.

significant growth in exports between 1971 and 1973.\textsuperscript{25} Further, the dilemma of principles and practice was illustrated by Australia's opportunity to influence the International Wool Secretariat. Financed by Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, but largely controlled by Australia, this international organisation offered the point at which the Whitlam government could have applied pressure on vital South African interests. However, it was understood that any disruption to South African trade in wool would weaken the industry as a whole, which would have created disquiet within Australia.\textsuperscript{26} Alternatively, Australia could have capitalised upon the exclusion of South Africa from the international wool market by expanding exports to replace the South African trade. Indeed, this course was suggested by some African leaders.\textsuperscript{27}

The Australian Department of Overseas Trade continued to promote economic links with South Africa by retaining two Trade Commission offices in South Africa.\textsuperscript{28} Minister Cairns intimated that the recall of the Trade Commissioners was a possibility. However, in 1974, the government decided simply to limit the role of the Trade Commissions to exclude promotional activity. In the following year, one Trade Commissioner was withdrawn from Cape Town while the same position was retained in Johannesburg.\textsuperscript{29}

Linked to the trade issues, the Whitlam government understood that significant national economic interests rested with Australian investment in South Africa, particularly as Australian investments in South Africa

\textsuperscript{25} Australian exports to South Africa grew from $79million in 1971-72 to $95million in 1972-73. Also significant was the growth in imports from $20million in 1972-73 to $36million in 1973-74. See answer to question from Crean, CPD, HR, 12 February 1975, pp. 243-4. See also Ron Witton, Australia and Apartheid, the Ties that Bind, \textit{Australian Quarterly}, Vol. 45, 2, June 1973 for details of trade and investment links between Australia and South Africa during the 1960s.


\textsuperscript{27} See Higgott, Australia and Africa..., op. cit., p. 231.

\textsuperscript{28} During 1973, the official journal of the Department of Overseas Trade promoted the South African investment and trade region, and advanced the economic opportunities in the disputed Portuguese colony of Angola. Witton, op. cit., p. 29.

were highly profitable. The problem remained that this investment assisted the apartheid economy and regime while utilising regulations which exploited the African labour force.\textsuperscript{30} Eventually, the Labor government discontinued the practice of subsidising investment by Australian companies in South Africa. Also, Senator Willesee wrote to all Australian companies with subsidiaries or associates in South Africa with proposals for improving the working conditions of employees. The Whitlam government may have been influenced by similar initiatives enacted by the British and Canadian governments. The correspondence attempted to apply moral pressure alone in the absence of legislation or other action.\textsuperscript{31}

These gestures on trade and investment reflected the interests of business groups in Australia. Whitlam was under pressure from Australian business to guarantee continued trade with South Africa but more importantly, the Prime Minister needed the support of business groups within the domestic economy.\textsuperscript{32} The Labor government was struggling to contain inflation and unemployment and required the active assistance of business groups in Australia. While the government seemed to confront a strike of capital and investment from the day of election, the attempt to incorporate the interests of business on some topics was important for Whitlam to the end.

Similarly, the Labor government considered the licence of South African Airways flights to Australia which was due for renewal in July 1974. At this point, there was some discussion between the Departments of Foreign Affairs and Transport. The argument against continued air links focused on the contribution to the South African tourist and business trade in addition to the implicit recognition of companies operating under the apartheid regime. Conceivably, the rights of Qantas in South Africa would have been revoked if the Whitlam government were to ban SAA in Australia. This would have damaged a profitable Qantas route. The Labor government repeated the stance that there were no United Nations prohibitions on international air links with South Africa and many carriers operated in South Africa. Australia would conform to UN resolutions on this but was not prepared to initiate a unilateral shift.\textsuperscript{33} Thus, the SAA licence was

\textsuperscript{30} See Whitlam, 30 April 1974, interviewed by Albinski, op. cit., p. 118.
\textsuperscript{32} See Witton, op. cit., p. 29.
\textsuperscript{33} See Albinski, op. cit., p. 118.
renewed and thereafter, the case for terminating the link became significantly more difficult.34

Simultaneously, the Whitlam government was criticised by community groups for the continuing trade and economic connections with South Africa. In 1974, for example, the Campaign Against Racial Exploitation began coordinating information for various organisations opposed to apartheid. CARE produced a comprehensive information kit which advocated direct action to draw attention to the apartheid system, attempted to raise awareness in the media and public forums, and implemented a strategy for changing the policies and practices of governments, individuals and companies in relation to trading with South Africa.35 Through CARE, student organisations, church groups and aid bodies actively discouraged purchases of South African imports in Australia.

In addition, community groups supported the Whitlam government's firm position to restrict sporting contacts with both South Africa and Rhodesia. Racially selected sporting teams were excluded from Australia and their transit through Australia was not permitted. Conversely, individual sporting players were not denied access to Australia nor individual Australians from competing in South Africa. However, in early 1974, the Lawn Tennis Association of Australia decided not to send players to South Africa. Also the Labor government argued with the Australian Cricket Board over sending a team to South Africa and the government's position prevailed.36 Given the historical sporting rivalries between Australia and South Africa in cricket and rugby, the sporting restrictions implied a substantial impact upon the colonial sporting communities.37

In sum, the Whitlam government rejected arguments for substantial change in Australia's economic relationship with South Africa. The government argued that unilateral action would have been ineffective or

35 See Canberra Times, 30 November & 2 December 1974. Also, groups such as the South African Defence and Aid Fund, the Southern African Liberation Centre, and the campaign to Halt All Racial Tours sought to influence the government and the public. Goldsworthy, Australia and Africa..., op. cit., pp. 66 & 69-70. See also Neville Curtis, Australian opposition to Apartheid, United Nations Centre against Apartheid: Notes and documents, no. 1/77, January 1977.
36 See Albinski, op. cit., p. 115. See also Whitlam, op. cit., p. 20 on the initial decision to exclude the sporting teams, and Australian, 21 March 1974.
37 Indeed, Higgott, Australia and Africa..., op. cit., p. 219, explained that challenges to South Africa's sporting relationship with Australia had a 'profoundly unsettling effect' on South Africa's minority population.
singly damaging to the Australian economy. The Department of Overseas Trade initiated and reinforced this position, supported by Minister Cairns. The Whitlam government encouraged a move by the United Nations on trade sanctions but also recognised that sanctions would not eventuate in the short term. Stronger action against South Africa would rely upon significant change from Britain and the United States.38

On the other hand, Whitlam directed that Australia would vote to expel South Africa from the United Nations. This position was directly opposite to the views of Britain and the United States and was a reversal of Australia's position prior to 1972. Whitlam also acted to limit sporting contact with South Africa which was significant in demonstrating a political commitment to oppose racial discrimination. Nevertheless, the combination of initiatives on South Africa provided a mixed outcome for the Labor government and, in the end, Whitlam could have strengthened Australia's opposition to apartheid.

Rhodesia

The Whitlam government's policies on Rhodesia were more rigid than those on South Africa. With an immediate change in voting on Rhodesia at the United Nations, the Whitlam government demonstrated an obvious change in foreign policy to oppose the minority regime in Rhodesia. Also, in line with the Labor Party Platform and policy speech, the Whitlam government attempted to sever ties with Rhodesia with mixed results. The clear change in direction on Rhodesia was crucial for Australia's international image and for the Whitlam Labor government's credibility in the Asia Pacific region.

Immediately following the 1972 election, Prime Minister Whitlam instructed the Australian delegation in the UN plenary session on 7 December 1972 to vote in favour of two draft resolutions which were strongly critical of the minority regime in Rhodesia and called for the strengthening of sanctions against the Rhodesian government.39 The advice to Whitlam from the Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs was to abstain on both resolutions but Whitlam regarded these arguments as too 'legalistic' and instead instructed the delegation to vote in favour of

both resolutions. Whitlam gained the desired impact as Australia's representatives in New York could 'scarcely believe the warmth of the welcome which other delegates gave to Australia's switch'.

In January 1973, Australia began an elected term on the UN Security Council and one of the first issues to be discussed was Rhodesia's closure of its border with Zambia. This course of action by Rhodesia was pursued in order to dissuade Zambia from supporting guerrilla forces which were operating in Rhodesia. In the Security Council debate in February, Australia expressed sympathy with Zambia on this issue and supported the Council decision to assist in alleviating 'the special economic hardships confronting Zambia' as a result of the Rhodesian blockade. This symbolic action by the Australian representative in the Security Council further demonstrated the anti-racist credentials of the new Whitlam Labor government to the international community.

Subsequently, Whitlam attempted to restrict the contact between residents of Rhodesia and Australia. From 1 October 1973, Rhodesians were required to gain a visa to enter Australia and, in effect, these were rarely granted. To the frustration of the government, Rhodesian access to Australia was facilitated through South African contacts and other agencies. Indeed, Australian military officers were recruited for service with the Rhodesian armed forces.

Despite clear instructions to the New South Wales government that the Rhodesia Information Centre in Sydney should be closed, the Whitlam government was frustrated on this issue. The Centre was a substitute for official representation of the minority regime in Australia and it was advising Australian businesses on methods of commercial gain in Rhodesia. On 7 December 1972, in a letter to the NSW Premier Sir Robert

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40 See comments of Sir Keith Waller, recorded from a meeting on 5 December 1972, discussed in Whitlam, ibid., pp. 14-15. See also Clark, The United Nations, op. cit., p. 127 and Clark, Australian Foreign Policy..., op. cit., pp. 16 & 129.
41 Whitlam, op. cit., p. 69.
43 Albinski, op. cit., p. 114. See also Clark, The United Nations, op. cit., p. 152.
44 See Goldsworthy, Australia and Africa..., op. cit., p. 66.
Askin, Whitlam wrote:

The [Rhodesia Information] Centre's existence under its present name . . . creates the impression in the minds of other governments, and of the public generally, that the Australian Government tolerates the existence in Australia of an agency of the regime in Southern Rhodesia.45

The Askin Liberal Party government co-operated in applying to the Supreme Court of NSW for the cancellation of the business registration of the Rhodesia Information Centre. The application was granted but subsequently overruled by the NSW Court of Appeal in June 1974. In preference to an appeal to the High Court, the Whitlam government decided to introduce legislation to implement the United Nations resolutions on Rhodesia which would provide authority to close the Centre. This course was blocked by a full and often disrupted Parliamentary schedule.46 Therefore, the Rhodesia Information Centre continued to operate throughout the term of the Whitlam government.

In the end, the early action in opposition to Rhodesia in the United Nations provided a clear policy direction for the Whitlam government. Australia was aligned with the majority of nations in halting contact with Rhodesia and applying diplomatic pressure by attempting to close the Rhodesia Information Centre. Australia was fervent in opposing the minority government in Rhodesia while inconsistent on South Africa.

Aid to Africa

The Whitlam government's aid policy on Africa complemented the international and domestic actions against the minority governments in South Africa and Rhodesia. Australia allocated food aid to various regions

45 Whitlam, op. cit., p. 70. Efforts to sever postal and telephone services to the Rhodesia Information Centre and to delete the Centre's entry from Sydney telephone directories were stopped by an application to the High Court. See Albinski, op. cit., p. 114 and Murphy, answer to question, CPD, Senate, vol. 57, 12 September 1973, p. 439.
46 Whitlam, ibid., p. 70. Goldsworthy, Australia and Africa..., op. cit., p. 66, explained that a group known as the Alternative Rhodesia Information Centre was important in publicising the activities of the Rhodesia Information Centre and in approaching Members of Parliament. See also Albinski, op. cit., p. 114; Goldsworthy, The Whitlam Government's African Policy, op. cit., p. 2; Clark, The United Nations, op. cit., p. 152; Bull, op. cit., p. 49; and see generally, United States Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa, Hearings: Implications for US international legal obligations of the presence of the Rhodesia Information Office in the United States, part 1, May 1973.
in Africa, provided monies to multilateral funds for targeted assistance, increased project aid which included the Magarini project in Kenya, and offered aid for specific political purposes in opposition to Rhodesia. The level of Australian aid to Africa increased during the tenure of the Whitlam government, mostly through multilateral disbursements. Nonetheless, the political significance of Australian aid to Africa was more important than the economic amounts. For example, in May 1973, the Whitlam government contributed $250000 to assist Zambia develop alternative trade routes through southern Africa in response to a visit from Zambian officials.

The focus of the Australian economic assistance program to Africa was emergency humanitarian relief in the form of food aid. In response to problems related to famine in 1974-75, Australia sent milk powder to Ethiopia and purchased maize to be used partly for distribution in food deficit areas and partly for the establishment of food security stocks. The Whitlam government delivered wheat, ghee, and milk powder to feeding camps established by the Somali government following severe repercussions from drought in 1974. Wheat was shipped to Mauritania, Mali and Senegal in February-April 1975 and a further cash allocation was made to the Sahelian Relief Operation of the Food and Agriculture Organisation. In June 1975, the Australian government shipped wheat to Tanzania, Mozambique and the Sudan which were experiencing food shortages due to the combination of drought and floods. Also, during 1975-76, wheat was allocated to Egypt and flour shipped to Mauritius.

In conjunction with the food aid allocations, the Whitlam government provided aid to Africa through multilateral channels. Targeted multilateral aid included the United Nations Educational and Training Programmes for Southern Africa, UN Trust Fund for South Africa, UN Fund for Namibia,

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48 Goldsworthy, Australia and Africa..., op. cit., p. 62. See also Higgott, Australia and Africa..., op. cit., p. 222.

Special Commonwealth African Assistance Plan, Special Commonwealth Programme for Assisting the Education of Rhodesian Africans, and Humanitarian Assistance to National Liberation Movements in Africa.\footnote{50} Contributions to these visible international funds was important in demonstrating Australia's shift on African political issues in the United Nations and the Commonwealth.

There were also less visible allocations that strengthened particular relationships with African countries. These contributions included training awards, study visits and scholarships under the Commonwealth Cooperation in Education Plan and the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan. While the totals of this aid remained small, representing less than one percent of Australia's aid expenditure, these new aid initiatives reflected a growing financial and political commitment to Africa.\footnote{51}

Also, increased attention was given to longer term rehabilitation aid and specific projects. In 1973, Australian assistance was requested in developing water resources in the arid Singida region of Tanzania. Australia sent two drilling units and a team of experts for an initial three-year period to develop water supplies for domestic and stock purposes. Windmills and storage facilities were supplied and local drillers and mechanics were trained to operate and maintain equipment.\footnote{52} Further, funds were provided in 1974 for a Food and Agriculture Organisation Sahelian pasture rehabilitation project with further assistance anticipated for 1975-6. At the request of the government of Ghana in 1975, a feasibility study was commissioned on the Bui Hydro-electric Project on the Black Volta River.\footnote{53}

The Whitlam government was also involved in the early stages of a large aid project in Kenya which became known as the Magarini Settlement Project. This project involved 'the investigation and development of water supplies, the establishment of settlers, and the development of agricultural production.'\footnote{54} Initial studies were conducted by representatives of the

\footnote{50}{See Goldsworthy, \textit{The Whitlam Government's African Policy}, op. cit., p. 3.}
\footnote{51}{ibid.}
\footnote{52}{ADAA, \textit{First Annual Report}, op. cit., p. 29-30 and ADAA, \textit{Annual Report 1975-6}, op. cit., p. 16.}
\footnote{53}{ADAA, \textit{Annual Report 1975-6}, ibid.}
\footnote{54}{ibid., pp. 16-17. As early as 1972, it was suggested that Australia provide Kenya with an expert in dry-land farming. At the 1973 CHOGM in Ottawa, the Whitlam government made an offer of aid in the form of technical advice to the Kenyan Vice-President and reiterated the proposal for an irrigation engineer or an arid-zone agronomist through the High}
Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation and the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation. In critique of the commitment of a large amount of aid funds into one project in Kenya, Porter, Allen and Thompson claimed that:

Magarini initially existed only as a desire of the Australian Whitlam Labor government for a 'project somewhere in Africa' to deflect charges by African Commonwealth leaders that Australia was a bastion of white racism.

This harsh interpretation of the motives for involvement in the project assumed that the Whitlam government had a simplistic attitude toward relations with Africa and that Whitlam needed to convince Commonwealth leaders about Australia's commitment to Africa. The Whitlam government was operating at various levels to support the interests of African countries and the accusation that the Magarini project was an empty gesture seems misplaced.

In linking aid and Australia's political position, the Whitlam government allocated economic assistance to liberation forces in Africa and to Mozambique. These decisions fitted with the Whitlam government's policies in opposition to South Africa and Rhodesia. Specifically, the President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, visited Australia in March 1974 and requested funds to acquire weapons for forces opposed to the apartheid regime. The Whitlam government was prepared to offer assistance but balked at the notion of supplying arms to the liberation movements. Following a submission from the Department of Foreign Affairs, the government decided to allocate $150000 in 1974-75 for humanitarian assistance to African national liberation movements. The funds were channelled through established networks such as the Organisation of African Unity and UNICEF, and were allocated as aid for women and children of liberation movements who had temporarily settled in Zambia.


On the role of SMEC, see T.A. Murphy, The Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation as an Instrument of Australian Foreign Policy, M.A. thesis, Department of International Relations, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, 1985, which examines two SMEC projects, the Serayu River Basin project in Indonesia and the Zamboanga del Sur Development project in the Philippines.


Albinski, op. cit., p. 102 and Higgott, Australia and Africa..., op. cit., p. 222. Several other nations had previously committed funds for humanitarian purposes to liberation movements.
These funds for food and housing for displaced and exiled families allowed other monies to be spent on weapons by the liberation groups. The visit by President Nyerere also signalled the Whitlam government's acknowledgment of a respected African leader and reinforced the collective action against the minority governments in South Africa and Rhodesia.

The Whitlam government also allocated $1 million in food aid to Mozambique. This assistance emerged from the 1975 CHOGM decision to provide aid to the Frelimo government in Mozambique to compensate for the costs incurred in enforcing sanctions against Rhodesia. This allocation of aid was significant in demonstrating the Whitlam government's opposition to the minority regime in Rhodesia.

Through the new Australian Development Assistance Agency, the Whitlam government also made longer term plans for aid to Africa. This began with an Australian aid mission, which included specialist advisers on water resources and agricultural development, visiting Ghana, Tanzania, Zambia and Kenya in June-July 1975. The purpose of the mission was to discuss priorities and requirements for aid with a view to assisting the forward planning of the aid program to Africa. On this basis, programs of assistance were being developed by the aid Agency late in the term of the Whitlam government. It was planned that the Australian aid program would focus on the need for increased food production and the development of water resources.

In total, the aid allocations to Africa demonstrated that the Whitlam government was committed to the interests and demands of the African states. Australian aid to Africa also complemented the Whitlam government's international and domestic initiatives in opposition to the minority regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia. In particular, the different elements of the Australian aid program to Africa assisted the Whitlam government's position in the United Nations and the Commonwealth. Overall, while the level of aid from Australia to Africa was low, these allocations had considerable political significance.

and the Australian contribution was seen as a modest amount. The aid assisted families linked to the Zimbabwe liberation groups ZANU and ZAPU, SWAPO and MPLA from Angola, and the African National Congress. See also petitions presented to the Parliament by Members of the Liberal Party in support of greater assistance for national liberation movements in Africa, CPD, Senate, vol. 62, 30 October 1974, pp. 2105-6.

59 Age, 8 May 1975 and Sydney Morning Herald, 8 May 1975. See also Australian, 8 May 1975 and Age, editorial, 8 May 1975.

Conclusion

In contrast to the support provided by the Liberal and Country Parties governments to South Africa and Rhodesia prior to December 1972, the Whitlam government demonstrated the Labor Party's opposition to racial discrimination in southern Africa. In addition, Whitlam showed support for the interests of African countries in conjunction with new relationships with developing countries in general. Specifically, Australia argued for the expulsion of South Africa from the United Nations but also continued to trade with the apartheid economy. While restricting sporting links with South Africa, Whitlam delivered a mixed record in opposing apartheid, reflecting the range of views in Australia about the appropriate relationship with South Africa.

Whitlam initiated immediate changes in Australia's approach to Rhodesia in the UN which established the anti-racist credentials for the Labor government with the international community, especially with the developing countries. However, Whitlam was frustrated in attempting to close the Rhodesia Information Centre. The content of Australian aid to Africa during the Whitlam government tended to complement the high profile changes in policy on South Africa and Rhodesia. Notably, Whitlam showed a level of political commitment to Africa in allocating economic assistance to liberation forces and southern African countries opposing the minority regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia.

The Whitlam government's position on Africa was central to Australia's relations with developing countries, particularly for Australia's policies in the Asia Pacific region. The changes initiated by the Whitlam government emerged from the domestic political context and the international debates of the early 1970s. In total, a significant achievement of the Whitlam Labor government was to place Australia in opposition to the minority regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia and in alliance with many developing countries. This outcome was a substantial shift from the position adopted by the previous Liberal and Country Parties governments in relation to A[r]ica and reflected Whitlam's determination to establish an anti-racist and anti-colonial foreign policy for Australia.
chapter 6

Domestic context of the Fraser foreign policy

In the previous chapters, I established the foreign policy position of the Liberal and Country Parties governments prior to December 1972. As initiated by Prime Minister Menzies, Australian foreign policy was based on security concerns and anti-communism, alliances with Britain and the United States, and support for South Africa and Rhodesia. I introduced the nature of the Whitlam Labor government to show the domestic context in which Whitlam played an important role in relation to Australian foreign policy. I subsequently examined Whitlam's critical relationship with the United States, the tensions in Australia's policy on the Indian Ocean, and the new position adopted by Whitlam in the United Nations. On these international issues, I concluded that Whitlam had instituted significant changes to Australian foreign policy while maintaining the basis for Australia's international alliances. Whitlam also built constructive relationships with developing countries through an anti-racist and anti-colonial approach toward the Asia Pacific region. This change in foreign policy was an important context for Whitlam's policies on Africa. The Whitlam government changed Australia's voting position at the UN to oppose the minority regime in Rhodesia and limited political and sporting contacts with the South African government.
The analysis of these issues provides a basis for comparison with the foreign policy of the Fraser Liberal and Country Parties government. Also, this discussion is structured to examine the continuity or change in foreign policy from the Whitlam government to the Fraser government. Further, the comparison creates links between issues over time to present a clear picture of Australian foreign policy.

To resume the examination of foreign policy from the dismissal of the Whitlam government on 11 November 1975, Malcolm Fraser was installed as caretaker Prime Minister prior to the federal election scheduled for 13 December 1975. Meanwhile, the Australian government was confronted with the movement of Indonesian troops into East Timor. Subsequently, the overwhelming victory of the Liberal and Country Parties in the federal election provided an important power base for Fraser. The unique combination of views held by Prime Minister Fraser were important in the construction of Australia's international agenda, particularly in providing links between different elements of foreign policy, which in turn was important for understanding Australia's relations with Africa. In the following chapters, I analyse the international relationships of the Fraser government, relations with developing countries, and finally Australia's policy toward Africa.

Caretaker government and East Timor

As caretaker Prime Minister, Fraser selected an interim Ministry to maintain the administration of government departments prior to the double dissolution election. The caretaker government, including the Prime Minister, could not initiate changes to policy prior to the federal election. Thus, between 11 November and 13 December 1975, the political parties were concentrating on the election campaign and Australia was in the unusual position of operating through a limited caretaker government.

The election campaign was dominated by reactions to the dismissal of Whitlam and domestic issues from the term of the Labor government. However, on 7 December 1975, Indonesian armed forces invaded East Timor

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1 Related to foreign policy, the caretaker Ministry included Andrew Peacock in the position of Minister for Foreign Affairs, Doug Anthony as Minister for Overseas Trade and Jim Killen as Minister for Defence. See Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, vol. 98, p. ii.
to 'restore order'. This move ensured that Fretilin would not control East Timor and implied eventual integration of the territory with Indonesia.

The timing of this manoeuvre coincided with the state of parliamentary and governmental flux in Australia which may have produced an expectation in Indonesia that the caretaker Fraser administration would not be able to organise a coordinated response to the invasion. Indeed, the caretaker Australian government, and the former Labor government Ministers, were preoccupied with domestic electoral issues and chose not to provide public reactions to the annexation of East Timor.

In fact, Fraser's policy options immediately after the invasion were limited. The choices ranged from silent acquiescence to the encouragement of an active role for the United Nations. Similar to the dilemma faced by the Whitlam government, Fraser needed to balance Australia's relations with Indonesia and support for self-determination in East Timor. Fraser also needed to offer a critical response for the consumption of the domestic electorate and provide a measure of reserve toward Indonesia for long-term contingencies, such as increased tension between Papua New Guinea and Indonesia.

The immediate response to Indonesia's action in East Timor was provided by the United Nations Committee on Decolonisation and the UN General Assembly. Two draft resolutions emerged for debate. The first, sponsored by Guyana, Sierra Leone and others, expressed deep concern about the situation in East Timor and strongly deplored the military intervention. The resolution called upon Indonesia to withdraw from East Timor and urged the Security Council to take urgent action to protect East Timor's

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territorial 'integrity and the 'inalienable right of its people to self-
determination'.

The alternative draft resolution, sponsored by India and members of
ASEAN, among others, did not specifically refer to Indonesia but called
upon all states to 'refrain from any action which might prejudice the free
exercise by the people of Portuguese Timor of their right to self-
determination'. This resolution was an attempt to assist Indonesia and to
maintain constructive relations in ASEAN and other forums.

During the UN debates, the Australian delegation actively sought a text
which would be acceptable to all nations. In the end, the Indian and
ASEAN draft was withdrawn and the critical Guyanan draft in original
form was adopted. Australia had expressed reservations about the direct
references to Indonesia and, in the General Assembly, abstained on a
separate vote on this element. However, Australia voted for the resolution
in both committee and plenary, and thus joined the condemnation of
Indonesia's military intervention and called upon the Security Council for
urgent action. In sum, the caretaker Fraser government advocated self-
determination for East Timor but did not actively oppose the Indonesian
invasion. It seemed that Australia yielded to long-term economic and
security interests in maintaining friendly relations with Indonesia.

Prime Minister Fraser and foreign policy

The federal election on 13 December 1975 provided a substantial majority of
seats for the Liberal and Country Parties government in both the House of
Representatives and the Senate. This significant electoral victory
entrenched the personal power of Fraser within the government. As Prime

5 See Clark, op. cit., p. 148.
6 ibid.
7 The resolution was adopted in committee with 69 in favour, 11 against and 38 abstentions,
and subsequently adopted in the General Assembly 72-10-43. Formal amendments to the
Guyanan draft from Australia, the Philippines, Thailand, Saudi Arabia and Mauritania to
delete the direct reference to Indonesian military action all failed. See ibid.
8 P.J. Boyce, Problems in Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1976, Australian Journal
of Politics and History, vol. 23, 1, April 1977, p. 5. See also Mackie, op. cit., p. 5.
9 There was a 7.4 percent swing to the Liberal and Country Parties from the previous election.
See Australian Parliamentary Handbook, Nineteenth edition, Supplement no. 1, AGPS,
Canberra, 1976. For the purpose of clarity, I continue to employ the nomenclature of the
Country Party through the period of the Fraser government while the Country Party changed
its name to the National Country Party in May 1975 and to the National Party of Australia
in October 1983.
Minister and leader of the Liberal party, and in contrast to the Labor Party process, Fraser was able to construct a Ministry with few constraints. There was an expectation that members of the Country Party would be appointed to particular portfolios as part of a coalition government and some expectations from long-serving Liberal Members of Parliament for senior portfolios. Thus, as established in the caretaker Ministry, Andrew Peacock was confirmed as Minister for Foreign Affairs, Jim Killen gained the Defence portfolio, and the leader of the Country Party and Deputy Prime Minister, Doug Anthony was appointed to the position of Minister for Overseas Trade. Nonetheless, the formulation of foreign policy centred on the complex ideological position of Prime Minister Fraser. Indeed, Fraser led the members of the government on many issues, especially in opposing the minority regimes in southern Africa.

The family experience of Malcolm Fraser instilled a conservative philosophy which was linked with a background of public service and an outlook of international proportions. The establishment country life shaped Fraser’s character, which was reinforced at Melbourne Grammar School. At Oxford University in the 1950s, Fraser learned of the threat of communism and this preoccupation remained in different forms throughout a long career. In 1955, aged twenty-five, with relatively little experience, Fraser was elected as the Liberal Party Member for the seat of Wannon, a marginal electorate in Western Victoria. Significantly, the Country Party chose not contest the seat. In the Parliament, Fraser demonstrated an individual set of ideals by criticising established authority, strongly supporting the rural sector and aligning with the Country Party more than with the urban-based Liberal Party led by Prime Minister Menzies.

Fraser developed an internationalist theme through many speeches in the Parliament. This interest was manifest in Fraser’s statements on the United

10 See CPD, HR, vol. 98, p. iii.
12 See Renouf, op. cit., pp. 10-12 for details.
Nations, the United States, South Africa, the Commonwealth, communism, and Vietnam. Following the retirement of Menzies in January 1966, Fraser was appointed as Minister for the Army, which involved responsibility for administration rather than personnel. Fraser was active in this portfolio at a difficult time given the commitment of Australian troops in Vietnam. Following the disappearance of Prime Minister Holt, Fraser helped launch Gorton to the leadership of the Liberal Party and was promoted to the position of Minister for Education and Science. Fraser again assisted Gorton against McMahon after the 1969 election and was subsequently promoted to the Defence portfolio. However, by early 1971, Fraser had clashed with Prime Minister Gorton on several occasions and thus resigned through a vitriolic speech in the Parliament.

Following the 1972 election defeat, Snedden was elected to the leadership of the Liberal Party in a ballot against Bowen and Fraser. In opposition, Fraser performed the duties of spokesperson on primary industries and later, industrial relations. After the April 1974 election, Fraser challenged the leadership of Snedden and was convincingly defeated. Nonetheless, tensions grew within the Liberal Party and Fraser successfully attained the leadership in March 1975. Fraser ensured that the Senate would not pass the Whitlam Labor government's Supply bills in October-November 1975 and thus provided the conditions for the Governor-General to dismiss Whitlam and to call elections.

14 See Fraser's Parliamentary speeches on foreign policy, for example: 
CPD, HR, vol. 9, 15 March 1956, pp. 860-3 on the Commonwealth and international affairs; 
CPD, HR, vol. 16, 5 September 1957 on trade; 
CPD, HR, vol. 18, 25 February 1958, pp. 22-5, address in reply to Governor General's speech; 
CPD, HR, vol. 20, 7 August 1958, pp. 214-17 on the Middle East; 
CPD, HR, vol. 30, 12 April 1961, pp. 769-73 on South Africa; 
CPD, HR, vol. 38, 21 May 1963, pp. 1583-90 on the United States and North West Cape; 
CPD, HR, vol. 41, 5 March 1964, pp. 297-301, address in reply to Governor General's speech; 
CPD, HR, vol. 43, 13 August 1964, pp. 193-7 on Vietnam; 
CPD, HR, vol. 44, 21 October 1964, 2176-9 on communism; 
CPD, HR, vol. 45, 23 March 1965, pp. 243-6 on Indonesia; and 
15 Australian Parliamentary Handbook, 1976, p. 69. Fraser was appointed on 26 January 1966 by Prime Minister Holt. 
16 Renouf, op. cit., p. 15. 
As Prime Minister, Fraser embodied a mixed Parliamentary experience with a significant personal interest in Australia's international relationships. Fraser also brought a strong leadership approach which implied, from the outset, a dominant role in foreign policy. Prime Minister Fraser argued that Australia could make a contribution in world affairs through a constructive foreign policy. This understanding also stressed the alliance with the United States and displayed a fervent opposition to Soviet communism. Fraser linked these general aspects of Australian foreign policy with a personal commitment to southern African issues, primarily, criticisms of the minority regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia. The simple explanation for this mixture was that Fraser opposed communism in southern Africa and therefore advocated the need for moderate African, democratically-elected governments in South Africa and Rhodesia rather than Soviet-supported socialist regimes. There seemed to be more to Fraser's advocacy on southern Africa than offered by this explanation. Nonetheless, the views of Fraser as Prime Minister outweighed the traditional support for the colonial communities in South Africa and Rhodesia within the Liberal and Country Parties.18

The dominance of Fraser within the government shifted the ideological focus from the political parties to the views of the Prime Minister. Rather than diminish the role of ideology in government policy, it was the personal ideology of Fraser that influenced the construction of Australian foreign policy.19 Fraser led the government with a unique combination of conservatism and liberalism, clearly tempered by strong anti-communist views. Within this approach, Fraser foreign policy was universalist, that is, internationalist in perspective. This implied that Fraser was not preoccupied with a particular region or alliance in constructing foreign policy. Indeed, Fraser was different from most Liberal Party Members of Parliament in adopting an active stance against discrimination and racism

which was connected to Fraser's positive approach toward the interests of developing countries.\textsuperscript{20} Thus, Fraser broke from the conservative traditions of Liberal Party foreign policy and, on southern Africa, appeared to move Australian foreign policy further than the Whitlam government.

In addition, Fraser appreciated the value of Whitlam's changes on several key issues in providing considerable distance from the reactionary rhetoric of the previous Liberal and Country Parties governments. Australia's new relationship with China, for example, and the improved relations with developing countries accorded with Fraser's view of foreign policy priorities.\textsuperscript{21} However, this did not mean that there was a convergence on foreign policy from the Labor Party and the Liberal Party. Ideological perspectives remained an important difference between the political parties and the personal ideology of Prime Minister Fraser was central to the contrast in foreign policy.\textsuperscript{22}

In critique of Fraser's position, Camilleri argued that the Prime Minister's view on foreign policy merely represented a return to 'the orthodoxies of the past'.\textsuperscript{23} Millar suggested that there was an element of the past with Fraser's anti-communism and appeals to national interests while Bell showed that Fraser analysed international politics in pessimistic and traditional terms.\textsuperscript{24} These arguments failed to capture the distinctive aspect of Fraser's position which was an insistence on Australia's independent interests. Fraser's sense of independence and view that Australia should play a constructive role in international affairs illustrated a 'more mature and measured quest' for an Australian identity in world politics.\textsuperscript{25} As Prime Minister, Fraser combined old and new perspectives to produce a complex foreign policy outlook.

\textsuperscript{20} Renouf, op. cit., p. 190. See also Coral Bell, \textit{Dependent Ally}, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1988, p. 143.


\textsuperscript{22} Leaver, op. cit., p. 263. See also Alan Renouf, \textit{A Frightened Country}, Macmillan, Melbourne, 1979, pp. 24-5.

\textsuperscript{23} Joseph Camilleri, Foreign policy, chapter 15 in Allan Patience and Brian Head, \textit{From Whitlam to Fraser}, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1979, pp. 282.

\textsuperscript{24} T.B. Millar, Australian Foreign Policy: More of the same in a colder world, \textit{Current Affairs Bulletin}, vol. 57, 12, May 1981, p. 4 and Bell, op. cit., p. 145. See also F.A. Mediansky, The Conservative Style in Australian Foreign Policy, \textit{Australian Outlook}, vol. 28, 1, April 1979.

While the power of Fraser was obvious after the events of 1975, there was an expectation that foreign policy would be influenced by various actors. It was not unreasonable to anticipate that the Parliament and the bureaucracy would shape the direction of Australian foreign policy and attempt to alter specific elements of international relationships. Central to this process was the role of the Minister for Foreign Affairs. In the formation of Fraser's first Ministry, Andrew Peacock was the obvious choice for the Foreign Affairs portfolio. Peacock had been Minister for the Army and then Minister for External Territories under Prime Ministers Gorton and McMahon. In opposition, Peacock was responsible for matters relating to manufacturing industry and then foreign affairs and external territories. With relevant experience and strong views on some issues, Peacock was expected to prevail on some occasions during foreign policy debates.

Peacock and Fraser differed in style, approach, and views on foreign policy questions which emerged from variant personal perspectives. While Fraser combined aspects of conservative and liberal philosophies, Peacock displayed a more predictable liberal ideology and held a more optimistic view of the world. From this position, Peacock had less reason to fear the Soviet Union but appeared to accord with Fraser's general approach. Indeed, Peacock and Fraser complemented each other in the execution of foreign policy. Peacock's professional diplomatic style proved effective in international forums which reduced the need for Fraser's more abrasive approach. Moreover, Peacock adopted a public relations role which included issuing statements which 'corrected, clarified or tempered the Prime Minister's more sweeping or enigmatic pronouncements' without criticising or questioning these views. Also, Peacock's emphasis on equity in international relations complemented Fraser's concern with security. Peacock allocated substantial time to the North South debate, and other economic issues concerning developing countries, which promoted the international credentials of the Fraser government.

28 P.J. Boyce, The Foreign Policy Process, chapter 1 in Boyce and Angel, op. cit., p. 11.
29 Boyce, *Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1976*, op. cit., p. 1. See also Leaver, op. cit., p. 263.
However, the Prime Minister was the central decision-maker on foreign policy. Peacock was perceived as Fraser's main rival for the leadership of the Liberal Party which may have reduced Peacock's effectiveness as a member of the cabinet. This rivalry meant that Fraser consistently attempted to maintain control of the direction of foreign policy and the structures which implemented foreign policy. Given the potential for conflict with Fraser, it was somewhat surprising that Peacock's tenure as Foreign Minister lasted five years. A disagreement arose in 1979 when Vietnam intervened in Kampuchea. Fraser decided to cancel aid to Vietnam without consulting Peacock who was out of Australia and was opposed to this change in policy. Also, Fraser and Peacock held opposing positions on the proposed boycott of the Moscow Olympic Games. Thus, in November 1980, Prime Minister Fraser decided to shift Peacock to the Industrial Relations portfolio and appoint Tony Street to the position of Foreign Minister. Street's main qualification for this promotion was personal loyalty to Fraser. Tony Street had no background in foreign affairs and, as a consequence, adopted a low profile as Minister while Fraser increased personal control over foreign policy. It was a convenient time for a change in personnel as the international political environment was shifting with conflicts in Iran and Afghanistan, and with the election of Reagan in the United States.
The Parliament did not have a significant impact on foreign policy. Renouf argued that Fraser attempted to limit parliamentary debate on international issues in order to control foreign policy. Alternatively, Fraser seemed to allow some latitude with the relevant parliamentary committees, which produced a variety of reports on foreign policy questions. The committees, and thereby backbench Members of Parliament, attempted to exert some influence over issues related to the Soviet Union in the Indian Ocean, the New International Economic Order, ASEAN, Zimbabwe and Namibia. However, these significant reports had little impact on the Prime Minister's view of Australian foreign policy.

At a different level, the bureaucracy had substantial power and discretion to implement political directives on foreign policy. However, during the Fraser government, the Department of Foreign Affairs endured severe financial restrictions, sustained administrative pressure from various inquiries, and lost influence in an atmosphere of greater executive control over foreign policy. Foreign Minister Peacock advocated the retention of Alan Renouf as Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs, notwithstanding Renouf's declared preference for Labor Party policies and public criticism of the Liberal Party in 1975. Renouf was able to work with

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35 Renouf, *Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy*, op. cit., p. 80.
38 Treasury attempted to constrict the spending of Foreign Affairs, especially on aid, where the Department of Foreign Affairs was dominant and worked in conjunction with Treasury. See Philip Eldridge, *Diplomacy, Development and 'Small Government': Conflicting Directions in Australia's Overseas Aid Program, Australia-Asia Paper*, no. 23, Centre for the Study of Australian-Asian Relations, Griffith University, January 1983. The Department of Foreign Affairs had never been the subject of a comprehensive public review but, between 1975 and 1978, four committees of inquiry focused on the Department.
Peacock and maintained amicable relations with Fraser. However, Renouf was dismissed in August 1976 after the Prime Minister's visit to China.39

Significantly, Owen Harries was recruited to an advisory role in Foreign Affairs which included writing speeches for both Peacock and Fraser.40 Harries' position on international relations accorded more comfortably with the Prime Minister's view than with the Foreign Minister's perspective, which led to an invitation to join Fraser's office as an adviser and speechwriter. Moreover, the increase in expertise in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, coupled with the interest of Fraser, shifted the focus of decision-making away from the Department of Foreign Affairs.41

In total, the complex personal philosophy of Prime Minister Fraser had a significant impact on Australian foreign policy. Fraser directed the construction and implementation of foreign policy in the context of limited influence from Foreign Ministers Peacock and Street, the Parliament, including the committees, and the bureaucracy. Moreover, the role of Fraser as Prime Minister was central to the direction of Australia's international relationships.

Conclusion

From the moment of appointment, Prime Minister Fraser operated with a substantial power base which was constructed in the context of the dismissal of the Whitlam Labor government. Whilst caretaker Prime Minister, Fraser was confronted with the Indonesian invasion of East Timor and chose to display Australia's position at the United Nations rather than during the domestic election campaign. The 1975 election result strengthened Fraser's position within the Liberal and Country Parties and provided a large Parliamentary majority.

39 Boyce, The Foreign Policy Process, op. cit., p. 13. Renouf was accused of an embarrassing leak of a conversation involving the Prime Minister in China. Renouf was moved from the position of Secretary to replace Nicholas Parkinson as Ambassador to the United States, and Parkinson was appointed Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs. See also Alan Renouf, The Champagne Trail: experiences of a diplomat, Sun Books, Melbourne, 1980.


Subsequently, the combination of Fraser's personal views and experiences played an important part in creating the complex foreign policy agenda of the Liberal and Country Parties government. Indeed, Fraser's understandings of international issues appeared contradictory at times, but the different elements of Australian foreign policy were intimately linked in terms of the Prime Minister's agenda. This was particularly evident in the links between Fraser's positions on international relationships, alliances with developing countries, and views on Africa.
The Fraser government's position on key international issues and events formed the context for Australia's relations with developing countries, particularly for Fraser's policies on Africa. This chapter provides the initial links between the general direction of Fraser's international relationships and the specific aspects of Australia's foreign policy. Through this analysis, I show that Prime Minister Fraser established an anti-racist and anti-colonial foreign policy for Australia.

This chapter examines Fraser's foreign policy statement to the Parliament on 1 June 1976 as the point of departure for the Fraser government's international outlook. As the central issue in the government's position, Fraser attempted to strengthen the alliance with the United States in response to a perceived failure of the Whitlam government in this relationship. As a result, the Fraser government encouraged the United States to adopt an active role in the Indian Ocean and condemned the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. In addition, Fraser supported the United States in placing sanctions on Iran following the revolution in 1979 and offered strong support for President Reagan from 1980.
Prior to examining the key international issues, it is important to raise the question about continuity or change in Australian foreign policy. That is, whether the Fraser government adopted the foreign policy agenda of the Whitlam government or moved away from this position. In the context of the acrimonious domestic political atmosphere, the Fraser government was expected to change many policies, thereby distancing the Liberal and Country Parties government from the previous Labor government. However, particularly in foreign policy, Fraser found some advantage in the changes initiated by Whitlam and valued the shift in international environment. These factors implied a need to accept central elements of Whitlam’s foreign policy agenda.¹

Indeed, the reforms implemented by Whitlam made it easier for the Fraser government to inherit an ‘updated’ foreign policy without the need for lengthy debates on the reappraisal of policy within the Liberal and Country Parties. For example, the friendly relationship with China was maintained, albeit from the new premise of a necessary ally against the Soviet Union. Fraser also displayed a willingness to talk with developing countries and upheld the Whitlam government’s policies in opposition to discrimination and oppression in Rhodesia and South Africa.²

Further, Fraser welcomed many Whitlam government initiatives in foreign policy because this extent of change could not have been achieved by the Liberal and Country Parties without straining their credibility with the electorate.³ On this, Millar claimed that Fraser’s successes in foreign affairs emerged from the groundwork prepared by Whitlam and that the Fraser government had merely changed the emphasis of policy while relying on the legacy of the Whitlam government.⁴ This argument centred on the question of style in foreign policy and devalued the changes in content.⁵

⁵ Millar believed that Whitlam’s foreign policy was only marginally different from the previous Liberal and Country Parties governments and thus concluded that little change
Alternatively, Leaver argued that Fraser's personal views were pivotal to Australian foreign policy, rather than any apparent legacy from the Whitlam government. This position was supported by Fraser's independent stance on Australian interests when compared to previous Liberal and Country Parties governments. In the end, the test for this debate is contained in the details of the Fraser government's foreign policies on both general and specific international issues.

June 1976 statement on foreign policy

On 1 June 1976, the Prime Minister addressed the House of Representatives on 'Australia and the World Situation'. This statement set the agenda and tone for the Liberal and Country Parties government foreign policy. Significantly, the June statement was not delivered by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Fraser was determined to frame the government's foreign policy with a personal outline. Foreign Minister Peacock was relegated to the secondary role of clarifying and defending the Prime Minister's statement in the ensuing Parliamentary debate.

In sum, Fraser explained to the Parliament that the Soviet Union was a threat to international security, particularly in relation to activities in the Indian Ocean. This view was linked to Australia's alliance with the United States. Fraser also focused on the Asia Pacific region which included an acceptance of China. In addition, Fraser detailed policies on Australia's relations with developing countries and Australia's attitude on southern Africa.

The June statement displayed several images of the Fraser government. First, the Prime Minister provided an impression of significant change in foreign policy as the government sought to redefine Australia's role in international affairs. Second, and in contrast, Fraser offered a measure of reaction to contemporary events which suggested at least some continuity

occurred at any time within the parliamentary system due to the dominance of external forces in foreign relations. T.B. Millar, Australian Foreign Policy: More of the same in a colder world, Current Affairs Bulletin, vol. 57, 12, May 1981, p. 4. See also Mackie, op. cit., p. 3.
6 Leaver, op. cit., p. 264.
8 See also Leaver, op. cit., p. 263 and Alan Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, Australian Professional Publications, Sydney, 1986, pp. 73-5.
with the Whitlam government on particular policy issues. Third, parts of the statement seemed to return to a Liberal Party tradition by highlighting Australia's security and concerns about communism. In simple terms, the Prime Minister's statement demonstrated an amalgam of the old and the new. However, Renouf argued that:

...as time went by, the old would take pride of place over the new. In part, external developments would be responsible but in part, the government would not live up to the expectations which its own words had aroused.

The overused theoretical position of the June statement was Fraser's understanding of 'realism'. This redirection of assumptions acted as a direct criticism of the perceived idealism of the Whitlam Labor government. The 'enlightened realism' of the statement was intertwined with Liberal Party interpretations of 'democracy, freedom and the individual'. Fraser's realism also extended to the notion of Australia as a small to medium power in the international arena and the focus upon security for Australia, the region and between all nations. From this, Fraser leapt to the position that Australia should pursue a 'flexible, alert and undogmatic' external policy within the constraints of an international environment dominated by power politics.

This position was the background to Fraser's alarmist views on Soviet expansionism and critique of detente. Without qualification, the Prime Minister stated that the Soviet Union sought to 'expand its influence throughout the world' in order to achieve military supremacy. Fraser elaborated through the examples of Soviet provocation during the 1973

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11 See Mackie, op. cit., pp. 3-4.
15 Leaver, op. cit., p. 265, expressed a more startled position regarding Fraser's picture of superpower balance. See also Coral Bell, Mr Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, *World Today*, vol. 35, October 1979, p. 418.
Middle East war, assistance to North Vietnam in the take over of South Vietnam, facilitation of Cuban troops in Angola, and the substantial growth of the Soviet armed forces. This assessment fitted with Fraser's view that detente had not reduced political and military tensions and the 'realities of power had now to be reasserted'. The June statement, and primarily the government's attitude toward the Soviet Union and detente, pre-empted the Prime Minister's first overseas tour to Tokyo, Peking and Washington, thereby fixing the agendas for discussion.

It was significant that, in the June statement, Fraser emphasised the Soviet threat and need for greater United States activity in the Indian Ocean. From an analysis of power in the Indian Ocean region, Fraser criticised the notion of a zone of neutrality and stated the need for 'balance and restraint'. This implied a more active role for the United States and an imperative for upgrading the US facilities at Diego Garcia. Further, Fraser emphasised the need to re-establish close relations with the United States but included a significant qualification:

The interests of the United States and the interests of Australia are not necessarily identical. In our relations with the United States, as in our relations with other great powers, our first responsibility is independently to assess our own interests. The United States will unquestionably do the same.

This intimation of independence in the context of Fraser's realist assessment of the world suggested a break from traditional Liberal Party patterns of international alliance. Indeed, Fraser appeared to be some distance from the language of Holt or Menzies on the United States. This somewhat independent position on the US, albeit within an important alliance with the US, seemed to emerge from Fraser's experience as Minister for the Army, and then Defence, during the Vietnam war.

Also, the importance associated with the South East Asia region in the June statement demonstrated the government's ability to respond to international change in conjunction with Fraser's view on Australia's role in the region. Particularly, Fraser showed a rapid change in accepting the

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17 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2737.
18 Leaver, op. cit., p. 265, paraphrasing the position of Fraser from the June statement.
19 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2741.
20 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2738.
21 For more, see Bell, Dependent Ally, op. cit., p. 146 and Renouf, Australian Diplomacy..., op. cit., p. 328.
People's Republic of China. The Prime Minister's analysis of the global power balance and associated priority on security in the region overtook any historical considerations when designing Australia's new policy toward China. In the simplest terms, Fraser saw China as a useful ally against the Soviet Union. The justification, however, signified problems for the Fraser government in the assessment of international relations and inconsistency in policy-making. The Prime Minister explained Australia's approach to China such that:

constructive relations do not depend on agreement on all aspects of relations but on the development of those areas where there are common interests.

The same could have been argued for improving relations with the Soviet Union with reference to trade, agriculture, research and allied issues.

Fraser's pronouncements in the June statement caused some confusion among interested nations. Both Japan and the United States, from different perspectives, were engaged in delicate diplomatic balances with China and the Soviet Union and were not enthralled by Fraser's position. Also, Australian alignment with China aroused suspicion within ASEAN, particularly with Indonesia. The adverse reaction to the June statement illustrated Fraser's lack of understanding about Australia's role in the region and inexperience in dealing with the complex set of trading partners, neighbouring countries and powerful allies.

The most immediate critiques of the Prime Minister's statement emerged from the subsequent Parliamentary debate. Foreign Minister Peacock spoke

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23 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2740 stated that:
   China is clearly concerned at the Soviet role on her northern and southern frontiers. Australia and China have a like interest in seeing that Soviet power in the Pacific and South East Asia is balanced by the power of other major states or by appropriate regional arrangements. We can therefore expect Chinese support for our own views on the need for an effective American presence in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Such support has, in fact, been given.
24 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2740.
25 Leaver, op. cit., p. 265. Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, pp. 2739-40, stressed the importance of relations with Japan in terms of security and trade, and welcomed the expression of the Japanese government to conclude a treaty of friendship and co-operation. See also T.B. Millar, Japan and Australia, Pacific Community, vol. 8, 1, October 1976.
26 The Indonesian government was puzzled and concerned by the position of the Australian government. While Indonesian leaders could understand the Labor government's commitment to the recognition of China in 1972, it was more difficult to comprehend why the Liberal and Country Parties government should suddenly move closer to China. Mackie, op. cit., p. 4.
in defence of Fraser's position between hostile attacks from Whitlam and Hayden. The Labor critique focused on the return to a rhetorical foreign policy of a conservative tradition. To some extent, the tone of Fraser with regard to security, defence and powerful allies invited the first point of criticism from the Labor Party. Fraser was not aided by several errors of fact regarding the superpower military balance and the consequent notions of threats to security. Whitlam observed that the Fraser foreign policy was acutely linked to domestic economic policy, and both were dominated by the perceived need for fundamental ideological change away from the assumptions of the previous Labor government. Further, the pre-emptive tactic of presenting the statement immediately prior to the first overseas tour by the Prime Minister restricted debate but also fixed the government's position on foreign policy for a considerable time.

On Fraser's view of the Soviet Union, the internal protests seemed to emerge from all quarters. The Joint Intelligence Organisation were vigorous in attempting to correct the exaggerated position on the build-up of Soviet and Warsaw Pact troops in Europe. Fraser was also pressured after the speech to qualify the alarmist view of the Soviet Union by a 'combination of Foreign Affairs bureaucrats, academic experts and prominent backbenchers'. These points raised the question of whether the Prime Minister took advice prior to the statement, and whether Fraser had sufficient input during the drafting of the statement by Owen Harries.

The most virulent criticisms converged on Fraser's understandings of the Soviet Union in the Indian Ocean region. Whitlam's colourful attack contained sentiments of surprise, anger and disappointment in reaction to the Prime Minister's perceived move backward in rhetoric:

The Prime Minister has now discovered a threat from the Russian navy. Russian naval activity in the Indian Ocean is the idee fixe about which the whole of the Fraser Government's foreign and defence policies revolve. This phobia about Russian ships is presumably the justification for [an increase in] defence

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29 Hayden, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2751 explained, with assistance from statements by Henry Kissinger, the relative military balance between the United States and the Soviet Union and the unjustified nature of Fraser's alarmist position.
31 See Bell, Dependent Ally, op. cit., p. 146, & note 4, p. 215.
32 Bell, Mr Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 418.
expenditure . . . at the expense of funds for health, cities, roads, the environment, child care, education. It is the justification for the resurgence of cold-war rhetoric and communist can-kicking . . . It is the justification for offending one of the most powerful nations on earth and discrediting the honest and painstaking efforts of the Western powers to improve the climate of international relations. It is an issue which has brought the hawks from their nests in numbers unseen since the early days of the Vietnam war.33

Whitlam continued in this vein to embarrass the Prime Minister by correcting the assertions of fact regarding the strength of the Soviet fleet in the Indian Ocean.34 Prime Minister Fraser was aware that the presence of Soviet shipping was inevitable as the Indian Ocean remained the shortest warm weather route linking the eastern and western sections of the Soviet Union. In fact, the Liberal Party in 1969 acknowledged the realities of Soviet naval power in the Indian Ocean without raising undue alarm.35

It was recognised that the alarmist policies were used to incite the United States to increase the military capacity of the Diego Garcia base in the Indian Ocean.36 It seemed that the Prime Minister and the government’s policy advisers were overly optimistic that uncritical support for the United States would generate greater assistance from Australia’s key ally.

34 Whitlam, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2745. The Minister for Defence, Jim Kilian, provided information to the Parliament a month prior to the June statement which showed that the number of Soviet combatant vessels in the Indian Ocean in 1975 was no greater than the previous year. Whitlam explained that:

the total Russian fleet deployed in the area in 1975, including those on harbour and mine-clearing operations, numbered 19, compared with 26 in 1974, 24 in 1973 and 24 in 1972. There was, in other words, a slight decline in overall numbers of Russian ships in the Indian Ocean between 1972 and last year [1975]. The myth of a sudden recent upsurge in Soviet naval strength was exploded by the United States Administration itself in a statement to Congress [on 22 April 1976] ... over the past two years the naval deployments of the United States and the Soviet Union have remained relatively stable'... The Americans themselves refuse to be panicked on this issue. They see no threat to themselves or anyone else. Dr Kissinger states on 22 March [1976] ... 'We will not be deflected by contrived and incredible scenarios, by inflated versions of Soviet strength'.

36 Whitlam, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2745, utilised the statement of the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, William Colby, of July 1974:

If there is no substantial increase in United States naval presence in the area, we believe the Soviet increase will be gradual... Should the United States make a substantial increase in its presence in the Indian Ocean, a Soviet build-up faster and larger than I have described would be likely.

See also Hayden's attack on Fraser's policy, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2752.
The focus of the critiques of Fraser's statement, particularly on the fear of the Soviet Union, the military threat in the Indian Ocean, and the new Liberal Party policy on China, ignored some progressive elements of the June statement which centred on relations with developing countries and Australia's relationship with Africa. Significantly, the Prime Minister mentioned the 'appalling widespread problems of poverty, hunger and disease' in the same introductory context as the grand international issues facing Australian foreign policy. The only qualification in this acclaim was Fraser's linking of development issues with security considerations.

Nonetheless, the Prime Minister admonished the industrial nations, implicitly including Australia, for the pursuit of a policy of tied loans and tied aid in addition to the implementation of barriers to domestic markets that restricted terms of trade with developing countries. Also, on primary products, Fraser warned of the influence of the European Economic Community's trading policies in relation to Australia and developing countries. While the position of Australia remained central, this recognition of the significance of international economic relations for developing countries added to Fraser's credibility on development issues.

In addition, the Liberal Party position on aid in the June statement emphasised the dependent relationship between domestic and foreign policies. Fraser explicitly connected with security and domestic prosperity, and further, Fraser seemed to advocate the provision of aid only when the Australian economy could afford such an expense.

In a clarification of the Prime Minister's position, Peacock explained that the notions of 'enlightened realism' and generosity were often connected. This was recognised, Peacock claimed, as 'both defence and aid have been

37 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2736.
38 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2736, continued this criticism, stating that 'the developed countries are regretfully more interested in trade between themselves than they are in facilitating the progress of nations poorer than themselves. They can take no pride in their actions in this area'. This type of comment was more likely to be associated with radical leaders of developing countries in arguing for fundamental structural change in the world economy, not normally with a Liberal Party Prime Minister of Australia. See also Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2742.
39 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2743, called for national unity and economic harmony in attempting to link domestic and international issues: Only out of [soundly based] growth can higher real wages and salaries and improved social welfare provisions be paid, without inflation and unemployment. Without such growth we cannot meet as we might the requirements of security and aid. We will not achieve the objectives unless all sections of the Australian community are prepared to work together in the common interest.
essentially exempt from the cuts we have been forced to make in almost every other area'.\textsuperscript{40} The Foreign Minister amplified the new Liberal Party philosophy with unqualified support for the aspirations of developing countries for a new international economic order.\textsuperscript{41} The tension between Liberal Party ideology and a form of radical internationalism was demonstrated by both Fraser and Peacock but was not well explained by either.

Another element of the June statement which was overlooked was the Prime Minister's approach to the nations of the South East Asia region, multilateral forums and Africa. These issues combined to offer links within Fraser's foreign policy. Although security considerations appeared primary in the Asia Pacific region, attention was drawn to the constructive nature of Australia's proposed role as an understanding neighbour and supporter of development needs.\textsuperscript{42} This was accentuated by the stated value of relations with Papua New Guinea and the priority for Australian aid programs in PNG.\textsuperscript{43}

Fraser's commitment to multilateral co-operation could be seen as a more progressive element of the government's foreign policy. Strong support was expressed for 'the United Nations, its Charter, and the work of its various specialised agencies'.\textsuperscript{44} A qualification was added, however, to the effect that problems still existed in the deliberative process and rights of participation in the United Nations.\textsuperscript{45} Further, the Commonwealth of Nations was endorsed as a distinctive, indeed unique, framework for co-operation and consultation in many varied areas.\textsuperscript{46}

The Commonwealth was also seen as the setting where Australia would seek a constructive role to 'help achieve a reasonable solution' to the

\textsuperscript{40} Peacock, \textit{CPD, HR}, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2749.
\textsuperscript{41} See Peacock, \textit{CPD, HR}, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2749.
\textsuperscript{42} The Prime Minister did not acknowledge the contradiction between this constructive role in the region and the government's overriding attitude toward the Soviet Union, the United States and China in the regional context. However, the Prime Minister allocated time to speak of relations with new governments in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, continued support for ASEAN governments, and close relations with Indonesia, which included a tortuous policy on East Timor. See Fraser, \textit{CPD, HR}, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, pp. 2738-9.
\textsuperscript{43} Fraser, \textit{CPD, HR}, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2739, reminded the Parliament of the previously agreed five-year aid program to Papua New Guinea which represented a substantial increase in Australian assistance.
\textsuperscript{44} Fraser, \textit{CPD, HR}, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2741. These words were reminiscent of Whitlam's statements on the United Nations.
\textsuperscript{45} Fraser did not expand on these comments, \textit{CPD, HR}, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2741.
\textsuperscript{46} Fraser, \textit{CPD, HR}, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2742.
problems in South Africa. From what was a well-thought out position, the Prime Minister denounced the policies of apartheid while implicitly arguing for a negotiated settlement. On Rhodesia, Fraser again advocated majority rule but prioritised security as the key issue for future stability.\textsuperscript{47}

In the heat of Parliamentary debate, Whitlam accused the Fraser government of 'scorning the Third World' and 'turning its back on the needs of a third of the world's people'.\textsuperscript{48} This comment was excessive unless the immediate impression of Fraser's words was to be overwhelmed by the return to antagonistic relationships and 'to everything that was servile, insular and craven in the discredited foreign policies of past Liberal governments'.\textsuperscript{49}

In total, the June statement displayed Fraser's view of the world and was not the consensus view of the Liberal and Country Parties government. Fraser clearly prioritised the need for security in international affairs which was linked to Australia's alliance with the United States, the intentions of the Soviet Union, activities in the Indian Ocean, and Australia's relationships in the Asia Pacific region. Also, the June statement signalled Fraser's agenda on support for developing countries, especially through the United Nations and the Commonwealth, and explicit opposition to the minority governments in South Africa and Rhodesia. The complexities of Fraser's foreign policy would emerge from the combination of policy initiatives relating to both the general and specific aspect of Australia's international relationships.

the United States

Prime Minister Fraser seized the opportunity provided by the more critical Whitlam government approach to construct a new relationship with the United States. Fraser blended the traditional Liberal and Country Parties stance on the alliance with a personal view which promoted a more independent position. The Prime Minister was significantly different to President Carter in terms of international issues but there was some common ground in relation to the developing countries and Africa.


\textsuperscript{49} This was Whitlam's final sentence when the time limit pressured an indignant close. Whitlam, \textit{CPD}, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2747.
Subsequently, Fraser relished the opportunity to strengthen the military and political alliance with the United States given the election of President Reagan. Australia's relationship with the United States was also central to the Fraser government's policy on the Indian Ocean and in the context of issues surrounding the revolution in Iran and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

The Liberal and Country Parties government's initial approach to the United States and related matters was outlined in the Prime Minister's June 1976 statement. Fraser emphasised the vital position of the United States in providing a balance to the power of the Soviet Union. Indeed, without this important international role played by the US, Fraser believed that peace and security would be threatened. Also, Fraser explained that, while maintaining an independent perspective, the Australian government would ensure that 'the ANZUS alliance with the US and New Zealand did not fall into disrepair and disrepute'.50 This obvious critique of the Whitlam government's approach to the United States fixed the position of the Fraser government which incorporated Fraser's view of independence within the alliance.51

Subsequently, a preliminary review of foreign policy issues was presented to the Parliament by Foreign Minister Peacock on 15 March 1977.52 This so-called March statement proved a useful guide to the government's outlook on global and regional affairs, and on policy priorities. Peacock expressed a secure and stable future for the Australian alliance with the United States. For example, Peacock stated that the Liberal and Country Parties government would:

pursue Australia's interests, express our disagreement with American policy where it exists, but the fundamental importance attached to the alliance and the general relationship are no longer in question.53

50 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2738.
Again, Peacock was criticising the Whitlam government's approach toward the United States but was also endorsing Fraser's element of independence within Australia's most importance strategic alliance.

However, an element of unpredictability entered the relationship with the United States when the Democrat candidate Jimmy Carter was elected President in late 1976 for office beginning in early 1977. Prime Minister Fraser had established good relations with caretaker President Gerald Ford, primarily when visiting Washington shortly after the tour of China in July 1976. The trip had focused on economic issues but included the cultivation of key members of the Congress and a telephone conversation with the then Democrat candidate Carter.54

The inauguration of President Carter sent mixed signals on foreign policy. There was an expectation that little would change given the limited room for manoeuvre in international relations policy and Carter's lack of experience at the national level. Also, the appointment of Cyrus Vance as Secretary of State suggested a continuation of Kissinger style foreign policy and that US allies would have little cause to object on this issue.55 However, the Fraser government had misgivings about the initial Carter foreign policy which declared human rights to be a major foreign policy objective, restored the policy of detente, and threatened a reduced presence in the Asia Pacific region. Further, President Carter's attempts to reopen the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks through far-reaching reductions in nuclear weapons and determination to demilitarise the Indian Ocean demonstrated substantially more faith in the Soviet Union than displayed by the Fraser government.56

54 It was Carter's policy to avoid meetings with foreign heads of government until after the November poll. Foreign Minister Peacock and Australian Embassy staff in Washington had carefully cultivated links with the Carter campaign organisers in the months leading up to Fraser's trip in order to secure the invitation for discussions. Peacock's friendships with key Democrats proved useful at various points during the Fraser government. P.J. Boyce, Problems in Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1976, *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, vol. 23, 1, April 1977, pp. 2-3. On other visits by Fraser to the United States, see J.M. McCarthy, Problems in Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1979, *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, vol. 25, 3, 1979, p. 305 and Henry S. Albinski, Problems in Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1982, *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, vol. 28, 3, 1982, p. 325.


The Carter foreign policy, in pursuit of world peace through moral example rather than military power, was expected to be constrained by the Presidential office. However, Carter had soon halted foreign aid to countries not judged as extending human rights to their citizens and warned South Africa not to expect assistance from the United States in the event of a civil war. President Carter showed that the moral approach to foreign policy would not be stifled.

Specifically, Prime Minister Fraser and President Carter were closely aligned in their positions on conflicts in Africa, particularly the central issue of Rhodesia. Carter's clear stance on human rights within foreign policy and the influence of expectations from the African American constituency shaped an attentive and accommodating United States approach to African issues. The President's policy seemed to be driven by the newly appointed US Ambassador to the UN and Carter campaigner, Andrew Young, who provided an effective channel of communication for the United States administration to developing countries, in particular, with nationalists in Africa. The input of Young and others from a more progressive intellectual position produced a policy toward Africa more radical than the mainstream Democratic opinion represented by Carter. The process of formulating this allied approach was different in the US and Australia with non-elected advice guiding the moderate US President and the Australian Prime Minister dragging the Liberal and Country Parties government toward a radical position on Africa.

In sum, the political points of departure for President Carter and Prime Minister Fraser were quite different but were not incompatible. The complementary policies on some issues emerged from Fraser's ability to offer progressive views from within a conservative foreign policy. The key elements of Australia's alliance with the United States were demonstrated through the debates on the strategic balance in the Indian Ocean, the


57 See McCarthy, ...Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1977, op. cit., p. 337.
58 Bell, *Dependent Ally*, op. cit., pp. 154-5. While the 'African American vote' had normally supported the Democrat Presidential candidate, it was the civil rights campaigner Andrew Young who directed this electorate toward Carter who was from the South.
response to the Soviet Union's actions in Afghanistan, and the position of President Reagan on the revolution in Iran.

the Indian Ocean region

Australia's position on the strategic naval balance in the Indian Ocean was central to the alliance with the United States. This issue also revealed Fraser's view of the Soviet Union and contributed to relations with developing countries, particularly the African littoral states. Australia's policy on the Indian Ocean was debated within the Fraser government and this exchange of views caused a modification of Australia's position. Further, the strategic balance in the Indian Ocean involved an argument to upgrade the military facilities at Diego Garcia and a proposal for a zone of peace for the region.

The Fraser government policy toward the Indian Ocean in the June 1976 statement was cursory yet laden with implications:

The Indian Ocean is of considerable political and strategic importance to Australia... The objective of a neutral zone in the Indian Ocean, while admirable, has little chance of success with the U.S.S.R. significantly increasing its permanent presence in the vital north west sector of the Ocean. It is clearly contrary to Australia's interests for the balance in this area to move against our major ally, the United States.

It is also against our interests for both superpowers to embark on an unrestricted competition in the Indian Ocean. We seek balance and restraint. We have supported the United States development of logistic facilities at Diego Garcia so that the balance necessary to stability in the area can be maintained. It cannot be maintained without those facilities. We also strongly support the recent appeal by the United States Administration for restraint so that the balance can be maintained at a relatively low level.60

In this statement, Prime Minister Fraser emphasised the importance of the Indian Ocean in response to a perceived domination by the Soviet Union in the region.61 As such, the proposed zone of peace in the Indian Ocean was not seen to be viable by Fraser.

60 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2741.
61 See Leaver, op. cit., pp. 261-2 and Coral Bell, Australia in a World of Powers, chapter 2 in Boyce and Angel, op. cit., p. 25. This concern may have been substantiated with reference to support for Soviet activity in Egypt, Iraq, Somalia and South Yemen compared with a
The emphasis on 'balance' in the region was an attempt to distance the Fraser government from the policies of the Whitlam government. Fraser analysed the Soviet presence as a threat to the flow of trade around southern Africa or, more importantly, a menace to transport of oil from the Persian Gulf. More than this, Defence Minister Killen, in support of Fraser's stance in the June statement, claimed that the activity of the Soviet Union in the Indian Ocean was a direct military threat to Australia.62

Nevertheless, for the purposes of strategic foreign policy statements, the language of 'balance' linked with the Australian desire for a greater US commitment to the Indian Ocean region and with the Carter objective of lowering the level of commitment from all parties. For example, a communique issued by Prime Minister Fraser after talking with President Suharto said that 'pending the achievement of a zone of peace . . . a balance in the Indian Ocean at as low a level as possible should avoid a competitive escalation of forces'.63 Australia in contrast preferred a 'balance' which represented an advantage for the United States. This was demonstrated in Australia's eagerness to provide assistance to United States forces operating in the Indian Ocean region.

The Prime Minister's alarmist statements on the Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean continued to be criticised from various sources. While the Labor Party critiques at the time of the June statement were dismissed, it was perceived decline in the ability of the United States to match the Soviet Union in the Indian Ocean. Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 112 and Leaver, op. cit., p. 265. See also A.W. Grazebrook, The Indian Ocean and Australian strategy, Navy, vol. 38, 2, May/June/July 1976.


difficult to ignore an assessment by the United States that the degree of concern expressed by Australia was unwarranted. Also, the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, chaired by the Liberal Senator for Western Australia Peter Sim, presented a report on the developments in the Indian Ocean. The report, widely advocated by Sim, found that the government's alarm was not fully warranted.

Senator Sim, in promoting the Committee's view, warned that 'we should not appear, by an over-reaction, to stimulate an escalation of naval power'. Leaver added that a 'bold ideological posture was counterproductive in so far as it might encourage the politicisation of the region that it was intended to prevent.' This position tended to echo the Labor critique but, of course, carried considerably more credibility within the Liberal Party. Senator Sim

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65 See Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, op. cit., pp. 204-5. In providing an alternative view to the Prime Minister, the Senate Standing Committee utilised the information contained in the submission to the inquiry by Geoffrey Jukes. This submission explained that Soviet naval forces in the Indian Ocean consisted of four warships which were designed for anti-submarine activity, not for intercepting shipping. Further, Jukes argued that the overall size of the Soviet navy had been declining for sixteen years and would continue to decline. See Jukes submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, 10 August 1976. See also Boyce, Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1976, op. cit., p. 3.

66 Senator J.P. Sim, The Soviet Naval Presence in the Indian Ocean, Australian Outlook, vol. 31, 1, April 1977, p. 187. See also Boyce, Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1976, op. cit., p. 3 and Leaver, op. cit., p. 266.

67 Leaver, ibid, p. 266 commenting on the argument of Senator Sim.
explained that the Soviet presence was not large and, indeed, the size of the fleet was carefully adjusted by the Soviet Union to demonstrate a level of power to the littoral states while not to be perceived as a threat to the United States.68 Significantly, Senator Sim stated that the Soviet presence did not pose a direct threat to Australia.69

As a Senator from Western Australia, Sim was pleased to outline that the debate on the Soviet presence had provoked the government to recognise that Australia was not only a Pacific Ocean continent, but also part of the Indian Ocean region. Thus, Sim argued for an acceptance of greater responsibility for the protection of Western Australia by increasing naval and maritime aerial surveillance in the Indian Ocean region.70 Also, closer cooperation with the littoral states was advocated to demonstrate Australia's intentions. Sim understood that this cooperation should involve assistance to the developing countries to export goods into Australian markets through tariff preference schemes.71 Thus, Senator Sim clearly linked the economic development of the Indian Ocean region with future political stability. This expansion of the debate prepared the path for a more moderate policy on the Indian Ocean to be outlined by Foreign Minister Peacock.

As early as August 1976, and without suggesting any criticism of the Prime Minister, Peacock explained that the Soviet Union was 'an authentic world power with legitimate interests extending beyond its own region'.72 The Minister for Foreign Affairs was confident that the Soviet Union would appreciate the basis of Australian concern and proceeded to underline the common cultural, trade and diplomatic links.73 In November, Peacock noticeably softened government policy on the Indian Ocean by arguing that support from developing countries for the zone of peace could contribute to a climate of restraint in the region, thereby re-admitting the proposals as a long-term strategic goal.74 However, Peacock explained that the most appropriate path toward this goal was through a balance of forces 'at the

68 Sim, op. cit., pp. 186 & 191.
70 ibid., p. 191. Sim urged that permanent units of the Australian Navy should be based at HMAS Stirling at Cockburn Sound and that maritime air reconnaissance units should be stationed in Western Australia.
71 ibid.
72 Peacock, Australia's relations with the Soviet Union, address to Kooyong public meeting, 20 August 1976, in Department of Foreign Affairs, Background, no. 54, 27 August 1976, p. 12.
73 See Boyce, ...Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1976, op. cit., p. 4.
74 Peacock, Age, 13 November 1976.
lowest practical level'. The exciting rhetoric of the Prime Minister was replaced by Peacock's reassurances but there were few other concessions. As Leaver pointed out, there was no attempt to incorporate the more flexible concept of a 'matching presence' which figured in the Senate Committee report as a means to advocate the reduction of United States and Soviet forces.

The disadvantage of Australia's operating position within the regional power struggles was demonstrated soon after Peacock had clarified the government's position at the end of 1976. The newly inaugurated President Carter undermined the Australian stance with the comment on 11 March 1977 that the Indian Ocean should be completely demilitarised. This proposal came as a surprise to many in the United States as this option was only one part of an ongoing debate over the Indian Ocean. Prime Minister Fraser obtained an assurance from the Carter administration that the declaration was intended to initiate negotiations with the Soviet Union and should not be taken in a literal sense.

Not surprisingly, Peacock explained to the Parliament that the Carter proposal was not in variance with the Fraser government's position. The argument was restated that the idea of a zone of peace was aligned with the government's commitment to a strategic balance in the region. In practical terms, however, this episode demonstrated a lack of consultation by the

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76 Leaver, ibid., p. 266. See also Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, op. cit., p. 187.

77 McCarthy, ...Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1977, op. cit., p. 337. See also Leaver, op. cit., p. 267 and Albinski, ...Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1977, op. cit., p. 2. Carter had proposed to the Soviet Union that the Indian Ocean become completely demilitarised', among other radical initiatives such as significant movement toward arms control and a proposal for the withdrawal of US ground-forces from Korea. Needless to say, the Australian government had serious reservations about these objectives, and in particular, was concerned about the issue of Korea and attempted to lobby the US administration to maintain some presence. Bell, Dependent Ally, op. cit., pp. 148-50.

78 See Millar, Australia in Peace and War, op. cit., p. 424 and Bell, Dependent Ally, op. cit., p. 148.

79 Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 112 and Albinski, ...Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1977, op. cit., p. 2.

80 Peacock, CPD, HR, vol. 104, 15 March 1977, p. 205. See also McCarthy, ...Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1977, op. cit, p. 337.
United States with the concerned Australians and brought into question the value of the relationships cultivated by the Fraser government with the Carter administration. This particular incident provoked Australian representatives into more vigorous action in an attempt to secure the Fraser government's interests in the Indian Ocean. The Prime Minister reaffirmed Australia's right to consultation during a visit to the United States.81 Subsequently, Fraser announced that President Carter gave assurances that the views of the Australian government would be taken into consideration in the talks between the United States and the Soviet Union and re-examined before any eventual agreement.82 No doubt the Australian position could have been used by the United States as a bargaining tool in the negotiations with the Soviet Union.

The United States had arranged with the Soviet Union to form a working party to discuss avenues to achieve a stabilisation of forces in the Indian Ocean.83 These negotiations began in 1977 but stalled in February 1978. During this brief time, Australia was consulted and kept informed by the Carter administration.84 The United States halted the talks claiming that the Soviet Union had violated the understanding that both parties would preserve the level of forces in the region. Bell provided evidence of an increase of Soviet strategic influence in the Horn of Africa-Red Sea area with the shift of alliance between Somalia and Ethiopia in 1977, the successful cultivation of South Yemen, and thereby acquisition of facilities at Aden.85 In fact, the United States was also involved in these manoeuvres which suggested a broader power struggle during 1977-78 than the negotiations over the Indian Ocean. Thus, the tensions surrounding the talks seem to have caused the end of discussions.

Subsequently, the Soviet Union reduced the level of commitment to the Indian Ocean region but relations with the United States had deteriorated to

81 Leaver, op. cit., p. 267.
82 Fraser, Address to the nation, 3 July 1977, in Backgrounder, no. 96, 8 July 1977, p. 23. See also McCarthy, ...Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1977, op. cit., p. 338.
84 Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., pp. 112-13, explained that, 'Indeed, Australia was even made privy to an incident of some embarrassment to the United States. An early topic in the discussions concerned the true limits of the Indian Ocean. The US argued that the eastern boundary was the west coast of Australia. Russia contested this, claiming that the Ocean stretched to the east coast of Australia and produced an official American map (albeit out of date) to prove the point!'.
the extent that further talks seemed useless. The issues on which there had been some agreement tended to favour the United States, and thus the Fraser government. While Australian diplomacy had some influence on elements of the negotiations, further discussions could have restricted the capacity for the United States to assist Australia and may have limited Australia’s ability to establish a naval base in Western Australia. In the end, the collapse of the talks was the best result for Prime Minister Fraser.

Throughout the debate, the Australian government prioritised the ANZUS relationship and attempted to extend this arrangement at various points. Moreover, the Prime Minister’s interpretation of the power balance included the need for a closer political and military alliance with the United States. The Australian input consistently attempted to highlight the ANZUS related functions in the Indian Ocean to capture US interest and to divert attention from a possible regional agreement between the major actors. Some success was demonstrated following the 1977 ANZUS Council meeting at which close links were expressed between the Indian Ocean and the alliance. The United States provided an assurance that the negotiations would ‘not qualify or derogate from the US commitment to Australia’. The diplomatic efforts were supported by the Australian government’s offers of facilities and active assistance for the US forces allocated to the Indian Ocean.

Following the arms stabilisation talks, the Australian efforts to link ANZUS with the Indian Ocean continued unabated. This strategy was demonstrated in proposals for facilities at Diego Garcia and in the pattern of Fraser foreign policy in offering Australian bases and services to the United States. The negotiating parties had come to accept the limits of the Indian Ocean region and agreed that current levels of forces and facilities should be preserved and not increased. The United States had an advantage because submarines were not included and there would be no limitation on land-based strike aircraft. Also, the United States maintained the right to hold exercises with allies in the Indian Ocean and, at the insistence of the Fraser government, the draft agreement included a ‘supreme national interests’ clause which permitted non-observance when such interests were judged to be involved. Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 113. Richardson, op. cit., p. 330. Bell, Dependent Ally, op. cit., p. 150 ff. Leaver, op. cit., p. 268. Bell, Dependent Ally, op. cit., p. 150. See also Sydney Morning Herald, 10 June 1978. The government encouraged the use of Australian facilities on Cocos Islands by United States surveillance flights and initiated an informal arrangement where Australian ground personnel in Singapore would handle US reconnaissance flights. Leaver, op. cit., p. 268. See also H.S. Albinski, Australia and the Indian Ocean, paper presented at the International Conference on Indian Ocean Studies, Perth, August 1979. Leaver, op. cit., pp. 268-9. See also H.S. Albinski, American Perspectives..., op. cit., esp. pp. 142-8.
States. On Diego Garcia, the Fraser government supported the development of the US naval facilities in the June statement, signalling an early commitment to a physical presence in the region under the banner of 'balance' and contradictory to the idea of peace. Fraser's prompt support for facilities at Diego Garcia fitted with an earlier decision to permit nuclear-powered and nuclear-armed US naval vessels to access Australian ports and an invitation for the United States Navy to use facilities at Cockburn Sound in Western Australia.

Australian support for US forces in the Indian Ocean was offered prior to Carter's announcement of demilitarisation in the region. However, the input of force reduction discussions into the debate heightened Fraser's commitment to a strong US presence at Diego Garcia as a necessary counter to the Soviet naval strength based at Berbera in Somalia. Certainly this was an argument used by advocates in the US Congress for upgrading the capability of Diego Garcia. Further, President Carter's determined attitude toward the arms negotiations over the Indian Ocean appeared to be undermined by the simultaneous construction of additional facilities at Diego Garcia.

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94 McCarthy, *Australian Foreign Policy*, January to June 1977, op. cit., p. 337. See also Bell, *Australia in a World of Powers*, op. cit., p. 29, on the shifting alliances of Ethiopia and Somalia with the United States and the Soviet Union.
95 The well established debate in the US Congress had become muted by 1979 due to a perceived escalation of Soviet activity and the subsequent conflicts in Iran and Afghanistan. Bell, *Dependent Ally*, op. cit., p. 148. See also Hugh Smith, Defence Policy, chapter 3 in Boyce and Angel, op. cit., pp. 50-1.
96 V. Kubalkova and A.A. Cruickshank, *Australia and Eastern Europe*. chapter 11 in Boyce and Angel, ibid., p. 179 and Albinski, *Australian Foreign Policy*, July to December 1977, op. cit., p. 2. Glen Barclay, Australia and North America, chapter 9 in Boyce and Angel, op. cit., p. 146, attempted to illustrate the political linkages between the conservatives in the US and in Australia with a description of President Ford in response to a question stating that United States policy in the Indian Ocean was that 'we should have a minimal military capability on the island of Diego Garcia ... This objective of our Government,' Ford continued, on learning that the questioner was an Australian, 'is strongly supported by the new Fraser government in Australia. It was opposed by the Whitlam [sic] government that was just thrown out in the last election.' It was not surprising that President Ford could not remember the name of the previous Australian Prime Minister but did remember a dislike for Whitlam's policies. The supplementary question should have been how much Ford knew of the process by which the Labor government was 'thrown out' in the President's words.
As an upgrade of facilities at Cockburn Sound approached completion in 1978, Foreign Minister Peacock sought assurances that the United States would continue to conduct naval exercises in the Indian Ocean region.\textsuperscript{97} The Western Australian base was potentially important at a time of increasing international conflict around the Horn of Africa and the African littoral, including South Africa. The Cockburn Sound facilities continued to be important as a point of contact on the southern route to the Indian Ocean if naval shipping needed to avoid the Lombok Straits.\textsuperscript{98}

The pattern of Australian offers to the United States culminated in 1980 with the suggestion that the facilities at Cockburn Sound could be used as a home-port for US naval forces in the Indian Ocean.\textsuperscript{99} In contrast to previous offers, this arrangement would have provided a permanent base for US naval forces in Australia. Further, this offer represented a substantial shift in Australian foreign policy.\textsuperscript{100} There had not been United States bases in Australia since the second World War. The facilities at Pine Gap, North West Cape, Nurrungar and elsewhere were organised as 'joint facilities' and fitted the intelligence gathering and signals relay functions rather than providing a permanent depository for US forces.\textsuperscript{101} Millar argued that the provision of home porting facilities at Cockburn Sound 'must affect our diplomatic stance and national image'.\textsuperscript{102} This new arrangement implied a further integration of Australia into the United States security axis. Such a definite move would have reduced the flexibility of Australian foreign policy in multilateral and bilateral discussions.

\textsuperscript{97} Coral Bell, Problems in Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1978, \textit{Australian Journal of Politics and History}, vol. 24, 3, 1978, pp. 295-6. Peacock posed this question at the annual ANZUS meeting in May 1978 as the base, to be commissioned as HMAS Stirling, was about to host a taskforce of the US Navy. The construction of facilities at Cockburn Sound had been subject to unique delays as the base had been projected before the first World War.

\textsuperscript{98} ibid., p. 296. The route from the Pacific to the Indian Ocean around the south of Australia would have been vital for all US naval vessels including nuclear-powered submarines in the event that normal routes were obstructed.

\textsuperscript{99} See Age, 11 January 1980.

\textsuperscript{100} Millar, ...More of the same..., op. cit., p. 8 and Renouf, Australian Diplomacy..., op. cit., p. 325. See also Smith, op. cit., p. 52.

\textsuperscript{101} The distinctions here are more marginal than suggested. The defence related functions of Pine Gap have continued with little Australian knowledge of operations and the United States is able to use this base to exchange goods and personnel into and out of Australia. Moreover, it is feared that the US could use the facilities for unknown purposes which may be detrimental to the interests of Australia. Smith, ibid., p. 51. However, the designated relationship between the United States and Australia over Pine Gap and the other bases is different from the offer to provide a conventional military base at Cockburn Sound. Renouf, Australian Diplomacy..., op. cit., p. 325. See also Des Ball, \textit{A Suitable Piece of Real Estate: American installations in Australia}, Hale & Iremonger, Sydney, 1980 and Des Ball, \textit{Pine Gap: Australia and the US geostationary signals intelligence satellite program}, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1988.

\textsuperscript{102} Millar, ...More of the same..., op. cit., p. 8.
The Australian offer of Cockburn Sound was open to a number of objections. Foreign military bases had become obstructions to effective international diplomacy and were actively disliked by most developing countries. Also, this offer was not consistent with a strategy of becoming more independent of the United States, nor did it recognise that Australia was becoming more able to provide its own defence requirements. Further, the United States base would make Australia more susceptible to attack. Fraser saw these objections as outweighed by the possibility that the United States would defend Australia. This arrangement intimated that Australia would not need to spend as much money on defence. For Fraser, it was a compelling argument in an international context of increasing aggression in Afghanistan, which threatened the stability of the Indian Ocean region, and therefore exposed the vulnerable western coast of Australia.

The Fraser government was encouraged by the warm reception of the idea by the United States. The Carter administration recognised the need to keep open the options at Cockburn Sound at a time when similar arrangements with Oman and Kenya remained unsatisfactory. The potential obstruction to the home port proposal appeared to be the allocation of costs in increasing facilities at Cockburn Sound for the accommodation of a carrier task force. By 1980, the issue remained at the level of discussions and, in the end, the home port option did not eventuate.

These issues clearly impacted upon the government's position on a proposal for a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. In the June 1976 statement, the Prime Minister described the objective of a neutral zone as admirable and proceeded to focus on the increasing presence of the Soviet Union in the Indian Ocean. This position led to Fraser's aim of balance and restraint of forces in the Indian Ocean. In critique, Hayden argued that the Liberal and Country Parties government had never considered the concept of the zone of neutrality in the Indian Ocean. In the context of refuting the Prime Minister's claim on the Soviet presence, Hayden highlighted the

103 Renouf, Australian Diplomacy..., op. cit., p. 325. See also Smith, op. cit., p. 51.
104 Renouf, Australian Diplomacy..., op. cit., p. 326. Also, Smith, op. cit., p. 52, outlined that the facilities at HMAS Stirling in Cockburn Sound were developed to support higher levels of Royal Australian Navy activity in the Indian Ocean.
105 For more, see Leaver, op. cit., p. 274. See also Bell, Mr Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 419.
106 The reference to a zone of peace incorporated two notions: the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) sponsored by the ASEAN countries, and the Zone of Peace approved by the United Nations, both in 1971. See Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 111.
107 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2741.
'nervous rhetoric' of the government, particularly on the Indian Ocean, which represented a return to the conservative foreign policy and defence debates of the 1960s.108

Nevertheless, the Fraser government did not withdraw from the United Nations committee examining the proposal for a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. The established Australian membership of this committee provided a welcome opportunity for the Fraser government to influence the direction of the discussions.109 However, Fraser's stated support for the zone of peace in the long term appeared hollow given the continuing Australian support for the development of Diego Garcia by the United States.

Issues related to the zone of peace proposal continued to be discussed in international forums and continued to be undermined by strategic manoeuvres and particular bilateral disputes. The Australian government supported the zone of peace in the communique which emerged from the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held in Melbourne in 1981. The agreed position from the CHOGM expressed that increases in military presence in the Indian Ocean undermined the zone of peace concept and the proposed UN conference on the Indian Ocean could contribute toward progress on this idea. In contrast, Fraser retained the view that an increase in US forces in the Indian Ocean should be supported and had attempted to cancel the conference through the United Nations. The Prime Minister appeared to endorse the CHOGM communique in the spirit of co-operation of the Commonwealth while pursuing a different set of objectives.110

In sum, the Indian Ocean region was an integral element of Australia's alliance with the United States. The Fraser government was energetic in encouraging a greater presence by the US in the Indian Ocean and, thereby, US defence of Australia. Also, Fraser's position on the Indian Ocean was in direct contrast to the equivocation of the Whitlam government on this issue. Fraser pursued a distinct position in support of United States action in the region which translated into strong opposition to the Soviet Union's actions in Afghanistan.

110 Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 144.
The hostile position toward the Soviet Union outlined by Prime Minister Fraser in the June 1976 statement seemed to be vindicated with the Soviet intervention into Afghanistan in December 1979. Fraser publicly opposed the action of the Soviet Union and attempted to gain international support for this position. In alliance with the United States, the Fraser government implemented a series of measures to demonstrate opposition to the actions of the Soviet Union. This reaction focused on trade, the Olympic Games in Moscow, and defence arrangements in the Indian Ocean. Australian foreign policy toward the Soviet Union was also linked to relations with, and among, the United States, China and ASEAN.

In the June statement, Prime Minister Fraser had expressed concern about the perceived military expansionist approach of the Soviet Union.\(^\text{111}\) Apparently, the first draft of the speech was even more vitriolic in critique of the Soviet Union and could have caused a breach of diplomatic relations or a reduction of Australian exports to the Soviet Union.\(^\text{112}\) Specifically, Fraser highlighted the ambitions of the Soviet Union by extending analysis of the 1973 Middle East war and the conflict in Vietnam.\(^\text{113}\) Thus, the Prime Minister's initial statement set the tone and agenda for Australian relations with the Soviet Union.

While Foreign Minister Peacock was attempting to soften the Prime Minister's statements on the Soviet Union in late 1976, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Overseas Trade, Doug Anthony, and the Minister for Transport, Peter Nixon, visited the Soviet Union. Upon return, Anthony raised the possibility of selling uranium to the Soviet Union and Nixon presented Soviet intentions as non-aggressive.\(^\text{114}\) Subsequently, Peacock attempted to reconcile the hostility of the Prime Minister with the views of Anthony and Nixon. The Minister for Foreign Affairs emphasised

\(^{111}\) See Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, pp. 2737-8.
\(^{112}\) See Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 84.
\(^{113}\) Richardson, op. cit., pp. 328-9. Indeed, the Fraser government attempted to instil the perception that serious action needed to be initiated to defend against the tactics of the Soviet Union but decided not to increase spending on defence. Prior to the June statement, the Minister for Defence Killen warned of the inadequacy of the Australian armed services in the context of heightened international instability. Despite the recommendations for increased expenditure for defence, the Fraser government did not substantially strengthen the armed forces citing the need for financial stringency. Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., pp. 88-9. See Killen, Ministerial statement, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 25 May 1976, pp. 2384-6.
\(^{114}\) See Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 87.
the government's sound bilateral relations with the Soviet Union, including agreements on scientific, technical and cultural cooperation. Peacock also highlighted the increases in Australian beef and mutton sales to the Soviet Union and explained that both countries were actively promoting trade within the bilateral relationship, as evidenced by the visit of Anthony and Nixon. However, Peacock stressed the Australian government's concern on the Soviet Union's increase in military capacity and the implications of this arms build-up for the strategic balance with the United States. Minister Peacock appeared to be providing additional analysis through which the government could sustain the trading relationship with the Soviet Union while continuing to express concern about Soviet activities in the Indian Ocean region.

Australian relations with the Soviet Union were fundamentally altered with the Soviet military intervention into Afghanistan in December 1979. The President of Afghanistan, Hafizullah Amin had been replaced by Babrak Karmal in a violent transfer of power which was accompanied by an infusion of Soviet forces into Afghanistan in the last days of 1979. In a key statement to the Parliament in February 1980, the Prime Minister explained that the world was facing a dangerous international crisis. Seemingly in vindication of an earlier prediction, Fraser explained the situation in simple terms:

The crisis has come about because, and only because, in the last week of 1979 the Soviet Union sent thousands of its troops across the border into Afghanistan. Since then it has continued to put men and arms into that country until today there are something in the order of 85,000 Russian troops there - over twice as many men as there now are in the disintegrating Afghan army. There is no indication that they will be withdrawn in the foreseeable future. In the English language the accepted and proper words for this kind of action are not interference or intervention but invasion, occupation and suppression.

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The Soviet Union is engaged in propping up an unstable and unpopular Marxist regime, which is internally divided and which is bitterly opposed to the people of Afghanistan. To say that it has acted, and is acting, brutally is not to engage in rhetoric. It is merely to state the facts.\textsuperscript{119}

The Australian Prime Minister adhered to the previously stated analysis which described Soviet expansionism within the narrow bipolar understanding of international power. Fraser also focused upon the Soviet Union's attempt to increase its influence over developing countries, in particular, Vietnam's intervention in Kampuchea.\textsuperscript{120} Fraser argued that the Soviet agenda was of particular concern to Australia given the 'subsidising of Vietnam to the tune of $3m a day' while occupying Kampuchea.\textsuperscript{121}

In addition to the expansionist argument, Fraser outlined the strategic implications of the Soviet action in Afghanistan. The Prime Minister explained that the Afghanistan crisis had 'profound implications for the stability of global order' and had 'substantially changed the strategic order underpinning Australia's security'.\textsuperscript{122} Fraser explicated that the Soviet strategy provided further options in the region, specifically an ability to exert pressure upon the Gulf oil states, the Indian sub-continent and the Indian Ocean region. This strategic advantage threatened the world's supply of oil at a time of nuclear parity and Soviet superiority in conventional weapons.\textsuperscript{123} For Australia, the implication of heightened tensions in the Indian Ocean posed the most immediate threat.

This interpretation of events and implications emerged from Fraser's understanding of international relations with some input from the Prime Minister's personal staff. When the Office of National Assessments provided an alternative and less alarmist analysis of the Soviet Union intervention in Afghanistan, Fraser dismissed this advice and publicly


\textsuperscript{120} This connection relied on the Soviet Union's support for Vietnam in expansionist activities in the Asia Pacific region. Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 117, 19 February 1980, p. 18. See also Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 99 and Kubalkova and Cruickshank, op. cit., p. 182.

\textsuperscript{121} Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 117, 19 February 1980, p. 19.

\textsuperscript{122} Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 117, 19 February 1980, pp. 18 & 23.

\textsuperscript{123} Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 117, 19 February 1980, pp. 17, 19 & 23.
criticised the ONA.\textsuperscript{124} The Office of National Assessments understood the events in Afghanistan in more narrow terms of regional stability and as an issue of border security for the Soviet Union. The conflict between the Soviet Union and China was also a factor but, again, this was confined to border disputes and territorial manoeuvring. Obviously, the Prime Minister wished to analyse the events in Afghanistan in a more international strategic context which matched the reaction of the United States and suited Fraser's previously stated views on the Soviet Union.

Fraser argued for a 'firm and sustained response' to the 'crisis in Afghanistan'.\textsuperscript{125} This position illustrated the basis of the Fraser foreign policy which was that international aggression should be met with forceful replies, including military action. By comparing the Soviet move into Afghanistan with Germany's occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1939, Fraser projected the Soviet Union as the new aggressor which intended to expand at the expense of neighbouring countries and international stability.\textsuperscript{126} This analysis further confirmed Fraser's doubts about the value of detente and the continuing need to contain Soviet aggression. Fraser argued that the Soviet Union should be told that expansionist tactics would not be tolerated and that the United States and allies had the responsibility for exacting the price of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{127}

To this end, Prime Minister Fraser embarked on an official visit to the United States, Britain, France, Germany and again to Washington in late January and early February 1980. At the same time, Foreign Minister Peacock visited seven countries in South Asia and South East Asia for consultations on the situation in Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{128} Fraser had argued the need for urgent talks with Australia's allies but other leaders relied upon the normal and efficient channels of diplomatic communication. The Australian Prime Minister wanted to illustrate the gravity of the situation through high level personal discussions.\textsuperscript{129} In contrast to Peacock's low-key


\textsuperscript{125} Fraser, \textit{CPD, HR}, vol. 117, 19 February 1980, p. 17.

\textsuperscript{126} Fraser, \textit{CPD, HR}, vol. 117, 19 February 1980, pp. 17-18.


\textsuperscript{128} Stockwin, op. cit., p. 340. See also Leaver, op. cit., p. 271.

\textsuperscript{129} In visiting Washington twice, Fraser claimed that President Carter wished to receive a report on the views of others, but Carter denied making any such request. Renouf, \textit{Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy}, op. cit., p. 91.
approach, Fraser attempted to heighten concern about Afghanistan, at one point remarking that 'we might be at war in three days'.

It was suggested that the purpose of Fraser's diplomatic efforts was to 'encourage the United States into adopting the global role which was the basis for US foreign policy prior to the Vietnam experience'. Fraser was intent on strengthening the resolve of the United States on economic and diplomatic sanctions against the Soviet Union. In exchange, the Prime Minister revived the offer of Fremantle as a United States naval base. President Carter apparently considered this idea but Fremantle was too distant from the important north west area of the Indian Ocean.

In the European capitals, Prime Minister Fraser received guarded responses to the message of alarm and disaster. France and Germany did not want to discard the notion of detente and preferred extensive consultations with the United States prior to any decisions on sanctions against the Soviet Union. It seemed that Europe favoured a 'graduated response across the range of policy areas and the co-ordination of action with key developing countries'. Nevertheless, in the Parliament, Fraser offered the impression that the nations in Europe and Asia shared the Australian position of serious concern over the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. In effect, international opinion was demonstrated through 104 countries condemning the Soviet Union at the United Nations.

The Australian government imposed a number of penalties upon the Soviet Union in January 1980. The Prime Minister explained that any reaction should improve communications with the Soviet Union in order to send clear and consistent signals. Thus, Fraser decided to implement a

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131 Leaver, op. cit., p. 271. See *Age*, 4 February 1980.
132 Renouf, *Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy*, op. cit., p. 120. To offer the city of Fremantle as a base was distinct from the idea of facilities at Cockburn Sound which is some kilometres south of Fremantle.
133 Renouf, ibid., p. 120. Even at the time of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, the United States was reluctant to commit to the defence of Australia while acknowledging that the establishment of a US base in Western Australia had been a long-standing goal of Australian governments. Nevertheless, the Carter administration used Fraser's state of alarm to make a counter offer. This was to persuade the Liberal and Country Parties government to accept flights of B52 strategic bombers in Australian territory. Fraser agreed to the proposal as this implied greater US involvement in the defence of Australia.
135 See Fraser, *CPD, HR*, vol. 117, 19 February 1980, p. 20.
number of substantive and symbolic measures which altered Australia's relations with the Soviet Union. These included:

- support for the United States embargo on grain sales to the Soviet Union;
- suspension of Soviet shipping access to Australian ports, including cruise ships and research vessels;
- withdrawal from fishing feasibility projects involving Soviet participation;
- suspension of Ministerial and official visits between Australia and the Soviet Union;
- rejection of a Soviet proposal to establish direct air services;
- suspension of proposed and established scientific, agricultural, and cultural relations; and
- opposition to the staging of the Olympics at Moscow while the Soviet Union remained in Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{137}

These measures drew criticism for the method by which they were decided and for not meeting the rhetoric of the Prime Minister. Immediately, Hayden captured the personal nature of the reaction to the Soviet Union:

> The pace has been set entirely by the Prime Minister on the basis of personal prejudice and political expediency. The analysis we might have expected from the Minister for Foreign Affairs (Mr Peacock) and his Department played no part in Australia's policy formulation and public stance on Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{138}

Also, several significant options of retaliation against the Soviet Union were not adopted. The Fraser government could have halted grain sales, as the US had done, but this would have damaged Australian trade and the members of the Country Party would not have agreed. Diplomatic relations could have been severed but this also would have led to a reduction in the profitable trade with the Soviet Union. Thus, many of the measures were entirely symbolic and the more strident options were not implemented.

In the longer-term debate, the central issues were the extent of trade with the Soviet Union and the boycott of the Olympic Games to be held in Moscow in July-August 1980. On trade, Fraser explained that Australia, in cooperation with other major grain exporting nations, would support the


\textsuperscript{138} Hayden, \textit{CPD, HR}, vol. 117, 19 February 1980, p. 29.
United States decision to halt the sale of 17 million tonnes of grain by not replacing this shortfall. This amounted to a partial sanction as Australian grain sales continued. Further, Fraser announced that Australia would review the trade in mineral raw materials with the Soviet Union. The essential criteria, the Prime Minister stated in the Parliament, 'must be the effectiveness of the measures in terms of their impact on the Soviet Union'. Fraser continued, to explain that:

The USSR is not dependent on imports of strategic materials, and would have little difficulty in replacing Australia as a supplier of mineral raw materials. The Government has, therefore, decided that exports of these mineral raw materials to the USSR should continue normally. This is consistent with the position of the United States and the United Kingdom.

The Fraser government seemed to conform with the established position of previous Liberal and Country Parties governments which divorced trade from politics even though the United States obviously used trade as a foreign policy instrument. The Fraser government did not fulfil the alarmist rhetoric of the Prime Minister in the trade sanctions which caused considerable debate when compared to the proposed Australian boycott of the Moscow Olympic Games.

For a number of reasons relating to the Australian electorate, the idea of boycotting the Olympic Games generated an unusually high level of public debate not replicated on other issues. Initially, Foreign Minister Peacock had offered the considered opinion that a boycott of the Olympics would be ineffectual and that a boycott was a matter for sporting bodies. Subsequently, President Carter openly advocated the notion of an international boycott of the Moscow Games with the expectation that allies of the United States would agree. Suddenly, Peacock was arguing for the boycott in line with the views of Carter and Prime Minister Fraser.

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140 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 117, 19 February 1980, p. 27.

141 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 117, 19 February 1980, p. 27. See also Kubalkova and Cruickshank, op. cit., pp. 182-3.


143 On 8 January 1980, Peacock stated 'I am not moved by suggestions that the Olympic Games be boycotted, because it is mainly a question for sporting bodies and I am not sure the USSR would suffer from a boycott'. By mid-January, President Carter had signalled the possibility of a boycott and the idea of an 'alternative Olympics'. On 21 January, Carter publicly proposed the boycott and suggested a permanent venue for the Olympics in Greece. Also on 21
Fraser strongly supported the boycott of the Moscow Games as the most effective method of inflicting some form of loss on the Soviet Union. The basis for Fraser's position was a moral argument which stood independent of any question of effectiveness:

First, we believe that it is wrong that a country which is engaged in the invasion, occupation and suppression of a people should be regarded as a fit host for the Olympic Games.

In addition, Fraser argued that the participation of Australian athletes in Moscow would be used as an endorsement of Soviet foreign policy. Also, the Prime Minister wanted to align with, and support the position of, other countries, especially the United States, which favoured the boycott. Ultimately, the attraction of the boycott was the little cost to Australia compared to the expected impact on the Soviet Union.

Within an active public debate, the arguments against a boycott of the Olympic Games varied according to their source. In general, arguments focused on whether any sanction could deter the Soviet Union, that politics should be separated from sport, that the Olympic ideal should not be compromised, that an alternative Games was not likely to be organised, and that athletes should not be 'the principal vehicle of the government's displeasure'. However, the central critique of Fraser's position was the contradiction between the boycott of the Olympic Games and continuing trade with the Soviet Union. Australian grain and wool sales to the Soviet Union prospered throughout 1979-80. In the public debate, the contrast was stark when it was revealed that wool from the Prime Minister's property of

January, Peacock experienced a complete conversion stating that 'boycotting the Games is clearly the greatest rebuff one could serve to Russia'. This change was attributed to the influence of Prime Minister Fraser which was summarised in the Melbourne Herald headline 'Peacock up the Khyber Pass'. See Hayden, CPD, HR, vol. 117, 19 February 1980, p. 29, Stockwin, op. cit., p. 341 and Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., pp. 100-1.  

144 Stockwin, op. cit., p. 342 and Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 94. See also Renouf, Australian Diplomacy..., op. cit., pp. 326-7 and Age, 18 February 1980.  


146 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 117, 19 February 1980, p. 21. Fraser explained that 35 governments of countries in Europe, Africa, Asia, the Pacific, the Caribbean, Latin America and North America had favoured a boycott of the Moscow Games if Soviet troops were not withdrawn from Afghanistan. Fraser also promised to actively promote and support the organising of alternative international Games. See also Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 93.  

147 Stockwin, op. cit., p. 343.  

148 See Renouf, Australian Diplomacy..., op. cit., p. 327 and Stockwin, op. cit., p. 344.
Nareen continued to be sold to the Soviet Union.149 Further, in June 1980, the Australian government renewed grain sales to the Soviet Union with the support of the Australian Wheat growers' Federation.150

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister was attempting to persuade the Australian Olympic Federation to agree to a boycott of the Moscow Games. In the United States, President Carter directed that the US team would not attend but Fraser expected that the AOF would decide in line with the government's position.151 Once the International Olympic Committee had failed to cancel the Moscow Olympics, it was inevitable that the Australian Olympic Federation would refuse to overturn the individual decisions of their composite sporting associations to attend the Games.152 Fraser inflamed the domestic public debate by castigating the Federation for placing duty to the Olympic movement above duty to Australia. In the end, many countries did not enforce the boycott, including Australia.

The Moscow Olympic Games were a limited success notwithstanding the boycott by the United States. It seemed that the Fraser government handled

149 See Mick Young, CPD, HR, vol. 117, 28 February 1980, p. 480, on the sale of rams to the Soviet Union and the need for the government to issue export permits for the sales: What is the government going to do?... The Deputy Prime Minister (Mr Anthony), the Minister for Primary Industry (Mr Nixon), the Minister for Industrial Relations (Mr Street), the Prime Minister, and the Minister for Transport (Mr Hunt) are all cockies. What do honourable members think they are going to do? They will be issuing permits by the dozen.

Paul Keating, CPD, HR, vol. 117, 28 February 1980, p. 485, added: When we look at the pathetic list of responses [to Soviet intervention in Afghanistan], we saw that the only response was the Olympic boycott. There were to be no trade embargoes,...the wool will go, the wheat will go, the minerals will go, but, more damningly, the Prime Minister's wool will go. He will take the roubles and run. He will say ... that the wool was sold before the invasion. The wool is still in Australia.


150 Leaver, op. cit., p. 272. See Age, 25 June 1980. Restrictions limited the sales to 3.9 million tonnes, the same amount sold in 1979-80. Despite a fierce attack on the decision from the Labor spokesperson on primary industry, Senator Peter Walsh, the Minister for Primary Industry, Nixon, stated that 'sales to the Soviet Union in 1980-81 could have been far more, so a "real restriction" was being enforced'. The Australian Wheat Growers Federation preferred no government restrictions on trade.

151 Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., pp. 100-1. In attempting to convince the Australian Olympic Federation, Fraser argued the line of national security and the need to oppose Soviet aggression. President Carter had decided that the US would not participate which included the implication that passports of athletes would be withheld. See Leaver, op. cit., p. 272.

152 Stockwin, op. cit., p. 344. President Carter attempted to influence the International Olympic Committee to cancel the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow. See also Leaver, op. cit., p. 273. In Australia, some sporting organisations were determined to send representatives while others supported the call for a boycott. The Australian Olympic Federation decided to send a team to Moscow by six votes to five. Individual athletes could withdraw on the grounds of conscience and a few athletes chose this option.
the issue badly and for some, did not have the courage to stop the Australian team from attending the Moscow Games.\textsuperscript{153} For others, Fraser's attempts to influence the debate were targeted more at domestic opinion than Soviet foreign policy.\textsuperscript{154} The debate in Australia focused on the proposed boycott of the Olympic Games at the expense of discussion on Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{155}

By the end of 1980, the Prime Minister had maintained an alarmist posture on the Soviet Union while Foreign Minister Peacock had attempted to soften Australia's position through more considered analysis.\textsuperscript{156} Relations with the Soviet Union were influenced by the campaign and election of Ronald Reagan for the Presidency of the United States. Fraser was more inclined to follow US foreign policy after 1980 given the conservative agenda of the Reagan administration.\textsuperscript{157} It was no surprise that diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union did not improve during the tenure of the Fraser government.\textsuperscript{158}

Finally, the depth of Fraser's hostility to the Soviet Union was puzzling, particularly as few colleagues in the Liberal and Country Parties shared the intensity of sentiment. The Prime Minister had no direct knowledge of the Soviet Union, was not widely read on Russian or Soviet issues and was not interested in advice which differed from established personal views.\textsuperscript{159} Fraser may have wanted to exploit the anti-Soviet opinion in Australia for domestic political advantage. With this aim, Fraser may have drawn upon the style and approach of Menzies to the threat of communism in the late 1940s and 1950s. Fraser was influenced by the leadership style of Menzies and the methods through which Menzies utilised the issue of communism to justify participation in international debates and to dictate the political agenda in the Australian electorate. Conveniently, Fraser's opposition to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan preceded the federal election in October 1980. However, this serves as only a partial explanation.

\textsuperscript{153} See Renouf, \textit{Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy}, op. cit., p. 102 and Renouf, \textit{Australian Diplomacy...}, op. cit., p. 327.
\textsuperscript{154} Leaver, op. cit., p. 273.
\textsuperscript{155} Kubalkova and Cruickshank, op. cit, p. 183.
\textsuperscript{156} R.J. Lim, Problems in Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1980, \textit{Australian Journal of Politics and History}, vol. 27, 1, 1981, p. 7. This was at a time of considerable personal distance between the Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister.
\textsuperscript{157} This was demonstrated on the issue of continuing the grain embargo on the Soviet Union. Meetings in 1980 saw Australia wait for a decision from the newly elected Reagan. ibid.
\textsuperscript{158} In contrast, trade relations continued to improve for Australia through 1980-83. Renouf, \textit{Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy}, op. cit., p. 103.
\textsuperscript{159} ibid., p. 189.
For Australia, the Soviet Union was a considerable distance in terms of posing a physical threat. Australia was not justified in attempting to lead international opposition to the Soviet Union in the context of relatively restrained responses from more knowledgeable countries located closer to Soviet borders. Nevertheless, Fraser was virulent in criticising the actions and perceived motives of the Soviet Union. This may have been an attempt to support the United States but could equally have emerged from Fraser’s desire to participate in international events and to be seen as a world leader. In the end, the distance between Fraser’s rhetoric and the government’s actions suggested that the Prime Minister conducted a personal assault against the Soviet Union with little support from Liberal and Country Party colleagues.

In total, Fraser’s concern about the expansionist intentions of the Soviet Union in the June 1976 statement appeared to be justified with the intervention into Afghanistan. In supporting the United States, Fraser implemented a range of measures against the Soviet Union including a boycott of the Moscow Olympic Games and increased defence arrangements in the Indian Ocean. At the same time, Australian trade with the Soviet Union prospered which caused difficulties for Fraser’s argument. To extend the argument on Fraser’s mishandling of the Olympic boycott, the entire Australian response to the Soviet action in Afghanistan was misdirected and mismanaged.

The United States and Iran

In addition to Australia’s early relations with the Carter administration, the issues which emerged in 1979-81 brought the Fraser government closer to US foreign policy. The key aspects of the relationship included the response to events in Iran, the change in US foreign policy from Carter to Reagan, and participation in the Sinai peacekeeping force. These topics also fitted the context of US and Australian relations with the Soviet Union, while the specific aspects provided distinct links to developing countries. The Fraser government adjusted key elements of Australian foreign policy with the emergence of President Reagan and a more confrontational US foreign policy.

In early 1979, the authority of the Shah of Iran collapsed and subsequently the Khomeini regime was installed. The dramatic events in Iran
demonstrated the inability of the Carter administration to effectively support the Shah. The seizure of the United States embassy in Tehran, including the holding of hostages, on 4 November 1979 was an act of defiance against the United States. The hostage crisis and the reaction of the Carter administration had a significant impact on Australian foreign policy, particularly relations with the United States.

While Fraser did not adopt an alarmist response to the crisis in Iran, the Prime Minister gained confirmation for the view espoused in the June 1976 statement that the world was inherently unstable and that the interests of the United States and allies were threatened. The central strategic implication of the rise of the Khomeini regime in Iran was the significant power realignment in the Gulf region, notably the decline of US influence.

Foreign Minister Peacock condemned the seizure of the US embassy in Tehran and stated that the holding of hostages contradicted Iran's obligations under international law. Also, Australia joined with others in the United Nations to call for the release of the hostages and for Iran to adhere to diplomatic conventions. While these words conformed to the US position, Australia nevertheless recognised the new government of Iran in February 1980.

Throughout the debate on Iran, Australia was interested in maintaining the perceived strength of the United States in international affairs which implied supporting the leadership of President Carter. The difference between Australian and US foreign policy at the time was that Fraser was focused on the actions and intentions of the Soviet Union while Carter appeared entirely concerned with Iran. This was not an unreasonable position for Carter to adopt, given there were a number of US citizens being held hostage and given the mood of the US electorate. President Carter had

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160 Leaver, op. cit., p. 269.
164 R. Bell, op. cit., pp. 19-20 and Leaver, op. cit., p. 270. Australia adopted a strict view, according to international law, recognising the change in Iran as an internal matter. The inconsistency within the government reflected the split in cabinet between those supporting trade boycotts and others defending Australian exports to Iran.
declined in domestic popularity through 1979 and attempted to bolster an ailing election campaign in early 1980 with tough foreign policy decisions on Iran.165

In response to the hostage crisis and the retention of US corporate assets in Iran, President Carter moved to impose economic and trade sanctions. At the end of 1979, Carter was not able to gain the support from European allies or Japan for a trade embargo or sanctions against Iran.166 The Fraser government appeared reluctant to join an embargo as profitable Australian trade with Iran had the potential for further improvement.167 To join a trade blockade would have damaged Australian trade but the United States required international support beyond not filling the trade gap left by a unilateral US trade embargo. Economic sanctions against Iran would also indicate support for action against developing countries at a time when the Fraser government was attempting to develop closer relations with countries in the Commonwealth, Africa and the Pacific region.

Despite the unlikelihood of a concerted trade embargo against Iran, the Fraser government undertook to review Australian trade with Iran in January 1980. By April, President Carter decided to impose sanctions which excluded food items and medicines. In the Fraser government cabinet, the Liberal Party Ministers, led by Foreign Minister Peacock, tended to favour compliance with the United States while the Country Party Ministers, led by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade and Resources, Doug Anthony, sought to defend rural export interests. Prime Minister Fraser apparently adopted a middle position which reflected a personal and political stance on most issues between the Liberal and Country Parties.168 Australia decided to support the United States by halting trade except the permitted sale of wheat, other grains and lamb to Iran.169 This cost Australia

166 R. Bell, op. cit., p. 20. The European countries and Japan were concerned not to upset the Middle East countries, particularly the oil-producers due to their dependence on oil products and the need for a low oil price.
167 Bell, ibid., explained that Australia would have earned more than $200million from sales of wheat and meat to Iran in the 1979-80 financial year. Iran provided only about one percent of Australia's oil needs but any reduction in Iran's supply to the international oil market would have raised oil prices and thus inflated Australia's energy costs. See also Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., pp. 114-15 and Leaver, op. cit., p. 270.
168 See Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 115 and Leaver, op. cit., p. 270.
169 Stockwin, op. cit., pp. 346-7. The embargo of non-food trade with Iran had been coordinated with the European Community and Japan, and emerged from a proposed resolution of the UN Security Council of 13 January 1980 which had been vetoed by the Soviet Union. See also Leaver, ibid., p. 271.
$70 million but the bulk of Australian exports did not suffer. The United States appreciated the response of Australia which was more positive than the EEC or Japan.\textsuperscript{170}

In addition to trade, the Carter administration decided to break diplomatic relations with Iran in April 1980 and requested that allies reduce diplomatic representation in Iran. At this time, Australia was without an ambassador in Tehran and, after some initial opposition from Peacock, the Fraser government decided not to replace the Australian ambassador. Also, the Australian trade commissioner was withdrawn, which may have been the more important of the two decisions, while officially, diplomatic relations were maintained.\textsuperscript{171}

The Fraser government's concerns about President Carter's leadership were heightened with the failure of the US military mission to rescue the hostages. This episode symbolised Carter's inadequacies as President and clearly signalled the end of Carter's hopes to be re-elected in late 1980.\textsuperscript{172} Also, the Fraser government was worried that the United States might propose an embargo on food exports to Iran which would have tested Australia's support for the Carter administration. Further, while Fraser was anticipating a more robust foreign policy from Presidential candidate Reagan, a new approach to Iran could also have demanded more from Australia in terms of the trade embargo.\textsuperscript{173}

By early 1981, the administration of President Reagan was setting a new foreign policy agenda for the United States. In general terms, the Republican Reagan foreign policy was more confrontational, Soviet-focused and leadership driven than the pejoratively characterised human rights policies of Democrat President Carter.\textsuperscript{174} The Fraser government

\textsuperscript{170} See Renouf, \textit{Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy}, op. cit., p. 115.

\textsuperscript{171} Stockwin, op. cit., pp. 346-7. An important implication of the revolution in Iran was the closure of US intelligence bases, which immediately increased the value of the military facilities in Australia. In particular, the Pine Gap and Nurrungar bases became important for gathering intelligence from the Indian Ocean, South Asia, and Middle East regions. Leaver, op. cit., p. 270.

\textsuperscript{172} See Stockwin, op. cit., p. 347; Renouf, \textit{Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy}, op. cit., pp. 115-16; Leaver, op. cit., p. 272; and Lim, op. cit., p. 8.

\textsuperscript{173} Leaver, op. cit., pp. 276-7.

demonstrated immediate support for the direction of the Reagan foreign policy. On 11 March 1981, the Prime Minister announced that agreement had been reached to allow flights of United States B52 bomber aircraft into Darwin and other northern Australian locations. The Australian electorate had been prepared by the 3 February 1980 revelation that the United States had been allowed to conduct training and navigational flights by the bombers over northern Australia. In the context of the new US foreign policy, the 1981 decision provoked an extended debate in the Parliament on the issue of the US bombers, the US bases in Australia, and the relationship with the United States. The Labor Party adopted a position critical of the Fraser government and the political parties were seen to be split on key elements of the US alliance.

Following this debate, Prime Minister Fraser and Foreign Minister Street welcomed the views of President Reagan and openly supported the 'new assertiveness' of US foreign policy. The Australian government endorsed the view of the Reagan administration that human rights, though important, should be tempered by the political and strategic interests of the United States and allies. Fraser supported Reagan's approach that the Soviet Union was the central problem in international affairs and thus attention should focus on this struggle. As such, Fraser was now able to follow the strong, anti-communist lead of Reagan and the United States.

Prime Minister Fraser's first meeting with President Reagan in June 1981 consisted of an exchange of fulsome praise. Australia was featured as a staunch ally of the new US administration. The ANZUS treaty was used in positive terms by Reagan, Fraser and Street to illustrate the alliance. In

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175 Renouf, *Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy*, op. cit., p. 121, F.A. Mediansky, Problems in Australian Foreign Policy January-June 1981, *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, vol. 27, 3, 1981, p. 296 and Leaver, op. cit., pp. 274-5. The government did not explain why the US aircraft needed to use Australian territory. However, Renouf explained that, traditionally, the US relied on the eastern route for military access to the Middle East. At the time of increasing tension in the Middle East, the United States found a reluctance among countries to host military bases and facilities. Hence, the US had developed a need for a westerly approach to the Middle East. Australia was the only reliable and suitable country for such purposes.


177 Mediansky, ibid., pp. 296-7.


an interesting extension, the US Secretary of Defence, Caspar Weinberger described the ANZUS treaty as 'one of the pillars of Asian security'.\textsuperscript{180} The Fraser government seemed to appreciate the importance placed on the relationship by the United States and, in reply, placed a greater degree of reliance upon the US. This reverted Australian foreign policy to a position similar to the policies of the Liberal and Country Parties governments prior to 1972. Fraser and others understood that the previous policies had preserved Australian security and provided a stable international context in which Australia could trade and prosper. With the change in US policy from Carter to Reagan, the Fraser government abandoned the position of qualified independence of the United States to support uncritically the security agenda of the new US foreign policy.\textsuperscript{181}

Nevertheless, the Fraser government deferred to the domestic debate when, in May 1981, the United States requested Australian participation in the Sinai peacekeeping force. Australia was asked to commit troops to the peacekeeping force which was to oversee Israel's withdrawal from the Sinai which had been annexed during the 1967 Middle East conflict. The idea of a peacekeeping force emerged from the Camp David agreements between the United States, Israel and Egypt.\textsuperscript{182} Thus, the contingent was not a United Nations force. The United States acknowledged that, in the Security Council, the Soviet Union would veto a proposed UN force for the Sinai and agreement from the General Assembly was unlikely given that the US had instigated the idea and there was opposition from key Arab countries.\textsuperscript{183} The United States proposed to construct a non-UN multinational peacekeeping force in which Australian participation would influence other potential contributors.

Through 1981, the United States placed pressure on Australia to commit to the peacekeeping force. Simultaneously, the issue was fiercely debated

\textsuperscript{181} For more, see Renouf, \textit{Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy}, op. cit., pp. 183-6. See also Renouf, \textit{Australian Diplomacy...}, op. cit., p. 328.
within the Fraser government and in the Australian electorate. Australian participation was opposed on various grounds, including that the peacekeeping force was not under the auspices of the United Nations, other countries were reluctant to join, exports to the Middle East would be jeopardised, and Australia's security resources would be diverted from the primary focus of defence in the region. Further, the Parliamentary Labor Party opposed Australian involvement in a non-UN force, although supporters of Israel in the opposition found this difficult to accept. From the backbench, former Minister for Foreign Affairs Peacock continued to doubt the value of Australian participation in a non-UN force while public opinion was consistently against involvement by Australia.

The debate was influenced by the assassination of the Egyptian President, Anwar Sadat on 7 October 1981. Hayden argued that this act demonstrated that Australia should not participate in the peacekeeping force in the Sinai. Fraser analysed the situation differently and on 22 October announced that Australia would contribute to the peacekeeping force. The Prime Minister explained that Australia must support the United States in the Middle East and argued that Australia had a clear national interest in the progress of peace in the Middle East. As a concession to the domestic opposition, Fraser stated that an Australian contribution was conditional on the participation of Canada and Britain, a significant European commitment, and the Australian involvement would be limited to the initial size and duration. Also, after pressure from the US and considerable negotiations, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Britain and New Zealand agreed to contribute to the peacekeeping force.

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184 ibid., pp. 8-9 and Mediansky, *...Australian Foreign Policy January-June 1981*, op. cit., p. 297. See also Weller, op. cit., pp. 335-44.
185 Mediansky, op. cit., p. 297 and Viviani, op. cit., p. 9. Significantly, the Country Party expressed fears about Australian trade with the Middle East.
187 See Viviani, op. cit., p. 11.
189 See Fraser, *CPD*, HR, vol. 125, 22 October 1981, pp. 2419-20. The decision to contribute to the Sinai force was also influenced by the position of Egypt as Australia's largest trading partner in the Middle East. Viviani, op. cit., p. 10. See also Renouf, *Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy*, op. cit., pp. 125-7 and Bell, *Dependent Ally*, op. cit., p. 162.
In the context of relations with the United States, the debate on Australia's participation in the peacekeeping force included a complex interaction of domestic and international influences. The Fraser government was wary of public opinion but chose to become involved in the Sinai in support of US foreign policy objectives. As such, Australian participation in the Sinai force was one of the few ostensible foreign policy differences between the rival party leaderships during the election campaign of February-March 1983.192

In total, the Fraser government was pleased to embrace the United States following the election of President Reagan in 1980. In response to events in Iran, Fraser focused on the intentions of the Soviet Union and was concerned about the loss of influence of the United States in the Middle East. The Fraser government decided to impose a limited trade embargo on Iran which did not accord with the strident position of President Carter. In contrast, Fraser embraced the leadership of President Reagan from 1980, which accorded with Fraser's anti-Soviet perspective on foreign policy. As such, Australia provided troops to the Sinai peace-keeping force under the auspices of the United States security agenda for the Middle East.

Conclusion

Australia's relationship with the United States, and the antagonism toward the Soviet Union, were the key international issues confronting the Fraser government. The Prime Minister recognised the importance of these relationships in the June 1976 statement in which Fraser established the government's security focus and opposition to the Soviet Union. Further, the alliance with the United States involved a difficult relationship with the Carter foreign policy which highlighted human rights as opposed to strategic power. As an element of the relationship with the United States, Fraser was concerned about security issues in the Indian Ocean, especially in terms of Soviet activity in the region. Thus, Fraser rejected the idea of a zone of peace for the Indian Ocean and supported the development of military facilities at Diego Garcia to encourage a greater US presence in the Indian Ocean region. In response to events in Afghanistan, Fraser aligned Australia with the United States in explicitly opposing the actions of the Soviet Union and attempted to gain support for a boycott of the Moscow Olympic Games. Fraser was faced with considerable difficulties in pursuing

192 Bell, Dependent Ally, op. cit., p. 163 and Viviani, op. cit., p. 12.
these international objectives in the domestic arena, particularly in relation to the comparison between the sporting boycott and the continuation of trade. Soon thereafter, Fraser found support from the newly elected President Reagan for a greater emphasis on security in international affairs.

As a collection, these international issues formed the framework for the Fraser government's relations with developing countries and specifically, policies on Africa. The focus on the alliance with the United States fitted with Fraser's understanding of international relations and underpinned Fraser's approach toward developing countries.
The Fraser government's relations with developing countries were framed to continue some of the changes initiated by Whitlam and to coincide with Fraser's approach to international relations in general. Prime Minister Fraser played an important role in directing Australia's support for the demands of the developing countries. From the foreign policy agenda which prioritised security and opposition to the Soviet Union, Fraser responded to the interests of the developing countries by opposing colonialism and racial discrimination.

The June 1976 statement to the Parliament provided the point of departure for Fraser to outline the Liberal and Country Parties government's relations with developing countries. Subsequently, the government commissioned a report on 'Australia's relations with the Third World' but this study, while supporting some elements of Fraser's security agenda, initiated ideas which challenged the Fraser foreign policy agenda. The international discussion initiated by the developing countries on economic structures, known as the North South debate, offered an opportunity for Fraser to demonstrate Australia's support for the demands of the developing countries. An important part of this agenda was Fraser's promotion of trade liberalisation.
in the context of discussions of a new international economic order and Fraser's argument for a Common Fund which could stabilise commodity prices. Through this work, Fraser attempted to combine Australia's trade interests with support for the developing countries.

Integral to these issues, the Fraser government tried to build constructive relations with the developing countries in the Asia Pacific region. With some difficulty, Fraser attempted to balance Australian relations with China and with the members of ASEAN. Within this diplomatic situation, Fraser was negotiating with both sides of an established political conflict. Connected to this, Fraser reacted against the intervention of Vietnam into Kampuchea but did not act against the actions of Indonesia in East Timor. Also, Australia continued to support the economy of Papua New Guinea while constructing relations with the island states of the South Pacific. In addition, Fraser used aid policy to support Australian relations with developing countries. In particular, Fraser used aid for political purposes in opposing the Soviet Union in the Asia Pacific region. Significantly, the Fraser government reversed the work of the Whitlam Labor government in establishing a separate aid agency.

This discussion of the Fraser government's relations with developing countries provides a comparison with the Whitlam government's approach. Fraser's position also offered an important shift from the previous Liberal and Country Parties governments' relations with developing countries, especially with the Asia Pacific region.

Fraser and developing countries

In actively promoting relations with developing countries, the Fraser government broke with the foreign policy tradition of the Liberal and Country Parties. Prime Minister Fraser attempted to combine an anti-Soviet security agenda with a constructive approach toward developing countries. Specifically, this involved active encouragement for the alliance with the United States while vigorously opposing racial discrimination in Africa. This merging of different philosophies was illustrated in Fraser's June 1976 statement to the Parliament. Further questions were addressed in the Harries report on Australia's relations with the 'Third World'.

On 1 June 1976, Fraser linked international security with the interests of the developing countries, explaining that 'the appalling widespread problems of poverty, hunger and disease are not only an affront to human dignity, but constantly threaten discord and conflict between nations'. With this position established, the Prime Minister proceeded to chide the industrial nations:

By no measure can the developed nations of the world claim that they have acted with adequate foresight to redress the balance. The developed countries have pursued a policy of tied loans and tied aid but they have completely failed to open their markets to the developing countries to permit terms of trade that will provide proper returns for their products to the developing countries. The developed countries are regrettably more interested in trade between themselves than they are in facilitating the progress of nations poorer than themselves. They can take no pride in their actions in this area.

This important government statement illustrated Fraser's concern with the situation of developing countries in the international economy while recognising the security implications of deteriorating economic conditions.

Despite this, the first year of foreign policy formation by the Fraser government did not give prominence to issues central to developing countries. Rather, priority was placed on relations with the United States, China, Japan, and Indonesia. These were Australia's key relationships in terms of international diplomacy, trade, and security. Also, it seemed that the Fraser government would need to allow for time to pass before continuing the policies of the Whitlam Labor government on developing countries. Nevertheless, in 1976, the Fraser government decided to continue food aid to Mozambique.

Also, domestic pressures limited Fraser's ability to assist the developing countries. On tariffs, the perception was that lowering the restrictions on imports would damage Australian manufacturing and other industries. In this case, to act on the rhetoric of increased access for developing countries

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2 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2736. See also Philip Eldridge, Diplomacy, Development and 'Small Government': Conflicting Directions in Australia's Overseas Aid Program, Australia-Asia Papers, no. 23, Centre for the Study of Australian-Asian Relations, Griffith University, January 1983, pp. 10-12, on Australia as a 'middle power' in attempting to provide a link between developing countries and industrialised countries.
3 Alan Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, Australia's Professional Publications, Sydney, 1986, p. 133.
to industrialised markets may have been costly in economic and therefore electoral terms for the Fraser government. The Prime Minister was able to articulate a personal agenda for foreign policy but the Liberal and Country Parties restricted Fraser's ability to implement this position in relation to greater trade with developing countries.4

This tension between Fraser and the Liberal and Country Parties was mollified somewhat by the Prime Minister's authority within the government. In the end, the questions remained whether Fraser acted to sufficiently support the rhetoric on developing countries, whether the developing countries accepted Australia as an ally, and whether Fraser actually broke with the foreign policy tradition of the Liberal and Country Parties.

To some extent, these questions were tackled in the Harries report on Australia's relations with the 'Third World'.5 In April 1978, Prime Minister Fraser announced the establishment of a committee, chaired by Professor Owen Harries, to investigate Australia's relations with developing countries. As an adviser to both Peacock and Fraser, Harries provided the driving force for the review from within the government offices.6

The Harries report recommended that the Australian government should close the gulf between rhetoric and action toward developing countries, reduce restrictions on imports from developing countries in South East Asia, not exaggerate the importance of the Commonwealth and avoid any prominence in southern Africa, and should aim to allocate 0.7 percent of GDP to aid.7 The report also promoted economic growth as the key development strategy and displayed a distinct anti-Soviet agenda.

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Foreign Minister Peacock endorsed the Harries report upon presentation to the Parliament. Peacock stated that Harries and the committee had produced 'an outstanding report which is a major contribution to the discussion of Australia's foreign policy'. The report represented an opportunity for Peacock to move the more reluctant members of cabinet away from traditional attitudes and toward policies which supported developing countries. The pragmatism of the Harries report appeared to reflect Peacock's views but the recommendations did not entirely fit with the Fraser government's foreign policy.

Despite apparently radical recommendations on the reduction of tariffs and an increase in aid funds, the Harries report was widely regarded as a profoundly conservative document. The Labor Party criticised the Fraser government for accepting 'all recommendations of the Harries report because this represented an endorsement of the status quo. From the Labor perspective, the Harries report restated the view that there should be no fundamental change in the relationship between developed and developing countries. Brian Howe pointed to the lack of an historical approach to the analysis of developing countries and the shallow political and economic context of the report. The Harries report assumed the benefits of free market economic growth for developing countries and urged Australia to promote economic growth with social development and political stability. Specifically, the Harries report argued that Australian

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8 Peacock, CPD, HR, vol. 115, 18 September 1979, p. 1190. See also Dobie, CPD, HR, 2 April 1980, p. 1655 and see generally, Peacock, Australia and the Third World, op. cit.
10 Howe, CPD, HR, vol. 117, 2 April 1980, p. 1652. See also Kerin, CPD, HR, vol. 117, 2 April 1980, p. 1658 and Blewett, CPD, HR, vol. 117, 2 April 1980, p. 1662. A separate debate emerged on the definition of the 'Third World' as used in the Harries report and the place of Australia with regard to the general groupings of industrial countries and developing countries. The terms of reference for the Harries report assumed a coherent 'Third World' and the report reflected this position. This assumption was questioned, in particular, in a brief dissenting view by committee member J.T. Smith which was included in the Harries report. Smith disagreed that Australia should be classified as a 'Western' country given the multicultural nature of the Australian community. Strangely, the Labor Party, principally the key Labor spokesperson Lionel Bowen, argued in favour of the Smith view and proceeded to criticise the report and the Fraser government from this spurious ground. See Harries report, op. cit., Appendix B, The Meaning of 'The Third World', pp. 195-6; Dissenting View from Mr. J.T. Smith, in Harries report, ibid., pp. 191-2; Peacock, CPD, HR, vol. 115, 18 September 1979, pp. 1189-90; Bowan, CPD, HR, vol. 117, 26 March 1980, p. 1211; and Dobie, CPD, HR, vol. 117, 2 April 1980, pp. 1655-6. See also R. Bell, op. cit., p. 22.
12 See Ralph Pettman, The Radical Critique of Australian Foreign Policy, chapter 18 in Boyce and Angel, op. cit., pp. 306 and Eldridge, op. cit., p. 15. The focus on growth was seen to advocate income inequality in developing countries. See Pettman, op. cit., pp. 306-8, on the impact of economic growth models on developing countries.
aid should attempt to achieve economic and social development through overall economic growth in developing countries.  

As expected, the report offered an anti-Soviet perspective. This was explained in terms of countering the intentions of the Soviet Union in developing countries which accorded with the view of the Fraser government. While adopting a more pragmatic line on relations with China, the Harries report warned that Australia should avoid actions which might push non-aligned countries toward the Soviet Union. This was an implied criticism of the Fraser government's decision to end aid to Vietnam and the subsequent inflexible approach to the dispute in Kampuchea.

Also within the anti-Soviet framework, the Harries report suggested that Australia should avoid prominence in southern Africa but should support efforts to find settlements which would prevent the growth of Soviet influence. This position recognised the collective influence of African countries in the United Nations and the Commonwealth. On the other side of this view, the anti-Soviet approach to Africa provided Fraser with a justification for further Australian involvement in southern Africa when debating with sceptical members of the Liberal and Country Parties.

In contrast, the economic position of the Harries report did not accord with the preferences of the Fraser government. The report favoured free world trade and recommended that Australia should reduce tariffs and other restrictions on imports. In opposing protectionism, the Harries report argued that trade between industrialised countries and developing countries was beneficial to both parties. The deputy leader of the Labor Party, Lionel Bowen criticised this 'simple-minded free trade approach of Treasury' which ignored the impact of reduced tariffs on industry and unemployment in Australia. The Labor Party accepted the need for co-operation in trading relations, particularly with ASEAN, but not at the expense of Australian industries.

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13 See Harries report, op. cit., p. 189. See also R. Bell, op. cit., p. 22.
17 Bell, ibid., pp. 23-4 and Eldridge, op. cit., p. 9.
The Harries report endorsed the view of the members of ASEAN that Australian tariffs should be lowered to allow greater access for imports from South East Asia. The problem for the Fraser government was the gap between the rhetoric of greater trade opportunities for developing countries and the lack of action on Australian restrictions on imports.\textsuperscript{20} The Harries report argued for co-operation with the anti-communist governments of ASEAN and East Asia and that Australia should promote foreign economic policies concurrent with the demands of these countries.\textsuperscript{21} This position set the anti-Soviet strategic framework above the free trade argument for lower tariffs.

In addition, the Harries report recommended that Australian aid should be progressively increased. Indeed, the report argued that the Australian government should prevent any further reduction of funds allocated to aid in order to achieve the target of 0.7 percent of GNP for official development assistance. However, the Harries report also recommended that 'the proportion of the annual aid budget directed at Papua New Guinea should continue to be reduced'.\textsuperscript{22}

Apart from Papua New Guinea, the Harries report argued that Australian aid should continue to be allocated in the form of grants, and related to specific projects where possible.\textsuperscript{23} Significantly, the report rejected the view that basic human needs should determine aid and trade policies because Australian interests would not appear to be served by this approach.\textsuperscript{24} The Harries report advocated that aid should be used to assist Australian trade in the Asia Pacific region and to promote political stability in developing countries.

\textsuperscript{21} Harries report, op. cit., pp. 181-2. See also R. Bell, op. cit., p. 23.
\textsuperscript{22} Harries report, op. cit., p. 189. The report continued to explain that 'the budget support grant component should be complemented by project aid and technical assistance, so as to place Papua New Guinea on a less dissimilar footing to that of other recipients'. However, Kerin explained that at the time of PNG independence in 1975, Australian aid comprised about 50 percent of the PNG budget, but by 1980 Australian aid counted for only 33 percent of the PNG budget. Kerin, CPD, HR, vol. 117, 2 April 1980, p. 1660.
\textsuperscript{23} Harries report, op. cit., pp. 189-90. See also Falconer, CPD, HR, vol. 117, 2 April 1980, p. 1660 and R. Bell, op. cit., p. 22.
\textsuperscript{24} Harries report, op. cit., p. 189: In Australia's aid program there will be many opportunities for providing for the basic needs of the very poor while simultaneously promoting long-term economic growth on a national basis. However, our aid programming should not make the meeting of basic needs an overriding test.
Finally, while supporting the Fraser government approach to foreign policy, the conclusions in the Harries report presented an argument that Australia needed to develop more balanced, comprehensive and consistent policies toward developing countries. By March 1980, Peacock was more critical of the Harries report. While agreeing with most of the recommendations, the Foreign Minister expressed concern about the implications of two key points, notably tariff reductions and increases in aid allocations. Indeed, Peacock effectively dismissed the report by claiming that the central elements of the document would be under continual review.

In conclusion, Fraser attempted to combine an anti-Soviet security agenda with support for issues central to developing countries in the June 1976 statement. Further questions were addressed in the Harries report which did not entirely accord with the policy preferences of the Fraser government. Indeed, the policy objectives and outcomes of Fraser were more clearly visible in Australia's participation in the North South debate, Fraser's approach on the Asia Pacific region, and changes in aid policy.

the North South debate

Prime Minister Fraser linked Australia with the developing countries through active participation in debates on North South issues. Discussions initiated by the developing countries in international forums focused on the economic relationships between industrial countries and the non-industrial, commodity exporting developing countries. Fraser supported the demands of the developing countries for a New International Economic Order, that is, a restructuring of global trade and investment relations. Fraser also advocated the need for a Common Fund to stabilise commodity prices and thereby assist the export earnings of developing countries. Nevertheless, Australia was criticised in these debates for maintaining high tariffs and reducing aid to developing countries.

In the June 1976 statement, Fraser outlined the government's understanding of, and commitment to, the international demands of developing countries:

25 ibid., pp. 177-82. See also R. Bell, op. cit., p. 24.
There is a great need in general for more practical recognition of the significance of international economic relations for the developing countries. More than any other single factor the developing countries need adequate access for their products to the markets of developed countries which we believe would come to be reflected in more appropriate terms of trade. International trading arrangements which provide relatively free trade for the industrial products of the developed countries while placing excessively high barriers before the products of the developing countries, offer little hope to the poorer nations in solving their problems. One of the greatest contributions which could be made by the industrial countries to the peace of the world would be international trading arrangements which provide greater opportunities for the primary products of the developing countries.27

This statement established a political link between Australia and the developing countries. The criticisms of protectionism were directed at the European Community and the United States and therefore Fraser argued that Australia would attempt to improve trade access into these markets for the primary products of both Australia and developing countries.28 In this, Fraser aligned Australia with the developing countries rather than promising greater access to the Australian economy. Fraser's words also provided support for the idea of a new international economic order.29 However, the clear outline of intent offered a point of reference for later criticisms of the Fraser government's policies on unequal terms of trade with developing countries, particularly with ASEAN.

Further, the work of Fraser and Peacock formed a loose plan designed to improve the economic conditions of poor countries and to stimulate economic recovery in industrial nations.30 Indeed, Australian foreign policy emphasised the need to incorporate developing countries into 'a comprehensive strategy for world development'.31 This involved greater assistance from wealthy countries to include the developing countries in a basic programme for world development while promoting growth in world

27 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2742.
28 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2742.
29 Indeed, Foreign Minister Peacock, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2749, explained that the Prime Minister's statement was an endorsement of a new international economic order. Peacock also showed a commitment to narrowing the economic gap between developed and developing countries.
31 Ian Bickerdyke, Australia, the international economy and the Third World, Economic Activity, October 1978, p. 1.
The specifics of Australian policy centred on the notion of a New International Economic Order, through which the developing countries argued for a restructuring of the world economy, and the proposal for a Common Fund for the stabilisation of commodity prices.

The idea of a New International Economic Order and Australia's position in relation to this notion was explained by Foreign Minister Peacock in a public campaign through 1978. The strategy started with a Ministerial statement on foreign policy to the Parliament on 9 May 1978 which highlighted the importance of the debate on international economic issues. Peacock also made five significant speeches on the issue, culminating with an address to the United Nations General Assembly on 6 October 1978. The wider North-South debate was geared toward a UNGA Special Session on Economic

32 Fraser's plan and the support for the New International Economic Order tended to suppress the demands for a basic needs approach to development. See Eldridge, op. cit., pp. 14-16.

33 There was substantial debate on the New International Economic Order, including R.H. Green, Toward a rational and equitable new international economic order: a case for negotiated structural change, *World Development*, vol. 3, 6, June 1975; M. Abdel-Fadil, et al., A new international economic order?, *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, vol. 1, 2, June 1977;


Development on 27 August 1980 at which Peacock revisited the notion of a NIEO with a further address to the General Assembly.\textsuperscript{36}

Initially, Peacock attempted to explain the background and content of the idea of a New International Economic Order. Many developing countries understood that the wealth of industrial countries was the result of systematic exploitation of commodity producing developing countries. Also, the developing countries perceived that international economic structures were governed by rules of trade and finance which had been designed by industrial countries to entrench established economic relations.\textsuperscript{37} Without denying these arguments, Peacock explained that this position was not accepted by the industrial countries. Nevertheless, the analysis of the developing countries formed the background to the collection of proposals referred to as the New International Economic Order.

The belief in past and present exploitation provided a strong moral component to the demands of the developing countries for structural change. Peacock concurred that:

\begin{quote}
    it may be arguable that there is a moral injustice in an international system which has tolerated declining real levels of official development assistance during a period of serious balance of payments and debt servicing problems in many developing countries.\textsuperscript{38}
\end{quote}

The developing countries argued for radical restructuring of economic and political systems on grounds of natural justice and equality. This argument involved a number of key issues including trade access to world markets, commodity exports, industrialisation, transfer of technology, financial debt, development assistance and other institutional arrangements.

The position of Australia in the debate on a New International Economic Order was made plain by Peacock:

\begin{quote}
The Government believes that a fundamental re-appraisal of present thinking is required on the grounds of justice to the Third
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{38} Peacock, \textit{The Implications for Australia...}, op. cit., p. v.
World and in the interests of the developed countries . . . [T]here are areas where action would result in mutual advantage: Action which will help to restructure trade relationships could stimulate world economic growth.39

Here, Peacock highlighted the benefits to Australia of greater international trade in total and attempted to bring the Parliament into the debate. In supporting the NIEO debate, Peacock was critical of the rounds of multilateral trade negotiations which were undertaken to expand and liberalise world trade through the reduction of trade barriers such as tariffs.40

The multilateral trade negotiations had focused on the problems of industrial countries and had ignored the need for liberalisation of agricultural trade which would assist primary producing developing countries. Indeed, Fraser preferred to focus on primary products in this debate in accordance with the trade priorities of Australia.41 In line with the Prime Minister, Peacock admonished the industrial countries for lifting restrictions on trade between industrial countries while constructing barriers against the primary and secondary products of the developing countries.42 However, in adopting this position on the inadequacies of the multilateral trade negotiations, Peacock was openly criticising Australia's protectionist stance against trade with developing countries in the Asia Pacific region.

From this situation, it was not surprising that the debate on a New International Economic Order moved slowly or not at all. Peacock wanted to link the multilateral trade negotiations with the calls for restructuring from the developing countries:

41 While the developing countries supported the critique of the multilateral trade negotiation, Fraser's agenda did not entirely accord with the view of the developing countries. Fraser tended to ignore industrial products from the developing countries in the plan to liberalise trade. The tariffs imposed by the industrial countries on manufactured products from developing countries were an impediment to dialogue. The industrial countries provided concessions under generalised schemes of preferences for manufactured and processed agricultural products from developing countries, but these schemes were limited to particular products and had quotas and ceilings. The developing countries argued that trade in industrial products was linked to trade in primary products and that the process of industrialisation would require concessions from the rich countries in both areas. See Bickerdyke, op. cit., p. 4.
Progress in the negotiation of international economic issues has been disappointing... The present impasse has arisen because the two key problems - slow growth rates in the developed economies and the need to accommodate the interests of developing countries - have been treated as distinct and separate processes... There will be greater prospect if [these issues] are considered in conjunction instead of as entirely separate questions.43

Peacock also appealed to the members of the United Nations General Assembly:

The international community cannot allow negotiations on international economic issues to proceed at their present pace. There must be a renewed effort by governments to achieve results... We must make a start on the preparation of the framework for a new international development strategy: a framework which can accommodate the objectives of growth and equity.44

In the end, Peacock was disappointed by the lack of support shown by the industrial countries for international economic change. In aligning with the developing countries, Peacock demonstrated that the Fraser government accepted the moral argument that the industrial countries had exploited the developing countries and continued to control international economic systems to the detriment to primary producing economies, including Australia.

Meanwhile, Australia's support for the demands of the developing countries was most clearly demonstrated through Prime Minister Fraser's consistent promotion of the Common Fund. This scheme was proposed to stabilise price fluctuations of major commodities and to support the prices at remunerative and just levels.45 Any country that relied upon a small number of commodity exports would benefit and, therefore, many developing countries would be assisted with stable commodity prices.

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45 Price fluctuations on international commodity markets cause difficulties for planning and disadvantage may be suffered by producers due to insufficient demand. The proposed commodity scheme employed a central authority supported by the Common Fund to buy and sell the commodity on the world market to counteract market movements and thus ensure that the supply and demand were equated at an agreed guaranteed price. See also Peacock, CPD, HR, vol 109, 9 May 1978, p. 2031, Peacock, Statement to the United Nations General Assembly, 6 October 1978, op. cit., p. x, and Peacock, Australia and the Third World, op. cit., p. 8.
However, the developing countries accounted for only one half of world commodity trade, which implied that the Common Fund would also assist other commodity dependent economies such as Australia.46

Significantly, the Fraser government's alignment with the developing countries on the issue of commodity exports was in direct opposition to the interests of industrial economies. It was sensible for the Fraser government to adopt this position as the prices for commodity exports had been depressed for several years.47 At a personal level, the Prime Minister and several other members of the government were involved in primary production and therefore the sponsorship by the Liberal and Country Parties government of this radical international cause was less than surprising.48

A constitution for the Common Fund was agreed in June 1980 but there were insufficient ratifications by participating countries to bring the scheme into operation. The problem was that the developing countries argued that the industrial countries should contribute more generously in order to flatten fluctuations in the returns from the selected commodities while the industrial countries wanted the Common Fund to be self-supporting.49 This disagreement threatened the idea of a Common Fund but Fraser was determined to continue promoting the need for this structure.

Prime Minister Fraser, in the first meeting with President Reagan in early 1981, attempted to gain endorsement from the United States on North South issues, particularly on the Common Fund. However, Fraser was unable to secure any financial support for the Common Fund from Reagan. Subsequently, Fraser integrated the notion of a Common Fund with


48 Bell, ...Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1978, op. cit., p. 294.

Australian support for the Reagan administration in the strategic rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union:

East-West rivalry and Nort-South issues do not exist independently of each other; they are already enmeshed and if conditions in the Third World are allowed to deteriorate further, the risk of super power conflict then will be greatly increased.50

In May 1981 the Fraser government signed the 'Agreement Establishing the Common Fund for Commodities' and promised more than $10million for this arrangement.51 The contribution by Australia belied the difficulties in raising sufficient financial support for the Common Fund from industrialised countries. The Common Fund suffered at a time of international austerity led by the Reagan administration. Also, the support of the rich countries was always in doubt while the prices of commodities could be controlled by the United States and allies to the detriment of the developing countries. The Common Fund threatened this part of the global economic power base of the industrial countries and, in the end, the dispute over contributions to the Common Fund caused the idea for commodity price stabilisation to be abandoned by the international community.

Undeterred, Fraser continued to pursue issues central to the developing countries. In October 1981, Fraser stressed the importance of North South issues to the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Melbourne. Australia was influential in constructing the Melbourne declaration from the Commonwealth on North South issues and the communique which argued for a new approach to relations between rich and poor countries.52 The Fraser government was operating against the tide of opinion from the industrial countries which continued to oppose the idea of a new international economic order. Throughout the debates, and particularly

50 Fraser, address to the Commonwealth Club, Adelaide, 9 February 1981, in Backgrounder, no. 270, 11 February 1981, statements, p. x. For Fraser, global stability was dependent on the strategic equation as well as on relations between rich and poor countries. See also F.A. Mediansky, Problems in Australian Foreign Policy January-June 1981, Australian Journal of Politics and History, vol. 27, 3, 1981, p. 297 and Bell, ...Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1978, op. cit., p. 294.

51 Mediansky, op. cit., pp. 294-5. The fund had two accounts, the first to assist with the financing of buffer stock operations, and the second to help finance measures aimed at improving commodity trade such as research and productivity improvements. Australia agreed to contribute $4.7million, or ten percent, to the first account, and $5.5million to the second account. See also Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 125, 13 October 1981, p. 1891; Renouf, op. cit., pp. 148-9; Bickerdyke, op. cit., p. 2; and Alan Renouf, Australian Diplomacy 1976-1980, chapter 20 in Boyce and Angel, op. cit., p. 328.

into the 1980s, the industrial countries proceeded as slowly as possible in considering concessions for the developing countries. To the credit of Fraser, Australia was a progressive and consistent force in the North South debate against the views of major allies such as the United States.

By 1980-81, the hopes for a New International Economic Order, a Common Fund and a new dialogue between developed and developing countries had faded. In addressing the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Economic Development in August 1980, Peacock concluded that the central tenet of the debates should have recognised the interdependence of the world economy. Further, Peacock drew several lessons from the North South dialogue, concluding that 'progress is most likely when it is recognised that mutual interests are involved, and that agreement depends on a readiness on all sides to consider concessions'. Unfortunately for Peacock and Fraser, the industrial countries, especially the United States and the European Community, were unwilling to entertain the arguments of the developing countries and were not prepared to offer concessions in the debate on trade. To a substantial degree, this outcome proved the arguments of the developing countries on the established power relations within the international economic system.

In conclusion, the position of Fraser and Peacock in the North South debate was said to form 'the moral centrepiece of Australian foreign policy'. The Fraser government's support for the developing countries was not axiomatic for the Liberal and Country Parties and indeed it was Fraser's personal standing which facilitated the role of Australia in the international debate. This situation could not have been predicted of the Liberal Party prior to election in 1975.

56 Bell, Dependent Ally, op. cit., p. 160.
57 Miller, op. cit., p. 162.
Despite the work of Fraser and Peacock within the North South debate, Australia was an easy target for criticism while maintaining high tariff barriers against trade with the developing countries while also substantially reducing the level of aid. This was most clearly shown in the Fraser government's relations with the Asia Pacific region, especially with the members of the Association of South East Asian Nations.

Asia and ASEAN

Part of the Fraser government's position on developing countries was Australia's bilateral relations with many countries in the Asia Pacific region. Central to Australia's stance was Fraser's balancing of relations with ASEAN and China. In attempting to build constructive relations with both, the Fraser government was often negotiating between serious diplomatic tensions. The simple comparison of the Fraser government's approach on these issues demonstrated the difficulties within Australia's policy on the Asia Pacific region.

In general terms, Fraser expressed Australia's interests in the region by arguing that:

... the region should not become in the future an arena of great power conflicts; that relations between states should be peaceful and co-operative; that political change in the area should not provide occasion for the assertion of a dominant role by any of the great powers; and that there should be opportunity for commercial and cultural exchange between Australia and the countries of the area. Beyond these interests we would wish, within the limits of our possibilities, to help in the region's development needs and to be an understanding and dependable neighbour.

In comparison with the Whitlam government, Prime Minister Fraser stressed Australia's strategic relationship with the countries of Asia which implied a different approach. The security agenda included the need to reduce tension in the region which, for Fraser, meant the need for a strong United States presence to oppose the Soviet Union. This position emerged

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from Fraser’s views as Minister for Defence during the war in Vietnam and linked to the Australian desire for US activity in the Indian Ocean region.

Fraser appeared to be less attentive to the Asia Pacific region than previous Australian Prime Ministers. The region remained important but Fraser regarded Asia as only one of many areas which required vigilance. Fraser’s approach to foreign affairs meant that Australia’s interests in the region would not override attention to other international issues. As a result, Fraser was also concerned about more distant regions and conflicts including the European Community, the Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean, the role of the United States in the Middle East, the Commonwealth of Nations, and southern Africa.

Notwithstanding this international vision for Australian foreign policy, Fraser attempted to build constructive relations with the members of the Association of South East Asian Nations. This approach was dominated by trade issues which drew attention to the Fraser government’s maintenance of protectionist policies. Throughout the term of the Fraser government, the debate on trade with ASEAN operated in parallel with the participation of Fraser and Peacock in discussions on trade liberalisation within the North South dialogue. Further, Australia was involved in a dispute with ASEAN over air travel while Fraser was attempting to promote the idea of a Pacific Rim economic community. Clearly, the Fraser government position on relations with ASEAN was filled with tensions which caused significant problems for Australia’s image in the Asia Pacific region.

The Prime Minister was engaged in the Asia region early in 1976 when combining attendance at the funeral of Tun Razak in Kuala Lumpur with official talks. The aim of these discussions was to improve Australia’s formal relationship with ASEAN following unsuccessful attempts by the Whitlam government to forge secure links. Fraser also attempted to gain consultations with the ASEAN leaders at the regular meetings of ASEAN.

While attempting to provide a positive image for Australia with ASEAN, Fraser was also maintaining Australia’s close relations with China. Indeed, Fraser explicitly accepted the Whitlam government’s enthusiasm for China and embraced China as a regional ally in opposition to the Soviet Union. Moreover, Fraser’s attraction to China distanced the Liberal and Country

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60 Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 163.
61 ibid., p. 166. On Australia meeting with ASEAN, see also Barclay, op. cit., p. 15.
Parties government from the anti-communist and anti-China governments of Menzies, Holt and McMahon. However, the members of ASEAN were concerned about China's motives in the Asia Pacific region and thus distanced themselves from Australia's support for China. In particular, the Indonesian government was puzzled by the behaviour of the apparently anti-communist Fraser.

In this context of early tension with ASEAN, Fraser attempted to offer a constructive policy in the June 1976 statement:

> Australia has long standing friendships with all ASEAN governments. We welcome the activities of ASEAN as providing a constructive basis for regional relations. We want to identify and develop further areas of practical co-operation on shared political and strategic interests. We will seek to do so through our aid programs, through involvement in regional efforts to advance economic and social development, and by the promotion of trade and other economic co-operation.

This statement could be read as an attempt to repair the damage inflicted upon Australia's relations with ASEAN in the early months of 1976.

Nevertheless, within days of this important foreign policy announcement, relations with ASEAN were again in crisis. During an official visit to China in June 1976, a transcript of comments made by Fraser was made public. Apparently, in meeting with Chinese officials, Fraser made derogatory comments about the future stability of some nations in South East Asia. This revelation negated the constructive tone of the words on ASEAN in the June statement and illustrated the problems with Australia's attempt to balance relations with both China and ASEAN.

The Fraser government prioritised strategic considerations in the Asia Pacific region which meant that the stability of the region was seen as closely

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64 Mackie, op. cit., p. 4.
tied to the viability of ASEAN as a regional organisation. Following the opportunity to meet with the Heads of Government of ASEAN in August 1977, Fraser reiterated the government's position on the region:

Australia strongly supports ASEAN's objective of preventing domination of the region by any major power and we have a significant interest in helping to ensure that ASEAN succeeds in its efforts to generate the economic growth and political stability for which it is striving. Our relationship with ASEAN is one which will require continuing and special attention.

Again, strategic factors were interwoven with economic interests, which implied trade and aid issues.

Indeed, the Fraser government was encouraging the United States to maintain a commitment to the region and thereby preserve the security of Australia. However, the United States reduced its involvement with the withdrawal of ground forces from South Korea. The members of ASEAN were concerned that the United States would further reduce its presence in Korea and the region, and publicly signalled their disquiet. At the same time, the ASEAN members, except perhaps Singapore, held reservations about military involvement within their borders, including the presence of the United States. The Philippine leaders, for example, viewed the US bases in their country as a risk to security rather than a benefit. The apparent contradiction in this approach emerged from the ASEAN members wanting the US to resist communist action in the region but not wanting permanent facilities in their countries. In the end, the United States maintained a level of commitment in the Asia Pacific region which was designed to placate ASEAN, Australia and others.

66 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 106, 17 August 1977, p. 351. Fraser and the ASEAN leaders agreed on the need for a sound basis of knowledge from which a long term economic relationship would be developed. To this end, a joint ASEAN-Australia research project was established to assemble the basic material, ideas and proposals for greater co-operation. See Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 106, 17 August 1977, p. 353.
68 Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 164.
69 Similar to the Fraser government's position, the United States combined the political stability of the region with economic development. Albinski, op. cit., p. 10.
In terms of trade, the Fraser government was confronted with conflicting priorities which remained unresolved through the entire term of government. The problems rested with distinct political pressures on tariff policies and the limited access to the Australian economy for ASEAN exports. Specifically, the Fraser government resolved to protect Australian industries through relatively high tariff barriers. This situation implied that prices for imports would remain uncompetitive in the Australian economy.

The Fraser government's resistance to demands for greater access to the Australian markets resulted in an acrimonious dialogue between Australia and the members of ASEAN. Irritation was heightened when Prime Minister Fraser criticised the European Economic Community for excessive protectionism without acknowledging the barriers imposed by Australia. Peacock argued that domestic economic conditions needed to improve before tariffs could be lowered and thereafter more imports could compete in the Australian market.

Nevertheless, as early as December 1976, the Fraser government, and in particular the Minister for Foreign Affairs, recognised the calls from ASEAN on trade issues. A small initiative was the establishment of a high level interdepartmental committee directed to monitor 'all aspects of Australia's relations with the five member countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations'. The committee had the potential to provide constructive policy advice to meet the grievances of ASEAN but, while the government was not prepared to implement domestic reforms on tariffs, the committee was faced with limited options.

Foreign Minister Peacock made the government's position clear in March 1977 by acknowledging and supporting the concerns of ASEAN for 'increased economic relations with Australia.' Peacock recognised the


71 See Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 167 and Peacock, Australia and the Third World, op. cit., p. 11.

72 McCarthy, op. cit., p. 339.

importance of economic growth in the region and the value of expanding trade for developing countries in general. The qualification to this position was that:

... any significant change in our trade relations will have to take place gradually to minimise any domestic dislocation in this country ... Progress in these matters depends on the recovery of the Australian economy.74

Peacock was again attempting to balance policy objectives in the region but foreshadowed a consistent negative response to all calls for tariff reductions.

Interestingly, Senator Sim claimed that the members of ASEAN understood the predicament of the Australian government:

The present domestic problems facing Australia are understood but they will not be understood if we disrupt the economies of the less developed countries in protecting Australian industry. While the problems are understood now, they are less likely to be understood in, say, 12 months' time. The time will come when we will be expected to stop talking and to deliver the goods.75

However, individual ASEAN members again registered protests over Australia's tariff policies and, in particular, the Philippines reduced by half the level of imports of Australian steel in a clear act of retaliation.76 These criticisms provoked a tour by Peacock to the ASEAN countries in April 1977. The Foreign Minister was able to make a personal impression but trade relations did not improve.

Progress on these issues was sabotage on occasions by the Minister for Overseas Trade and leader of the Country Party, Doug Anthony, in defence of protectionist policies. Anthony argued that Australian imports of clothing and footwear from developing countries compared favourably with other developed countries and criticised the developing countries which were demanding greater access to Australian markets:

I have very real difficulties with those who maintain that our actions have been unduly restrictive or harsh. Nor do I accept the criticism that our policy has provided little opportunity for developing countries to expand their trade.77

75 Sim, CPD, Senate, vol. 72, 22 March 1977, p. 348.
Possibly in response to the Minister for Overseas Trade, or in reaction to the trade policies of the Fraser government as a whole, the Malaysian Trade Minister threatened to switch wheat orders to Canada. Thus, the trend in Australian trade relations with ASEAN were entrenched by mid 1977.

The pivotal opportunity for Fraser to alleviate tensions with ASEAN arrived in August 1977 when Australia, New Zealand and Japan were invited to the ASEAN Heads of Government meeting in Kuala Lumpur. Prime Minister Fraser reported to the Parliament that:

> The meetings with the ASEAN Heads of Government were of the greatest value in furthering the strong and friendly ties that have linked Australia with these five countries for more than three decades. The meeting demonstrated, at the highest level, our mutual desire to enhance Australian-ASEAN cooperation.

This understanding of the discussions with the ASEAN leaders contrasted with the barrage of criticism against Fraser and Australia's protectionist policies.

Possibly in response to these objections, the Prime Minister attempted to explain the government's policy as stated to the ASEAN countries:

> The ASEAN Heads of Government raised the question of our trade and they expressed the strong wish to increase their share of trade with Australia. I emphasised that the balance of trade with ASEAN countries had been moving relatively in ASEAN's favour since 1970-71 from a ratio of 3:1 against them to 2:1. The growth rate of imports to Australia from ASEAN over the last five years has averaged 30 per cent, much higher than the general growth rate of imports from all countries to Australia.

The growth in imports from the members of ASEAN was actually thirty percent for the entire five year period employed but this was a minor flaw in the argument. Fundamentally, Fraser reiterated the government's position that ASEAN imports would not continue to grow at the expense of

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78 See McCarthy, op. cit., p. 340. The Malaysian Trade Minister, Datuk Hamzah, outlined the possibility of shifting trade away from Australia only weeks after the statement by Doug Anthony.

79 The 6-7 August meeting was the first at which leaders of other countries had been invited to meet with the five ASEAN Heads of Government.

80 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 106, 17 August 1977, p. 351.

81 Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 167. See also Millar, Australia in Peace and War, op. cit., pp. 428-9.

82 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 106, 17 August 1977, p. 351.
Australian industry. More opportunities for imports from ASEAN would be dependent upon improvements in the economic situation in Australia.\footnote{Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 106, 17 August 1977, pp. 351-2.}

Whitlam was critical of Fraser's argument:

The Prime Minister repeatedly makes comparisons between the growth of trade with ASEAN countries on one hand and our industrialised trade partners in Europe, North America and Japan. It is an irrelevant and counter-productive comparison. It demonstrates the complete failure of the Prime Minister to understand the real nature of our relations with the ASEAN countries and their view of their relations with Australia. Simply, they are our neighbours. They expect to be treated as such. They expect our trade relations as much as our other relations to reflect that inescapable fact of geography. At present our trade with ASEAN clearly does not reflect our true situation as the nearest neighbours, the most industrialised neighbours of these large and rapidly developing nations.\footnote{Whitlam, CPD, HR, vol. 106, 24 August 1977, p. 588.}

More pointedly, Whitlam attempted to show that the Fraser government had ignored the claims of ASEAN by further restricting imports to Australia:

At 8 o'clock last Wednesday night [Ministerial Statement on Post ASEAN Conference Talks, 17 August 1977] the Prime Minister announced that it had been arranged in Kuala Lumpur that there should be consultative machinery with ASEAN members on trade matters, particularly, presumably, quotas and tariffs. Twenty minutes later the Minister for Business and Consumer Affairs (Mr Fife) announced that the Government would soon announce lower quotas for footwear, textiles and clothing - the very three areas identified in the Prime Minister's ASEAN statement as having been discussed in Kuala Lumpur. One can only marvel at the exquisite sense of timing of this Government.\footnote{Whitlam, CPD, HR, vol. 106, 24 August 1977, p. 589.}

Essentially, the Fraser government dismissed the pleas from ASEAN for trade liberalisation while lowering quotas for imports of textiles, clothing and footwear to the detriment of ASEAN trade with Australia.\footnote{Albinski, op. cit., p. 11 and Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 168. See also Frank Frost, Australia and ASEAN - a report by a study group of the Canberra branch of the AIIA, Dyason House Papers, vol. 5, 1, September 1978 and Peter Drysdale and Alan G. Rix, Australia's economic relations with Asia and the Pacific, Current Affairs Bulletin, vol. 55, 11, April 1979.}
On this, the members of ASEAN attempted to draw on the Fraser government's support for a new international economic order to gain concessions within the Australian protectionist trade system. Rather than offer greater trade opportunities, Fraser emphasised the value of the Australian aid program as compensation. In 1977, the Prime Minister announced a significant expansion in the size of Australia's aid program to ASEAN and several measures to improve the quality of this aid. Australia promised an additional $10 million for the ASEAN-Australia Economic Cooperative Program and increased the forward commitment to bilateral aid to the five members of ASEAN by $90 million to $250 million. However, the aid was not an adequate substitute for the trade benefits enjoyed by Australia.

Subsequently, Australia's relationship with ASEAN deteriorated further during a dispute over air fares and air routes. Whether by ignorance or arrogance, the Minister for Transport, Peter Nixon, announced in October 1979 a new International Civil Aviation policy which would assist Australia and ASEAN, with the exception of Singapore. The reduced prices on air routes between Australia, Asia, Europe and North America would boost tourist trade to Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand but prohibit stops in Singapore as part of direct point to point travel. While Singapore could benefit from an increase in travel in general, passengers from Australia would be prevented from breaking their journey in Singapore, or elsewhere, en route.

Minister Nixon may have anticipated that Singapore would be isolated within ASEAN given the considerable benefits for the other member countries but this strategy was quickly defeated. ASEAN presented a united front to the Australian government and identified the Nixon policy as reflecting the high protectionism noted on other trade issues. Minister Goh Chok Tong of Singapore threatened considerable political and economic damage for Australia if the air fare policy was not changed. Sensibly, the diplomatic skills of Foreign Minister Peacock were invoked to improve...
relations between Australia and ASEAN on this issue. \textsuperscript{92} It was clear that the Minister for Transport would be forced to compromise. The settlement maintained the cheap air fares, discarded the point to point travel without stops, and provided ASEAN with the right to compete with Qantas and British airways on equal terms. \textsuperscript{93} Nixon was defeated on the policy issues as ASEAN demonstrated a growing diplomatic strength. Millar claimed that Australia’s desire to accommodate the demands of ASEAN on trade relations created a vulnerability on the air fares dispute. \textsuperscript{94} Certainly the Fraser government’s desire to maintain productive relations with the ASEAN countries determined the substantial compromise on the specific air fares policy.

More constructively, Australia and ASEAN were involved in discussions on a Pacific Rim concept from late 1979. The proactive debate on a regional economic structure provided a new context for Australian support for the demands of developing countries for greater access to world markets. \textsuperscript{95} Further, Australia’s foreign economic policies were increasingly directed toward participation in a notional regional arrangement. In response to Japanese initiatives, the Fraser government appeared ready to embrace the Pacific Rim idea. \textsuperscript{96} The concept included closer formal economic interdependence between states in the Asia Pacific region. The proposed regional structure would utilise the complementary capacities of the various countries to increase the rate of economic development beyond other regional groupings such as the European Economic Community. \textsuperscript{97}

The Fraser government seemed committed to the Pacific Rim arrangement and moved slowly to adjust tariff and quota levels to comply with the idea of a more open regional economic structure. Implicitly, Australia accepted the argument of the South East and East Asia states that expanded

\textsuperscript{92} By March 1979, talks with ASEAN representatives on the air fares policy had collapsed, Australian airport ground staff had refused to refuel a Malaysian aircraft in Sydney in protest over the imprisonment of Malaysian unionists, and Dr Mahathir had commented that relations with Australia were ‘deteriorating like a house on fire’. ibid.

\textsuperscript{93} ibid., pp. 304-5.

\textsuperscript{94} Millar, ...More of the same..., op. cit., p. 11. Millar’s brief reference to this dispute described Singapore’s position as ‘blunt and acquisitive’ which implied the Fraser government was forced to compromise with an overly assertive ASEAN.

\textsuperscript{95} See R. Bell, op. cit., p. 24.

\textsuperscript{96} See Backgrounder, no. 190, 13 June 1979, pp. 5-6.

\textsuperscript{97} Far from an equitable arrangement, the Pacific Rim structure was based on separation of capacities: the advanced industrial countries such as Japan and the United States would provide capital, technology and planning; Australia, New Zealand and Canada would act as sources of foodstuffs, raw materials and energy; and ASEAN and East Asia states would provide manufactured goods through cheap labour. R. Bell, op. cit., p. 26.
international trade would accelerate development and generate improved living standards throughout the region. However, the alleged nexus between trade and development was criticised by organisations and individuals concerned with the inequitable consequences of the economic strategies employed by the developing countries.98 The new industrialising countries and developing countries of ASEAN and East Asia continued to display signs of unemployment, rural poverty, maldistribution of income, social inequality and political repression despite their success in export strategies. Nevertheless, the Australian government did not scrutinise the implications of the idea of a regional economic structure. In particular, the Fraser government was quiet on the possibilities of political unrest in the region given the potential for greater economic inequality and did not emphasise the impact of greater regional integration on unemployment and social inequality within Australia.99

For some time, the Pacific Rim idea shifted attention away from Australia's protectionist trade relationships with ASEAN. Nevertheless, the Fraser government continued to be unpopular with the members of ASEAN because Australia was not prepared to alter trade and tariff policies. The Fraser government had provided sufficient grounds for the ASEAN countries to disregard and dismiss Australia in the Asia Pacific region.100 In total, the Fraser government refused to make changes to Australian industry and trade policies and thereby resolved to endure the criticisms from the members of ASEAN.

China

The Fraser government continued to develop diplomatic relations established by Whitlam with the People's Republic of China, albeit from a different political understanding of China's international role. There were specific difficulties within Australia's position on China in 1979 to 1981 but overall, the relationship was a success for the Fraser government.

98 Bell, ibid., quoted Oxfam at the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in Rome in July 1979: 'Governments which have failed to provide elementary economic and social justice to their own people were the most strident in demanding access to international markets, improved terms of trade, transfer of resources, and an increase in the flow of aid'.

99 See ibid., pp. 26-7 for further criticisms of the concept of a regional economic arrangement from Philip Eldridge and Max Teichmann.
Prime Minister Fraser clearly placed Australia's relations with China in terms of a common desire to limit the influence of the Soviet Union:

A realistic view requires us to recognise that despite ideological differences there are important areas where our interests overlap ... Australia and China have a like interest in seeing that Soviet power in the Pacific and South East Asia is balanced by the power of other major states or by appropriate regional arrangements. We can therefore expect Chinese support for our own views on the need for an effective American presence in the Pacific and Indian Oceans.\textsuperscript{101}

Fraser understood China as an ally in the global strategic balance. Thus, the Prime Minister minimised the ideological differences between the Australian government and the Chinese communist government to the extent necessary to envisage a strategic alliance. As such, Fraser's analysis of China was a major departure from previous Liberal and Country Parties foreign policy.\textsuperscript{102}

Prime Minister Fraser's position discarded the relatively recent history of the Liberal Party which refused to recognise China.\textsuperscript{103} Indeed, Fraser had made alarmist statements about China prior to gaining government.\textsuperscript{104} As late as 1973, Fraser portrayed China as the principle obstacle to harmony and progress in the region and criticised the Whitlam government for recognising China without consulting ASEAN and other countries in the region.\textsuperscript{105} In a short space of time, Fraser's view of China shifted from a potential enemy to a potential ally. Millar suggested that Fraser may have been influenced by the degree of responsibility shown by China in the international community.\textsuperscript{106} More likely, Fraser saw a need to balance the

\textsuperscript{101} Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2740.
\textsuperscript{102} Richardson, op. cit., p. 331. See also Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., pp. 154-5, Millar, ...More of the same..., op. cit., p. 6, and Renouf, Australian Diplomacy..., op. cit., p. 322.
\textsuperscript{103} Coral Bell, Mr Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, World Today, vol. 35, October 1979, p. 415.
\textsuperscript{104} Fraser had attempted to generate a fear of China, accused China of nuclear blackmail, suggested that China was a threat in the region and to Australia, and criticised both Whitlam and Kissinger for visiting China in 1971. See Whitlam, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2746 and Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., pp. 41, 44 & 48-9.
\textsuperscript{105} See Whitlam criticism of Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2746.
\textsuperscript{106} Millar, Australia in Peace and War, op. cit., p. 425. Strangely, Hasluck and Freeth had considered gaining support from the Soviet Union as a counterweight against China in the late 1960s. See Bell, Mr Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 416.
perceived expansion of Soviet influence in the Pacific and Indian Ocean regions.

At a personal level, Prime Minister Fraser appeared to be converted through the diplomatic hospitality of China during a visit in June 1976. To Fraser's surprise, the Chinese representatives disregarded previous hostile statements and welcomed the Australian Prime Minister with an impressive reception. Fraser was pleased with the tone of discussions at which the Prime Minister pushed the need to resist Soviet foreign policy. Moreover, Fraser canvassed the idea that China, Japan, the United States and Australia had a common interest in containing Soviet military expansion. China was happy to agree with Australia about the Soviet Union and agreed with Fraser about the need for stability in the Asia Pacific region and the objective of discouraging military escalation in the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

The Prime Minister's visit to China developed domestic support in terms of criticising the Soviet Union but seemed problematic in relation to foreign policy in the region. The close relationship with China aroused suspicion of Australia from ASEAN, Japan and India. These countries perceived a need to distance themselves from the Fraser government. Fraser's criticism of Whitlam not consulting ASEAN prior to recognising China had some familiarity here. As Prime Minister, Fraser seemed to misread the concerns of many countries and Australia's relations with China tended to compound the difficult relations with ASEAN over trade.

Nevertheless, the Fraser government attempted to enhance relations with China through economic aid and diplomatic links. Development assistance was extended to China in contrast to the Whitlam government which had decided not to implement an aid program in China. After some negotiations, Australia established a $10 million program over three years. Projects concentrated on English language training and assistance with primary production. The aid allocation was significant because Australia

107 Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 155.
108 Millar, Australia in Peace and War, op. cit., p. 424.
109 Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., pp. 155-6. The views of China were qualified by their commitment to support revolutionary groups in Asia. On the visit to China, see L.R. Marchant, Australia and East Asia: China and Korea, chapter 13 in Boyce and Angel, op. cit., pp. 212-13 and Bell, Mr Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 415.
was the first Western donor to provide grant aid to China. Also, at this time, Australia separated the aid program from trade considerations which was a victory for the Department of Foreign Affairs over the Department of Trade.\footnote{Mediansky, op. cit., pp. 298-9. Australia was also among the first and largest donors of humanitarian relief to China. Through the United Nations Disaster Relief Organisation, the Fraser government pledged wheat valued at $1.5 million and medical supplies valued at $100000 for natural disaster victims in two Chinese provinces.} Further, the Fraser government encouraged cultural and scientific links. The Australia-China Council was established and funded to develop exchanges, despite opposition from some supporters of the Fraser government. Thus, trade with China expanded, assisted by government credits, and China became an important market for Australian products.\footnote{Renouf, \textit{Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy}, op. cit., p. 156.}

Diplomatic relations were further facilitated in late 1978 with the establishment of consulates-general in Sydney and in Shanghai. Australian sales to China had doubled over the previous year and the exchange of visitors had increased. Indeed, the Minister for Trade led a delegation to China in an attempt to sell any and all Australian products in the Chinese market.\footnote{Barclay, op. cit., pp. 12-13.} Importantly, the United States announced on 15 December 1978 that relations would be normalised with the Peoples' Republic of China.\footnote{Ibid., p. 14.} The Fraser government was ahead of the United States on China which was a new situation for Liberal and Country Parties foreign policy.

The positive image of Australia on China was disturbed by divisions within the Fraser government over relations with China and Taiwan. There was some disillusionment within the Liberal Party about the shift in policy which was not anticipated with the election of Fraser.\footnote{Marchant, op. cit., p. 209.} The supporters of Taiwan advocated an anti-communist position which opposed Liberal Party policy toward China. Dissent also emerged from others within the Fraser government, possibly with different motives and aims, primarily as a result of the efforts of Senator Peter Sim, Chair of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence. The Western Australian Senator may have been influenced by or concurred with the views of the Western Australian Premier, Charles Court who was an enthusiastic supporter of Taiwan.\footnote{As Premier of Western Australia from 1974 to 1982, Court attempted to develop trade with Taiwan while the extended Court family expanded business relations with Taiwanese companies.} Within the Fraser government, the dissenting group was influential in softening Australian policy on Taiwan in 1979-80.
Further, this group provided support for Foreign Minister Peacock to challenge Prime Minister Fraser for the Liberal Party leadership based on Fraser's firm line on China.\textsuperscript{115}

Nonetheless, Australia's relations with China continued to improve and expand through 1980-82. While China continued to oppose the Soviet Union, the Australian government approved of China testing an unarmed inter-continental ballistic missile over the Pacific Ocean in 1980. Further, agreements were reached on cultural relations, the exchange of military attaches and the visit of Premier Zhao to Australia. These close links contrasted with China's difficulties with the Reagan administration due to the United States proposals to transfer military assistance to Taiwan.\textsuperscript{118} Australia was keen to maintain excellent relations with China within the Sino-American context but this was problematic.

In total, Whitlam had posed the central question in critique of Fraser in June 1976. Whitlam rhetorically asked what Australia would gain in taking sides in the dispute between China and the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{116} The new Liberal and Country Parties position on China appeared to be enlightened but for the wrong reasons. In maintaining close relations with China as established by the Whitlam government, Fraser understood that Australia and China were allied in opposition to the Soviet Union. With reference to China in the June 1976 statement, Prime Minister Fraser explained that 'constructive relations did not depend on agreement of all aspects of relations'.\textsuperscript{120} This approach could have applied equally to the Soviet Union as it did for China which may have facilitated a more even international position for Australia. In regional terms, the Fraser government's association with China created suspicion among members of ASEAN. Nevertheless, Fraser was able to improve relations with China at many levels and, significantly, increased Australian trade to China.

**Vietnam and Kampuchea**

The Fraser government continued the cordial relations with Vietnam that had been established by the Whitlam Labor government. This was a

\textsuperscript{117} Marchant, op. cit, pp. 209 & 218-19.
\textsuperscript{118} ibid., pp. 298-9. See also Street, Ministerial statement: Australia's Foreign Relations Policy, CPD, HR, vol. 121, 24 March 1981, pp. 829-34.
\textsuperscript{119} Whitlam, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2746.
\textsuperscript{120} Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2740.
surprise for some supporters of the Liberal and Country Parties government. However, in 1978, Fraser's position turned to opposition when Vietnam signed an agreement with the Soviet Union and subsequently deposed the Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea. Prime Minister Fraser ceased Australian aid to Vietnam and aligned the Australian government with ASEAN and China against Vietnam. In the complex diplomatic alliances and developments on Kampuchea, the Fraser government combined a fear of the Soviet Union and Vietnam with a commitment to developing countries and the region. Tensions in Australian foreign policy were also demonstrated in regard to the flow of refugees from Vietnam.

Similar to other foreign policy issues, Prime Minister Fraser had a significant influence over the formulation and implementation of the government's position on Vietnam and Kampuchea. Fraser's understanding of the international context of Vietnam's actions was predicated upon long-held concerns about the region. In 1963-64, Fraser had argued that communist imperialism was a serious threat to the Asia and Pacific region and that the conflict in Vietnam was central to stopping the spread of communism in the region.121 As Minister for the Army, Fraser engaged in a bitter exchange with Whitlam over Vietnam during 1966-67 in which Fraser advocated increased bombing of North Vietnam by the United States.122 By February 1973, Fraser was attacking the Labor government for halting aid to South Vietnam and disagreed with Whitlam's protest to the United States over the bombing of Hanoi.123 As leader of the Liberal Party in 1975, Fraser attempted to refute Whitlam's description of the conflict in Vietnam as a civil war.124 For more than a decade, Fraser had adopted the position that Soviet communist aggression in Vietnam required sustained resistance from the United States and Australia in order to halt the spread of communism through the region.

Understandably, there was an expectation that the Fraser Liberal and Country Parties government would re-establish an anti-communist policy

121 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 40, 22 October 1963, p. 2100 and Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 41, 5 March 1964, pp. 299-300.
123 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 32, 28 February 1973, p. 64.
124 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 94, 8 April 1975, p. 1261.
on Vietnam. However, at first, the Fraser government was not overtly hostile toward Vietnam and instead, encouraged a relaxed relationship between Vietnam and the region. Fraser maintained aid programs to Vietnam and Laos which signalled the potential for constructive relations.

The emerging diplomatic relationship with Vietnam was interrupted by the need to deal with refugees arriving in Australia. In April 1976, a boat carrying Vietnamese refugees arrived in Darwin. This method of entry into Australia foreshadowed many more arrivals in the next five years. For both domestic and foreign policy reasons, the Fraser government was reluctant to accept a large number of refugees and, for 1976, allowed the entry of only 800 refugees. Fraser also refused to establish a resettlement program despite continuing pressures from ASEAN. The four countries most involved and affected by the arrival of refugees, namely Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia, as well as the United States, were displeased with this approach by the Fraser government.

Through 1977, the members of ASEAN intensified their diplomatic efforts while refusing to allow more boats to land on their shores. In an attempt to force the debate on resettlement, the Malaysian and Indonesian authorities seemed to assist the passage of boats toward Australia. In turn, the Fraser government attempted to persuade the ASEAN countries to halt the flow of refugees to Australia. By mid-1978, this diplomatic impasse was mediated as ASEAN undertook to hold boats bound for Australia while the Fraser government agreed to expand resettlement to 9000 refugees per year. The unauthorised arrivals of boats with refugees diminished while there was a substantial increase in authorised air arrivals. By the end of 1980, official arrivals of refugees in Australia totalled approximately 45000. The

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125 Albinski, op. cit., p. 5.
127 Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 168 and Viviani, Aid Policies and Programmes, ibid., p. 133. See also R. Bell, op. cit., p. 14 and see generally, J.M. van der Kroef, Hanoi and ASEAN: a new confrontation in Southeast Asia?, Asia Quarterly, no. 4, 1976.
128 Viviani, op. cit., pp. 133-4. See also McCarthy, ...Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1979, op. cit., p. 302 and Albinski, op. cit., p. 5.
129 Viviani, op. cit., pp. 131-2. See also Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., pp. 169-70. Once landed, the refugees were protected by international obligations which directed that the boats should not be sent back to sea and the refugees
members of ASEAN expected Australia to accept a share of the responsibility for resettling the refugees and any hesitation by the Fraser government was interpreted as a return to a selective immigration policy and a rejection of regional co-operation.

The prospect of large numbers of refugees from Vietnam linked the Fraser government's foreign policy objectives with domestic considerations. While there was some support in the Australian electorate for the entry of Vietnamese refugees, there were also serious reservations expressed about their impact on Australian society. The fear of greater unemployment was central to the debate on refugees which was linked both explicitly and implicitly with racist groups opposing immigration from Asia. Where the Fraser government was attempting to deflect criticism of the reintroduction of restrictive immigration practices, groups within Australia were openly advocating the exclusion of the refugees from Vietnam which provided an international image of racism and isolation.

For both domestic and international reasons, Prime Minister Fraser initiated a conference in Geneva in November 1978 to gain resettlement places from countries tangential to the refugee issue. This attempt to 'internationalise' the problem was not successful and thus pressure was maintained upon Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia to accommodate the flow of refugees. Another attempt by Australia to broaden the base of concern was to work through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees by contributing $3.7 million for refugee relief. As the international standing of Vietnam declined in 1979, the attitude toward the refugees shifted. At another conference in Geneva in July 1979, several countries accepted responsibility for resettlement places, the largest number in the United States, with Australia promising 14000 places for 1979-80.

On the issue of refugees, the intersection of humanitarian arguments, regional associations and domestic concerns posed a significant test for the Fraser government. The refugee crisis compelled Australia to recognise that participation in the Asia Pacific region involved responsibilities beyond...
trade relations. From the negotiations over refugees, Australia eventually offered a sensitive and flexible response and the Fraser government was more active than the Whitlam government on this issue.133

Meanwhile, in Kampuchea, formerly Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot, had attempted to implement a social and economic revolution. Supported by China, the Khmer Rouge engaged in skirmishes along the border with Vietnam and, in 1978, attacked Vietnamese villages in border regions.134 Vietnam attempted to peacefully settle the dispute with Kampuchea but was ignored by Pol Pot and rejected by the United Nations. Simultaneously, the Khmer Rouge was instituting structural change in Kampuchea through brutal methods which cost perhaps three million lives.135

In late 1978, Vietnamese armed forces overthrew the Khmer Rouge government in Kampuchea and established the Heng Samrin regime in early 1979. Whether a primary, secondary or tangential motive, the military action by Vietnam ended the destructive revolution of Pol Pot. Indeed, the methods of the Khmer Rouge may have continued for some years longer had Vietnam not intervened. Further, it was argued that Kampuchea had provoked Vietnam for some time with the border incursions and diplomatic taunts which suggested that Vietnam had been quite tolerant.136

Immediately prior to moving against Pol Pot, Vietnam signed a Treaty of Friendship with the Soviet Union in November 1978.137 The signing of the Treaty provided weight for the argument that Vietnam was acting for the Soviet Union against Kampuchea and therefore against China. Analysis within the Fraser government gravitated toward this simplistic conclusion. Foreign Minister Peacock interpreted the events as part of the rivalry

133 See Bell, ibid., p. 15.
137 Renouf, op. cit., p. 89. See also McCarthy, ...Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1979, op. cit., p. 301.
between regional powers, in this case communist states, rather than as limited conflicts with essentially local causes. Further, Prime Minister Fraser resorted to an anti-Soviet response which criticised Vietnam for invading Kampuchea.

Both Fraser and Peacock attempted to generate international interest in the situation in Kampuchea but their concern was not shared by others, notably the United States. The apparent alliance of Vietnam with the Soviet Union produced a temporary coincidence of interests between China and ASEAN. The Khmer Rouge continued to be supplied by China which opposed Vietnam while ASEAN and Australia were concerned about Vietnam's intentions in the region. To various degrees, this coalition supported the standing of the Khmer Rouge in Kampuchea against the imposed Vietnam-backed regime.

The web of conflict was escalated when China attacked Vietnam in February 1979. These border incursions were designed for short-term strategic impact rather than sustained military invasion. The Fraser government was quiet on the actions of China in direct contrast to the criticism aimed at Vietnam's move into Kampuchea. This 'tilt' in Australian policy appeared to support China, and to some extent ASEAN, in the diplomatic manoeuvres over Vietnam. In an attempt to restore an even-handed approach, Fraser argued that, in general, the use of force was not acceptable for the settlement of disputes. This statement on Vietnam and China was immediately used to point out the inconsistency in the Fraser foreign policy with reference to Australia's passive response to Indonesia's use of force in East Timor.

138 See Peacock, CPD, HR, vol. 113, 27 February 1979, pp. 361, 363-4 and R. Bell, op. cit., p. 10. See also Barclay, op. cit., p. 13 and Millar, ...More of the same... op. cit., p. 6.
139 Fraser in McCarthy, ...Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1979, op. cit., p. 301. In the same vein, Senator Carrick, CPD, Senate, vol. 79, 18 October 1978, p. 1382, was able to deplore the actions of Vietnam without expressing sympathy for the Khmer Rouge.
140 Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 89. It seemed that the United States administration was relatively unperturbed about the situation in Kampuchea, adopting the view that conflict between communist states, and the demise of the Pol Pot regime, were acceptable outcomes in terms of US foreign policy objectives.
141 Millar, ...More of the same... op. cit., p. 6. See also Angel, op. cit., p. 234, on the ASEAN position on Kampuchea and Vietnam.
142 McCarthy, ...Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1979, op. cit., p. 302. See also Peacock, CPD, HR, vol. 113, 27 February 1979, p. 363, Bell, Mr Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 414 and Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 89, and see generally, Leo Goodstadt, Race, refugees and rice: China and the Indo-China triangle, Round Table, no. 271, July 1978.
143 Bell, Mr Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 415.
144 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 113, 22 January 1979, p. 261.
The decision to halt Australian aid to Vietnam also displayed contradictory elements. While Foreign Minister Peacock was attending a Disarmament Conference in Geneva, the acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ian Sinclair, with the support of Prime Minister Fraser, decided to withhold aid to Vietnam and suspend all cultural exchanges. Peacock was not consulted prior to the announcement of this decision. Other donor nations had not cut aid which suggested the Australian government wished to overtly display an anti-Soviet position on Vietnam. In fact, Vietnam had valued the small amount of Australian aid because it had helped to diversify the sources of international assistance. Arguably, the decision to cut aid was contrary to the Fraser government aim not to push Vietnam closer to the Soviet Union.

Parallel to this, Australia's difficult relationship with ASEAN was central to the Fraser government's position on the complicated issue of recognising a government in Kampuchea. The ASEAN agenda was accepted in a United Nations resolution of 16 November 1979 which stated that the Khmer Rouge, under the leadership of Pol Pot, should be recognised as the legitimate government of Kampuchea. Given the immediate criticisms of the actions of Vietnam, the Fraser government could not recognise the Heng Samrin regime and therefore maintained recognition of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge. ASEAN and China preferred this position and Australia was eager to agree. The Fraser government's support for the repressive Pol Pot regime was challenged within Australia as inappropriate and fundamentally unethical.

Britain led international opinion in late 1979 by withdrawing recognition of the Khmer Rouge regime. This simple exit from the difficulties did not involve recognition of the new regime. Fraser explained that Australia would not follow Britain because the withdrawal of recognition implied approval for the Heng Samrin regime. In fact, Britain had explicitly

145 McCarthy, *Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1979*, op. cit., p. 302.
146 ibid., p. 301. Sinclair was Minister for Primary Industry. The decision was dated 23 January 1979. See also Renouf, *Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy*, op. cit., p. 172; Bell, Mr Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 415; R. Bell, op. cit., p. 11; Millar, *...More of the same...*, op. cit., p. 7, and *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 January 1979. Vietnam had previously asked for food supplies to help with relief in areas affected by floods and Australia's small aid programme of $7.1million was due to expire in June 1979.
147 R. Bell, op. cit., pp. 10-11. The UN resolution also stipulated that the withdrawal of all foreign troops was the basic prerequisite to any solution and that all states and humanitarian agencies should give economic and humanitarian aid on a non-discriminatory basis to Kampuchea's civilian population.
disavowed this implication. Fraser appeared to be wedded to the Khmer Rouge, or more accurately, aligned with ASEAN and China on Kampuchea, against the Labor Party, elements of the Liberal Party and domestic public opinion. Also, it became known that Peacock, with the support of some members of the Parliamentary Liberal Party, disagreed with the view of the Prime Minister. In line with Peacock, the public debate focused on the repressive nature of the Khmer Rouge.

Further, Peacock consulted with the ASEAN foreign ministers in June 1980 about the possibilities of withdrawing recognition of the Khmer Rouge which evoked strong criticism from Thailand and Singapore. Lim claimed that, shortly thereafter, in a heated cabinet meeting, Peacock’s recommendation to withdraw recognition of the Pol Pot regime was defeated. Nevertheless, public opinion on this issue was mounting against the government. By October 1980, the Prime Minister relented to domestic considerations over regional alliances in deciding to withdraw recognition of the Khmer Rouge:

This means that Australia now does not recognise any regime in Kampuchea. Australia has no intention of recognising the Heng Samrin regime, condemns Vietnam’s invasion of Kampuchea and calls for the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from that country.

We are committed to a comprehensive political settlement in Kampuchea, and fully support the provisions of the ASEAN sponsored UNGA resolutions on Kampuchea.


The record of the Pol Pot administration on human rights was utterly reprehensible... Indeed, Australia had made it abundantly clear, both in the United Nations and elsewhere, that it utterly abhorred and condemned the policies of that Government. However, perspectives of South-East Asia as seen from Europe were different from those of the nations and peoples nearer the region. In particular Australia could not accept Vietnamese intervention in Kampuchea and its virtual occupation of that country. The Australian Government believed that to de-recognise would be interpreted as endorsing Vietnam’s invasion of Kampuchea. This it was not prepared to do.

150 See Stockwin, ibid., p. 348. See also Milton Osbourn, Kampuchea: the crisis continues,


151 See Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 173.

152 Lim, op. cit., p. 9. Peacock offered to resign but was prevailed upon to remain.

153 Backgrounder, no. 271, 18 February 1981, p. iii. See also Mediansky, op. cit., pp. 300-1. The official date of derecognition was 14 February 1981.
The withdrawal of recognition was described as a 'small gesture of independence, a tiny but significant stand on principle'. This was a generous interpretation given the lapse of time required to decide and the imperative of electoral support.

An additional aspect of the recognition problem was the representation of Kampuchea at the United Nations. In 1979, the Khmer Rouge regime continued to be recognised by the United Nations which assisted the Australian government's early argument on recognition. The UN position was also a victory for the tactics of China and ASEAN, especially Singapore, which argued that the transfer of recognition to Heng Samrin would violate the principle of non-intervention. These considerations had been ignored with regard to Uganda and similar constraints had not influenced Australia and others on Indonesia's incorporation of East Timor. Similar to Australia's dilemma over Kampuchea, the United Nations could have withdrawn recognition of the Khmer Rouge without supporting Heng Samrin.

At the United Nations General Assembly in 1980, Australia supported a recommendation to accept the credentials of 'Democratic Kampuchea', that is, the Pol Pot regime. In the revisiting of credentials in September 1981, Australia was again under pressure from ASEAN and China not to abstain on the Kampuchea seat, but to support the Khmer Rouge representatives. However, given the withdrawal of recognition by Australia earlier in the year, and in the context of increased public pressure from the electorate, the Fraser government decided to abstain. Australian relations with ASEAN did not appear to be strained by this decision.

The debates on Kampuchea also focused the personal and political struggles between Foreign Minister Peacock and Prime Minister Fraser. Peacock had not been consulted on the decision to cut Australian aid to Vietnam and indeed it appeared that the decision was taken at a time to exclude the Minister for Foreign Affairs. There was also the long-standing difference of opinion between Fraser and Peacock over the recognition of the Pol Pot

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154 Millar, ...More of the same... , op. cit., p. 7.
155 R. Bell, op. cit., p. 12.
156 Lim, op. cit., p. 10. The vote to seat the Kampuchea delegation in the UNGA was taken on 14 October 1980. Australia voted in favour with the members of ASEAN, the United States, United Kingdom, China, Japan, and Canada, among others. See also Russell H. Fifield, ASEAN, Kampuchea and the United Nations, Asia Pacific Community, no. 17, Summer 1982.
157 Viviani, ...Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1981, op. cit., p. 18.
regime. Peacock resigned from the Fraser cabinet in April 1981 citing the issue of Kampuchea as a key determinant.\textsuperscript{158}

The complex political issues and diplomatic relations surrounding Kampuchea were central to defining the Fraser foreign policy and the role of Australia in the Asia Pacific region. The reaction to Vietnam's move into Kampuchea in late 1978 demonstrated the connections between international politics, regional alliances, relations with developing countries, the use of development assistance, and issues of recognition. In addition, the Fraser government was praised for accepting many refugees from Vietnam but this interpretation may have been overstated. Australia assisted the ASEAN countries in resettling refugees but the Fraser government was initially hesitant and appeared to be more concerned with relations with the region than the welfare of the refugees.\textsuperscript{159}

Further, the Fraser government's approach to constructive relations with China and ASEAN on the recognition of the Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea inevitably forced Vietnam toward the Soviet Union. Vietnam increasingly relied upon the Soviet Union for military and development aid.\textsuperscript{160} For the Fraser government, this created a more hostile strategic situation in the region, which required careful management of policies toward Vietnam and Kampuchea. By 1981, it could be argued that the Fraser government had been unsuccessful in key elements of policy on Vietnam and the Asia Pacific region.

\section*{East Timor and Indonesia}

The issue of East Timor proved difficult for the Fraser government. The annexation of East Timor by Indonesia in December 1975 provoked sustained political debate and press coverage on Australia's foreign policy. As a consequence, Australia's relationship with Indonesia was strained at times, and in a state of disrepair at other times. Indeed, Boyce captured the situation in stating that the 'East Timor issue impaled both the Whitlam and Fraser governments on the sharp horns of a moral dilemma'.\textsuperscript{161} The

\textsuperscript{158} See Peacock, CPD, HR, vol. 122, 28 April 1981, pp. 1611-12. See also McCarthy, ...Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1979, op. cit., p. 301 and Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 75.

\textsuperscript{159} Angel, op. cit., p. 226.

\textsuperscript{160} Millar, ...More of the same..., op. cit., p. 7.

\textsuperscript{161} P.J. Boyce, Problems in Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1976, Australian Journal of Politics and History, vol. 23, no. 1, April 1977, p. 5.
early enthusiasm of both governments for the principle of national self-determination for East Timor, with which Australia had shared friendly association through peace and war, slowly yielded to the long-term claims of national security and support for Indonesia in the Asia-Pacific region. Australia's position on East Timor also illustrated the Fraser government's emerging policy toward developing countries. Fraser was caught between the historical support for Indonesia as a anti-communist bastion in South East Asia and the perceived need to support the people of East Timor against political oppression.\textsuperscript{162}

In caretaker mode and subsequently as the elected government after the December 1975 federal election, Prime Minister Fraser adopted a stronger line than the Whitlam Labor government on Indonesia's actions in East Timor. On the day immediately prior to the election, Fraser directed that Australia should vote in the United Nations to maintain the territorial integrity of East Timor and to refer the matter to the Security Council.\textsuperscript{163} This action effectively demonstrated Australia's opposition to the actions of Indonesia in East Timor. On this, Fraser did not consult acting Foreign Minister Peacock or other countries in the region.\textsuperscript{164} Instead, Fraser acted quickly to direct the Australian vote in the United Nations. Therefore, in the UN vote on 22 December 1975, Australia was in the majority that


\textsuperscript{163} See W.J. Hudson, Problems in Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1975, \textit{Australian Journal of Politics and History}, vol. 22, 1, April 1976, p. 4. See also \textit{Australian}, 13 December 1975. The General Assembly called on Indonesia to withdraw from Portuguese Timor by a vote of 72, including Australia, to 42, with 10 abstentions, including the US, Britain and Singapore. Gough Whitlam, \textit{The Whitlam Government 1972-1975}, Viking, Ringwood, 1985, p. 112. The political parties did not appear to be substantially different on East Timor. Peacock, as acting Foreign Minister, was critical of the approach of the Whitlam Labor government toward Indonesia's actions but Peacock also used the same argument as Whitlam in trying to simultaneously appease Indonesia and Fretilin while invoking Portugal as the responsible actor.

\textsuperscript{164} Renouf, \textit{Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy}, op. cit., p. 78.
disapproved of the Indonesian action and sought urgent intervention from the Security Council to preserve the territorial integrity of East Timor.\textsuperscript{165} In the end, Portugal, as the former colonial power, invoked the Security Council on the position of East Timor thus relieving Australia and others of the need to act.

The position of Australia in the United Nations was part of the rhetorical critique of Indonesia. This stance reflected disappointment after much work was initiated by the Australian delegation during 1975 to negotiate a resolution to enable a genuine act of self-determination in East Timor.\textsuperscript{166} From an Australian recommendation, the Secretary-General decided to send a UN envoy to report on the situation in East Timor. Strangely enough, the Australian government was entirely unhelpful in the facilitation of the envoy's visit to East Timor, somewhat weakening what, to many, was a firmer policy on Indonesia.\textsuperscript{167}

A further conundrum in this episode was the leaked cable from the Australian Ambassador to Indonesia, Richard Woolcott which urged the Fraser government to opt for the realist acceptance of the inevitable integration of East Timor. Adverse public reaction to this position in the context of evidence of severe repression in both Indonesia and East Timor provoked a rejection of the Ambassador's advice and pushed Australia somewhat closer to the United Nations stance.\textsuperscript{168} Thus, in the early months of 1976, the relatively new Liberal and Country Parties government, with Peacock leading the argument, actively supported the involvement of the United Nations in East Timor.

Further, the Fraser government advocated a cease-fire in East Timor, the resumption of humanitarian aid through the return of the International Red Cross, a withdrawal of Indonesian forces and an act of self-determination. Also, during a visit to Jakarta in April 1976, Foreign Minister Peacock gained assurances from the Indonesian government concerning the involvement of the Red Cross, the withdrawal of Indonesian 'volunteers' and a further investigation of the deaths of five

\textsuperscript{165} Hudson, op. cit., p. 4 and Harry, op. cit., p. 91.

\textsuperscript{166} Harry, ibid., p. 91, outlined the details of Australian recommendations to the Security Council on East Timor. See also Hudson, op. cit., p. 4, for an analysis from an alternative context.

\textsuperscript{167} Richardson, op. cit., p. 333. For more information on the January 1976 visit of UN envoy, Dr. Winspeare-Guicciardi to Indonesia-controlled East Timor, see Harry, op. cit., p. 91.

\textsuperscript{168} Richardson, op. cit., p. 333, and Boyce, Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1976, op. cit., p. 5.
journalists at Balibo in October 1975. In addition, Australia refused to send an observer to a specially convened Popular Assembly in Dili on 31 May 1976 which approved a petition to integrate East Timor into Indonesia. This decision by the Fraser government apparently influenced the views of other countries which led to reports of Indonesian disquiet toward Australia.

Indeed, the Indonesian government might have expected that the Liberal and Country Parties government would be more understanding and supportive of the annexation of East Timor. Indonesia could not understand why the Australian government was critical of a small matter of a few thousand troops in a neighbouring territory in the face of silence in the region. According to Millar, the Fraser government did offer some assurance to Indonesia by accepting the result of the invasion but regretting the means of annexation and demonstrating this regret in the United Nations. Given Indonesia's expectations, the early view of Fraser on East Timor caused serious disruptions in the relationship with Indonesia.

Prime Minister Fraser attempted to clarify Australia's position on East Timor in the June 1976 foreign policy statement, and thereby reassure Indonesia, but the difficult policy choices simply caused more ambiguity. Within a foreign policy analysis that prioritised security in the Asia Pacific region, Fraser outlined that Australia would maintain close relations with Indonesia. In this context, Australia would also support a genuine act of self-determination in East Timor. The Prime Minister intimated that this policy might be a point of difference with Indonesia.

Indonesia might also have been concerned about the tactics of the Fraser government within the continuing hostile Parliamentary atmosphere of Australian party politics. At every opportunity, Foreign Minister Peacock used the East Timor issue to embarrass the Labor Party on the previous government's 'tacit or avowed support for Indonesian expansion in Timor'. Peacock used East Timor as an excuse to criticise the members of

169 Richardson, op. cit., pp. 333-4. See also Australian, 17 April 1976.
171 Millar, Australia in Peace and War, op. cit., p. 423. See also Renouf, Australian Diplomacy..., op. cit., p. 329.
172 Mackie, ...From Whitlam to Fraser, op. cit., p. 5.
173 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2739.
174 See, for example, Peacock, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2748.
the Whitlam government in a personal and vindictive manner. For the Indonesian government, the Foreign Minister was intimating that the invasion of East Timor was a most unacceptable act and that Australia would defend the East Timorese people under a Liberal and Country Parties government. Some distance could be seen between the language used by the Prime Minister in the June statement and the Foreign Minister only minutes later, albeit with different targets.

For the remainder of 1976, the Fraser government became progressively less critical of Indonesia and thereby less vocal on the issue of East Timor. In July, the formal incorporation of East Timor as Indonesia's twenty-seventh province failed to enlist Australian recognition but did not provoke official protest from the Fraser government. ASEAN was not objecting to the Indonesian act, a majority of developing countries were not aroused and the United States seemed anxious to avoid offending Indonesia. In August 1976, Peacock promised that $250,000 of aid would be sent to East Timor through the Indonesian Red Cross which was an abandonment of the Minister's earlier insistence that all aid be routed through international agencies.

Subsequently, Prime Minister Fraser visited Indonesia where talks with President Suharto seemed to progress smoothly. There was an expectation that Australia would resolve the perceived dispute which had arisen over East Timor. The Prime Minister was briefed to accept de facto incorporation of East Timor into Indonesia but, believing this would cause political difficulties in Australia, Fraser declined to offer this support to Indonesia. However, immediately following the talks, an Indonesian Minister informed the press that Fraser had offered de facto recognition of the East Timor annexation. This may have been the basis upon which Fraser claimed to have improved relations with Indonesia.

In the Parliament in October 1976, the debate on East Timor was reignited. The Labor Party argued a lack of confidence in the government 'because it

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175 Peacock, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2749. In attacking Mick Young and thereby the whole Labor Party, Peacock claimed that East Timor was a constant reminder of the hypocrisy, the deceit and the avowed evasion of truth of the previous Labor government.
176 Boyce, ...Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1976, op. cit., p. 5. See also J. Panglaykim, Indonesia's economic and business relations with other ASEAN countries, Indonesian Quarterly, vol. 4, 2/3/4, 1976.
177 See Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., pp. 166-7. See also Renouf, Australian Diplomacy..., op. cit., p. 329.
178 Boyce, ...Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1976, op. cit., p. 5. See also Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., pp. 166-7.
could not pursue and express a coherent and principled foreign policy'. The debate covered allegations of secret undertakings on East Timor entertained by both Whitlam and Fraser, the accuracy of remarks of Indonesian Foreign Minister Malik in conversation with the Canadian Foreign Minister in September 1976, and the cable from Ambassador Richard Woolcott to the Labor government in August 1975. The debate also included the link between Australia providing recognition of the annexation of East Timor with the negotiation of terms for the disputed Australia-Timor off-shore border. This was important for Australian oil exploration, particularly for the renewal of leases for Australian companies.

Further, on 20 October 1976 in the Parliament, Peacock attempted to restate the government’s policy on East Timor. While Boyce suggested that Peacock almost conceded recognition of the Indonesian annexation of East Timor, the Minister for Foreign Affairs was balanced in stressing the context in which policy was constructed:

This Government has not recognised Indonesia’s incorporation of East Timor. On the other hand, for quite practical reasons such as the provision of humanitarian aid and the reuniting of families, we have to accept certain realities.

This ambiguous statement was variously interpreted as offering recognition of Indonesia’s actions, or a clear rejection of the annexation of East Timor, or as a cautious foreign policy position. The domestic political agendas of commentators, journalists and academics overshadowed the policy itself. Certainly, Peacock struggled with the principle of self-determination and the fact of invasion by Indonesia. At this time, however, the Fraser government’s public position did not offer recognition of Indonesia’s actions.

Nevertheless, the public debate simmered beyond the government statements as intimations emerged from Indonesia and due to the

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179 Whitlam, Motion of Want of Confidence, CPD, HR, vol. 101, 12 October 1976, pp. 1718-23. The motion was resolved 32 in favour, 83 against.
180 See debate between Whitlam, Fraser, Uren and Sinclair, CPD, HR, vol. 101, 12 October 1976, pp. 1718-34. See also Boyce, ...Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1976, op. cit., p. 6; Age, 16 October 1976; Financial Review, 18 October 1976; and Richard Woolcott letter to Canberra Times, 27 October 1976.
importance of the border negotiations over oil in the Timor Sea. Millar demonstrated the tone of the discussions explaining that both the Labor Party and the Liberal Party:

resorted to that hypocrisy which at times appears the only refuge of a democratic political party but which inevitably produces the worst of all worlds: conceding the inevitable in private while condemning it in public. 183

The mixed messages emerging from the press and, at times, from the Fraser government raised questions about the private guarantees offered to the Indonesian government against the public announcements for domestic political consumption.

By late 1976, the Fraser government was keen to end debate on Australia's policy on East Timor. The Telecommunication Commission was instructed not to distribute any further messages from Fretilin forces in East Timor and several Fretilin 'ministers' were denied entry visas to Australia. While halting the links with East Timor which were promoting discussion and criticism of Indonesia, the Fraser government's position at the end of 1976 was moving away from East Timor and tending to implicitly favour Indonesia.

Again, the relationship with Indonesia was strained in early 1977 when allegations were raised that Indonesian troops had been involved in atrocities during the invasion of East Timor, particularly in Dili, in December 1975. Indeed, the chair of the Labor Party Defence and Foreign Affairs Committee, Gordon Bryant, called for an international inquiry into 'Indonesian atrocities in Timor'. 184 Further, the former Australian Consul in East Timor, Jim Dunn, reported to Peacock and gave evidence at the United States House Committee on International Relations on alleged atrocities in East Timor. In an extraordinary response, the Indonesian government threatened reprisals against Australia unless Dunn became more retiring. Within Australia, discussions mentioned notions of blackmail by Indonesia against the Fraser government which, while not unfounded, signalled a diplomatic crisis. 185 Peacock was conciliatory if somewhat submissive in explaining that the incident was a 'delicate

184 Bryant (ALP Member for Wills, Victoria) was speaking from Lisbon after interviewing groups of East Timorese refugees evacuated to Portugal. Age, 14 January 1977. See also McCarthy, ...Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1977, op. cit., p. 340.
185 McCarthy, ibid., p. 341.
question affecting a bilateral relationship of high importance to Indonesia and Australia'.

The Fraser government continued to dampen any discussion of atrocities in East Timor. In practical terms, the government refused to be involved in a proposed visit to East Timor by several members of the Australian Parliament. In the end, Indonesia refused to issue visas for a perceived intervention into their internal affairs. At the same time, the Labor Party could have been more critical of the Fraser government's policy on East Timor but the Labor Party was conducting an internal debate on the traditional support for Indonesia against the need to support the people of East Timor. At the 1977 ALP National conference, the delegates overwhelmingly endorsed a resolution to suspend military aid to Indonesia until all troops were withdrawn from East Timor. Whitlam spoke against these measures which moved the Labor Party caucus to threaten censure of the leader and to ask for an explanation.

In November 1977, the United Nations Decolonisation Committee passed a resolution to reject the integration of East Timor into Indonesia. The United States voted against this position while Australia abstained from the vote. Australia's diplomatic decision not to vote in favour nor against was designed to avoid unsettling the Indonesian government. Nevertheless, Australia's international policy displeased Indonesia as the abstention appeared to demonstrate a lack of support for the Indonesian government. Moreover, from 1977, Australia abstained on similar resolutions in the United Nations with many other member states while active criticism of Indonesia diminished. Australia also joined the members of ASEAN in abstaining on the resolution calling for Indonesia to withdraw from East Timor. Thus, it was suggested by Harry that Australia's voting pattern in the United Nations from 1977 offered de facto recognition of the incorporation of East Timor into Indonesia.

186 Peacock, CPD, HR, vol. 104, 16 March 1977, p. 343. Subsequently, it was revealed while in Bali in September 1975, Peacock apparently assured Indonesia that the Liberal Party would not protest if Indonesia moved into East Timor. This meeting also included an outline of how the Whitlam government would be dismissed. See National Times, 7 May 1977.


188 See Albinski, op. cit., p. 8. See also Age, 9 July 1977; Bulletin, 16 July 1977; Age, 22 September 1977; and National Times, 26 September 1977.

189 Harry, op. cit., p. 91.
Shortly after the overwhelming re-election of the Liberal and Country Parties government in December 1977, Fraser formally announced recognition of the incorporation of East Timor as part of Indonesia. In domestic political terms, this was the opportune moment to declare a controversial decision. The Fraser government had gained an additional mandate, some said their first mandate, at the December 1977 federal election to direct Australia's domestic and foreign policies. Also, the Labor Party was demoralised and Whitlam resigned as leader of the Labor Party after the election. Further, the Parliament would not resume until 21 February 1978 which denied an opportunity for immediate scrutiny of the government's decision on East Timor. In diplomatic terms, the position adopted by Australia in the United Nations, that is, to abstain on the Decolonisation Committee vote in November 1977, had foreshadowed an official announcement on East Timor by the Fraser government.

The announcement to recognise the actions of Indonesia provoked substantial dissent in the Parliament and in the electorate. The critics of the government attributed the decision to pressure from the Department of Foreign Affairs, the business lobby, multinational companies and other governments. The dissenters questioned the assumption that Indonesia controlled the main administrative functions in East Timor and argued that Indonesia controlled only one-third of the territory. These criticisms were insufficient to shift the Fraser government.

Nevertheless, the clear denunciation of the Fraser government policy on East Timor allowed for easier arrangement of Australian participation in an oil exploration program in the Timor Sea. The ownership of the sea-bed between Australia and Timor had been in dispute. Portugal had argued that the mid point was the correct border whereas Australia claimed the area to the edge of the continental shelf. It was the region near the extremity of the

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shelf in which the oil companies were hoping to find oil or gas. Australia and Indonesia had agreed to a common sea-boundary except for the crucial area under dispute due to the ambiguous status of the previous Portuguese territory. This issue was important for both Australia and Indonesia but was not explicitly included as a reason for the Fraser government’s decision to recognise the incorporation of East Timor.

Not surprisingly, the domestic debate on East Timor, or more accurately, the strong criticism of the government's policy toward Indonesia’s actions in East Timor, continued in the Australian press and the electorate. This discussion was fuelled by further evidence in the press of atrocities committed by Indonesian troops in East Timor. The response of the Fraser government to the criticism demonstrated a continuing willingness to support the Indonesian government and the activities of the Indonesian armed forces in East Timor. Indeed, the interpretation of events by the Fraser government paralleled the official Indonesian view. After consulting Indonesia, the Australian government offered an additional $2 million for relief work by the Indonesian Red Cross in conjunction with the International Committee of the Red Cross in the region. This allocation more than doubled Australia’s contribution to humanitarian work in East Timor since 1975.

The problem for the Fraser government seemed to be the Indonesian government’s inability to distinguish between the official Australian view and the perspectives offered in the Australian press. Thus, the relationship between the governments of Australia and Indonesia remained tense while the press repeatedly revealed new information and allegations about the Indonesian annexation of East Timor. Significantly, this issue was publicly

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195 Evidence uncovered by Peter Rodgers, and debate continued in Sydney Morning Herald, 31 October, 1 & 5 November 1979, Age, 2 November 1979 and Australian, 3 November 1979.

196 R. Bell, op. cit., p. 16. The total amount of Australian aid was $3.5 million. However, Smith explained that Australia was also providing Indonesia with military aid. For the period 1976-1980, the Australian military aid program to Indonesia amounted to $6-10 million per annum and included the transfer of Nomad aircraft and patrol craft for maritime surveillance. Also, Indonesian service personnel continued to attend training courses in Australia. See Hugh Smith, Defence Policy, chapter 3 in Boyce and Angel, op. cit., p. 49.
debated into the 1980s and, therefore, was troublesome for Fraser in every year of government.197

By early 1983, and in preparation for a federal election, the Fraser government explicitly declared its support for Indonesia. Minister for Defence Sinclair visited Indonesia in January 1983. During this trip, Sinclair visited East Timor and thereby was the first Australian Minister to visit the disputed territory since annexation in 1975. The Minister for Defence stated the Australian government’s strong support for the Indonesian administration of East Timor and blamed the poor conditions in East Timor on the years of Portuguese colonialism. Further, Sinclair accused the Australian media of reporting incidents with an inadequate understanding of the problems facing the Indonesian government.198 The Minister for Defence also sought to expand Australia’s role in developing Indonesia’s defence forces.199 As a prelude to the election campaign for a federal ballot on 5 March 1983, the statements by Minister Sinclair demonstrated a complete abandonment of East Timor in order to project the image of a close relationship with Indonesia.

In conclusion, it was remarkable that the issue of East Timor was sustained as a point of contention for the entire term of the Fraser government. The status of East Timor, and the actions of Indonesia in East Timor, appeared more prominent as a foreign policy issue than other international conflicts. In this context, it was striking that the Fraser government was willing to persist with an apparently unpopular Indonesia policy. Indeed, the Fraser government advocated that the interests of the East Timorese people should

197 On the issue of Australian press coverage of East Timor, see Lim, op. cit., p. 12, including information on the publication of cables from J.R. Walsh and G.J. Munster, eds, Documents on Australian Defence and Foreign Policy, 1968-75, Walsh and Munster, 1980; Viviani, ...Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1981, op. cit., pp. 7 & 18; Millar, ...Australian Foreign Policy July-December 1982, op. cit., pp. 11-12; and Renouf, Australian Diplomacy..., op. cit., p. 329. Specifically, on the disappearance of journalist Roger East in East Timor in 1975, see Canberra Times, 23 October 1980, on alleged atrocities, see Australian, 9 October 1981, and on reports that a serious famine was imminent in East Timor, see Australian, 3-4 October 1981. In practical terms, the Indonesian government decided to close the Australian Broadcasting Commission office in Jakarta in mid 1980. Most of the notable press activity occurred before and after the federal election of 18 October 1980. See also Nancy Viviani, Australia-Indonesia relations - bilateral puzzles and regional perspectives, Australian Outlook, vol. 36, 3, December 1982.
199 See Canberra Times, 26 January 1983.
be subordinated to the longer term security interests of the Asia Pacific region.  

On the political agenda of the Fraser foreign policy, Bell questioned the lack of action by Australia on East Timor while Fraser actively opposed similar actions of Vietnam in Kampuchea. Moreover, it was clear that Fraser supported the anti-communist government of Indonesia while opposing the communist government of Vietnam. This may have been conceived as consistent by Fraser but appeared inconsistent in terms of arguing for the protection of peoples in developing countries.

Papua New Guinea and the South Pacific

The Fraser government understood Australia's relationships with Papua New Guinea and the island states of the South Pacific as primarily based on the allocation of development assistance. However, the allocation of aid, especially to the South Pacific, involved an explicit security agenda which aimed to minimise the influence of the Soviet Union in the region. Relations with Papua New Guinea were also based on the historical Australian support of the PNG economy, and on an emerging arrangement for defence cooperation. Also, the Fraser government's relations with the island states of the South Pacific combined the concerns on security, the need for increased aid, the idea of exclusive fishing zones, and improved diplomatic contacts. Significantly, over the term of the Fraser government, Australia demonstrated a greater commitment to the South Pacific region, principally through increased aid allocations. For the Fraser government, relations with both PNG and the South Pacific were framed by a foreign policy which prioritised the need for improved alliances with developing countries.

In the Prime Minister's June 1976 statement, Papua New Guinea was reaffirmed as Australia's highest priority for the aid program. Fraser emphasised the five year aid package of $180million per year, which represented a substantial increase in Australian assistance to PNG.  

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200 See also Boyce, The Foreign Policy Process, op. cit., p. 23, on the influence of the Department of Foreign Affairs.
201 Bell, op. cit., p. 17.
202 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2739. See also Peacock, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2748 attack on the record of the Whitlam Labor government, specifically the intimation that Whitlam had reduced the amount of aid to Papua New Guinea.
November 1977, Australia had agreed to allocate an additional $35 million to PNG for 1978-79. At this stage, Papua New Guinea was receiving 52 percent of Australia's total aid budget. With the visit to Australia of the PNG Prime Minister, Sir Julius Chan in December 1980, a new aid agreement was signed to provide budget support grants of at least $1326 million in the five year period from 1981 to 1986. Prime Minister Chan expressed satisfaction at Australia's aid program and called for increased Australian investment in PNG. Thus, Australia's relationship with Papua New Guinea was based on the levels of aid allocated for budgetary support, which included the costs of Australian personnel working in PNG. Indeed, the Fraser government built upon the commitments of the Whitlam government to Papua New Guinea.

As part of the aid relationship, issues of defence were central to Australia's policy toward Papua New Guinea. Interim defence arrangements provided for the continuation of Australian military assistance after independence in September 1975. In January 1977, the governments of Australia and PNG reached formal agreement on the Status of Forces Arrangement and procedures to ensure effective consultation. In addition to development assistance, Australia allocated $11-15 million per annum for military aid to Papua New Guinea, the largest amount of Australian military assistance.

206 In 1976, 400 Australian service personnel were on loan to the PNG Defence Force with an additional 250 personnel in other units or administrative positions. Over time, the number of loan personnel was reduced as PNG staff were trained. Smith, op. cit., p. 49.
208 Smith, op. cit., p. 49.
The defence relationship became complicated in 1978 when Indonesian armed forces continued to cross the PNG border in an attempt to apprehend West Irian activists. At a diplomatic level, Australia was placed in the invidious position between PNG and Indonesia. The Fraser government decided not to assist PNG against Indonesia. The border issue provoked debate in the Australian Senate on the need for a formal military alliance with PNG. In the end, however, no formal defence treaty was contemplated.

In contrast, Australia's support for the PNG armed forces was displayed in 1980 with the suppression of a separatist rebellion in Vanuatu. At independence, the government of Vanuatu called upon PNG troops to move against a group of rebels on the island of Espiritu Santo to restore law and order. Australia agreed to permit twenty Australian service personnel to support the PNG force in Vanuatu. This action by the Fraser government also reflected the level of concern for regional security in the South Pacific.

On the South Pacific, Fraser was apprehensive about the level of Soviet influence in the region. In particular, the Soviet Ambassador to New Zealand Selyaninov, visited Tonga in April 1976 to meet with King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV. At first, Australia and New Zealand did not appear overly concerned. However, reactions became more vociferous when it appeared that the Soviet Ambassador had offered economic assistance to expand the airport at Fuamotu, one of the King's favourite projects, in exchange for a servicing base for the Soviet Pacific fishing fleet.

The Fraser government used the South Pacific Forum held in Nauru on 26-28 July 1976, to consult with the independent island states. The leader of

210 Senator Durack, acting for the Minister for Foreign Affairs, CPD, Senate, vol. 78, 12 September 1978, p. 513, in response to a question from Senator Sibraa, explained that the defence relationship had been set out in the joint statement issued by Prime Ministers Somare and Fraser on 11 February 1977. See also Senator Sibraa question, CPD, Senate, vol. 79, 19 October 1978, p. 1499, concerning the government's view of the various issues related to the West Irian-New Guinea border conflict. See also Smith, op. cit., p. 49, with regard to the need for a defence treaty.
212 Herr, ibid., p. 280. See also Boyce, ...Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1976, op. cit., p. 4 and see generally, Alexander Malyashkin, USSR, the Pacific, Pacific Islands Monthly, vol. 49, 1, January 1978 and P.J. Boyce, Great powers in the Southwest Pacific, World Review, vol. 18, 3, August 1979.
213 The South Pacific Forum included the Prime Ministers of all the independent island states, with New Zealand and Australia.
the Australian delegation, Senator Cotton, warned the South Pacific leaders against assuming that Soviet involvement in the region would be benign. This note of caution was not reflected in the final communique of the Forum but the exchange of views may have persuaded the Tongan Prime Minister to postpone a decision on the Soviet offer. 214

Only a week later, at the ANZUS Council meeting in Canberra, the issue of Soviet influence in the South Pacific was raised with the United States. To the surprise and disappointment of the Australian and New Zealand governments, the United States seemed less concerned with the activities of the Soviets and did not regard the ANZUS Treaty as pertinent to the island states of the South Pacific. 215 It transpired that the United States had assumed that Australia and New Zealand would accept military responsibility for the island states. Adding to the surprise of the Fraser government, there was an ill-concealed suspicion among US State Department officials that Australia and New Zealand had overreacted to the Soviet initiatives in the South Pacific in order to involve the US in the region, and thereby share the security responsibilities. 216

As a result of the discussions on the Soviet activities, the ANZUS meeting concluded that Australia and New Zealand would provide greater priority to the South Pacific in their development assistance programs. The United States also promised more aid to the region. This reflected the perceived need to strengthen regional institutions and to provide assistance as a means of countering the Soviet initiatives in the South Pacific. 217 Thus, over the 1976-78 triennium, Australia allocated $60 million in untied economic aid to the members of the South Pacific Forum. 218

214 Boyce, ... Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1976, op. cit., p. 4.
215 Herr, op. cit., p. 280. The US government maintained that if there had been any coverage extending to the independent island states, it had arisen solely because the islands were dependent territories of Australia or New Zealand. As independent states, the status of the islands was different and the implications for the United States were minimised.
216 See ibid., pp. 280-1.
217 Boyce, ... Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1976, op. cit., p. 4. See also Herr, op. cit., p. 281. By 1977, it became apparent that the Soviet threat to the region had been overstated. While establishing official relations with Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa, the Soviets were unwilling to extend aid to the South Pacific. The Soviet diplomatic actions provided credibility to the view that the purpose of the overtures to Tonga was to counter China in the region. In contrast, China was never regarded as a cause for concern despite establishing permanent missions in Suva in April 1975 and Apia in October 1976.
218 Boyce, ...Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1976, op. cit., p. 4 and Herr, op. cit., p. 281.
In the context of assistance to the South Pacific, the Fraser government supported the idea of a 200-mile fishing zone around each island state. At the South Pacific Forum meeting held in Port Moresby in August 1977, the members agreed to establish the fishing or economic zones as quickly as possible 'to the fullest extent permissible under international law'. The meeting also agreed to establish a South Pacific Regional Fisheries Agency open to all South Pacific countries 'who support the sovereign rights of the coastal state to conserve and manage living resources including highly migratory species in its 200-mile zone'. Significantly, the Fisheries Agency would be temporarily housed in Australia, denoting a level of support from the Fraser government.

The fishing zones were designed to provide an element of economic security for the small island economies of the South Pacific. The anticipated improvement in access to fishing stocks and the promotion of future fishing stocks clearly proved attractive to the members of the South Pacific Forum. However, the implementation of the fishing zones by the island states implied exclusive access to several million square kilometres of the South Pacific. This situation would not be readily accepted by the major fishing powers, namely the Soviet Union and Japan. Despite this, Australia provided support for the aspirations of the South Pacific island states which may have involved issues of security and political alignment as well as economic development.

Related to the heightened sensitivity on the South Pacific, Australia undertook to secure closer diplomatic relations with the region. Following the process of decolonisation in the South Pacific, Australia established High Commissions in Apia (1977), Honiara (1978), Nuku'alofa (1979) and Vila (1980). This increase in diplomatic representation was conducted despite the reductions in funding in other areas of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

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219 Albinski, ...Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1977, op. cit., p. 11 and Millar, Australia in Peace and War, op. cit., p. 429. On the implications of law of the sea problems, see Financial Review, 16 September 1977.
220 Millar, Australia in Peace and War, op. cit., p. 429. See also Albinski, ...Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1977, op. cit., p. 11.
221 Millar, Australia in Peace and War, op. cit., p. 429. See also Herr, op. cit., p. 282.
222 Herr, ibid., pp. 281 & 284. See Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, Australia and the South Pacific, AGPS, Canberra, 1978. This inquiry was initiated after prompting from Senator Knight. See presentation of the report by the committee chair, Senator Sim, CPD, Senate, vol. 76, 13 April 1978, pp. 1245-9.
However, at the political and diplomatic levels, relations with Fiji tended to overshadow Australia's attempt to improve and diversify official contacts in the region. Fiji had been central to Australia's commercial, political and social activities in the South Pacific for many years. Also, Fiji retained a pre-eminent position in the region given its relative size, population, location and economic base. For these reasons, Fiji received the largest share of Australian aid to the region and more than half of the commercial investments from Australia. Further, Fiji served as Australia's diplomatic point of access to the South Pacific as the Australian mission in Suva had, until the mid 1970s, co-ordinated ancillary services for the Commonwealth to the other island states. While Fiji continued to host a number of important regional bodies, it was clear that Australian bilateral relations with Fiji would remain central despite the expansion of direct relations with the region.

Also at the diplomatic level, Prime Minister Fraser initiated a Commonwealth Heads of Government Regional Meeting in Sydney in February 1978. The conference included Commonwealth leaders from South Asia, South East Asia and the South Pacific. Fraser was attempting to assist the island states of the South Pacific, and other smaller states in the Asia Pacific region, to broaden their diplomatic outlets and to establish a wider community in the Pacific area.

The idea of regional Commonwealth meetings appeared attractive to the South Pacific members because the general Commonwealth conferences tended to be dominated by African issues. The opportunity to discuss other issues, if not particularly regional topics, was attractive. Further, Fraser's attempt to provide some specialisation was predicated upon the maintenance of the larger Commonwealth membership and agenda. The regional Commonwealth conference was seen to be a constructive initiative.

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224 ibid., p. 285.
225 Fraser had issued invitations for the regional meeting during the 1977 CHOGM in London. See Bell, Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1978, op. cit., p. 292, Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 135 and Harry, op. cit., p. 96.
226 Herr, op. cit., p. 287. The initiative revived an idea proposed by Evatt in the 1940s on Commonwealth regionalism. See also Margot Simington, Australian Relations with the Pacific Islands, World Review, vol. 17, August 1979, pp. 60-1.
which was to enhance the work of triennial Heads of Government meetings.

The scheduled Sydney CHOGRM was relocated to the town of Bowral following the explosion of a bomb at the hotel venue immediately prior to the meeting.\(^228\) Nevertheless, the CHOGRM was productive and the participants agreed to establish four consultative groups on trade, energy, drugs and terrorism. Fraser claimed that this outcome represented a 'strong commitment to practical cooperation' among the Commonwealth members.\(^229\) It was agreed to meet again in September 1980 in New Delhi where the regional Commonwealth Heads of Government added two further groups on industrial issues and cooperation in agricultural research and development.\(^230\) The continuance of working groups formalised the regional cooperation but these groups did not publish outcomes from talks which suggested that the interaction was merely a reason to meet without the imperative to produce outcomes.\(^231\)

Subsequently, the regional Commonwealth Heads of Government met in Suva in October 1982. On balance, there was some argument amongst a lot of agreement. In Suva, following from the goodwill produced during the Commonwealth Games in Brisbane, Prime Minister Fraser announced the provision of ten scholarships for athletes from developing Commonwealth countries to attend the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra. Fraser gained strong support from the meeting when reiterating the need to reduce protectionism but Australia needed to bolster this position with greater action in domestic trade and industry policies.\(^232\)

In sum, the Fraser government had substantially increased Australia's commitment to the South Pacific through increased aid contributions. In 1975, Australia was third amongst aid donors to the region but by 1980, Australia had become the primary external source of assistance to the island

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\(^{228}\) Bell, ...Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1978, op. cit., pp. 292-3. The explosive devise was planted outside the Sydney hotel and was accidentally detonated, killing two people. See Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Forei~ Policy, op. cit., pp. 135-6.

\(^{229}\) Fraser in Renouf, ibid., p. 135. See also Bell, ...Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1978, op. cit., p. 292 and Harry, op. cit., p. 96.


\(^{231}\) See Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 136. See also Hayden critique, CPD, HR, vol. 119, 11 September 1980, p. 1206.

\(^{232}\) Millar, ...More of the same..., op. cit., p. 10.
states of the South Pacific. This shift in Australia's role seemed to provide some concerns for New Zealand which had previously carried responsibility for South Pacific issues.

The relationships constructed by the Fraser government with Papua New Guinea and the island states of the South Pacific incorporated the sometimes conflicting issues of development assistance, trade, security, and diplomacy. The Australian foreign policy agenda in the South Pacific was also an attempt by Fraser to improve relations with the developing countries in the Asia Pacific region. Again, this approach tended to be couched in the language of security for Australia and the region.

**Aid policy**

The aid policies of the Fraser government formed part of the attempt to promote relations with developing countries. This link brought aid and foreign policy closer in the international outlook of the Fraser government. Not surprisingly, diplomatic goals tended to dominate in the formulation of aid policy and the Department of Foreign Affairs was central to this process. The Prime Minister was also instrumental in directing aid in the construction of foreign policy. Fraser was assisted by the lack of attention paid to aid policy by the electorate and the Parliament which provided substantial scope for manoeuvre.

Generally, the Fraser government attempted to expand relations with developing countries but implemented domestic economic policies which limited the growth in aid levels. The result of this collision tended to be determined by financial considerations rather than by development objectives for aid. Specifically, the Fraser government made some initial changes to aid policy in reaction to initiatives of the Whitlam government. Fraser also used aid for overt political purposes and shifted the geographical

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distribution of aid. Further, over time, the Fraser government reduced the level of aid and substantially changed the administration of aid policy.

In the initial months of government, Fraser made a number of changes relating to aid policy, most obviously in the administration of aid and the level of aid. The Whitlam Labor government had attempted to recruit staff dedicated to aid policy and some effort had been made to reach the United Nations aid target of 0.7 percent of Gross National Product. Thus, there was a brief controversy in February 1976 when the Minister for Foreign Affairs announced a reduction of $21.5 million in foreign aid, including $5.3 million in food aid and $12 million in multilateral aid. While other areas of government were also experiencing financial restrictions, the cuts in aid allocations were much greater than average, given more than half the aid budget of $385.5 million went to Papua New Guinea.236 The substantial reductions in both food aid and multilateral aid also indicated a greater impact on the poorest countries, particularly Africa, rather than regional neighbours which were allocated bilateral aid for particular projects.

Somewhat surprisingly, the Fraser government decided to maintain food aid to Mozambique. During the 1975 election campaign, Fraser had been critical of Whitlam government policies toward Africa but decided to uphold the 1975 CHOGM commitment of $1 million food aid to the Marxist government of Mozambique. This allocation of aid in the form of skim-milk powder was understood as compensation for costs incurred in enforcing sanctions against Rhodesia.237 The maintenance of this aid may have been based on Fraser's personal attraction to the Commonwealth as an institution which was capable of influencing international conflicts. It was also significant that this decision to continue a Whitlam government initiative emerged against resistance from some in the Liberal Party who supported the minority government in Rhodesia.238

Also in the early months of government, the status of aid policy was downgraded with the abolition of the Australian Development Assistance Agency and the incorporation of aid administration into the Department of Foreign Affairs. This move clearly reinforced the connection between aid

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236 Richardson, op. cit., p. 335. The cut of $21 million represented a relatively large proportion of the remaining $175 million. The decision announced by Peacock on 4 February 1976 was criticised by aid agencies and commentators. See Age, 7 February 1976 and Canberra Times, 11 February 1976 & 27 April 1976.


238 ibid. See also Australian, 9 March 1976.
and foreign policy. Moreover, the restructuring of aid administration accorded partly with economic considerations and partly with the Fraser government understanding that aid should be an expression of foreign policy.239

Further, in the June 1976 statement, the Prime Minister provided an early indication of the direction of aid policy. As stated, Fraser explicitly connected problems of poverty with the potential for conflict and criticised the industrial countries for limiting trade with the developing countries.240 Fraser also linked regional strategic cooperation with the aim of increased aid and trade.241 It was clear from the Prime Minister's emphasis that aid would be used to complement security and strategic elements of foreign policy. This approach to developing countries openly advocated the use of aid to blunt any attempts by the Soviet Union to influence poor countries through economic assistance.242 The Fraser government demonstrated this view by increasing aid to Tonga when there was a perception of Soviet interest and by withholding aid to Vietnam in retaliation for the intervention into Kampuchea.243 Similarly, aid was channelled to East Timor through the Indonesian Red Cross in an attempt to promote relations with Indonesia and thereby encourage regional security.244 The political content of Australian aid was also demonstrated with a decline in Australian aid to India following the signing of the USSR-India friendship treaty and the allocation of aid to the Philippines for development of Mindanao and Saman where insurgency and rebellion continued.245

The political dimension of Australian aid could also be seen in the regional distribution of development assistance. Australian aid to Papua New Guinea was committed in five year allocations for non-project budgetary support. The aid for PNG dominated the Australian aid budget but required

240 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2736.
241 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2739.
242 See Eldridge, *Diplomacy, Development...*, op. cit., p. 13 and Albinski, *...Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1977*, op. cit., p. 11. See also Renouf, *Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy*, op. cit., p. 193.
244 See Boyce, *...Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1976*, op. cit., p. 5 and R. Bell, op. cit., p. 16.
little administrative monitoring. Apart from Papua New Guinea, the members of ASEAN received a large share of the Australian aid budget. For example, the Fraser government contributed $20 million over a five-year period toward an extensive rural aid program in the Philippines, promised an additional $10 million for joint ASEAN development projects, and offered $90 million in bilateral aid to individual ASEAN members. This aid did not placate the ASEAN demands for greater trade access to Australian markets.

Aid to the South Pacific was placed in the context of proposed Soviet involvement with some island states. In October 1976, Foreign Minister Peacock announced a 300 percent increase in Australian aid commitments to the South Pacific states. The island states also wanted greater trade access to Australia but, rather than reduce tariffs, the Fraser government agreed to establish the South Pacific Trade Commission in Sydney in 1979. By 1982, Australia had become the principal aid donor in the region with the consequence of frustrating the efforts of the South Pacific states to diversify aid sources.

Australian aid to Africa was not significant in absolute terms. Aid was committed for educational support under the Special Commonwealth African Assistance Plan and the Commonwealth Cooperation in Education Scheme. Also, food aid increased over time and Australia was keen to increase project aid to Africa. The political significance of bilateral aid was more important than the level of aid. For example, Fraser allocated $11 million to Zimbabwe immediately after independence. Multilateral aid was small and dispensed to Africa through international organisations such as the UN Trust Fund for South Africa, UN Fund for Namibia and the Special Commonwealth Fund for Zimbabweans.

In terms of the level of aid, the Fraser government announced a reduction in aid in February 1976 and there was further pressure to reduce all elements of government spending in the August 1976 budget. For 1976-77, the aid allocation was $378 million which represented 0.46 percent of GNP.

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247 Boyce, Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1976, op. cit., p. 4.
248 Herr, Australia and the South-West Pacific, op. cit., p. 287.
250 While the amount of funds increased, the percentage of GNP declined. See Eldridge, Diplomacy, Development..., op. cit., p. 3. Bickerdyke, op. cit., p. 5, argued that the
There were proportional increases in multilateral aid and in allocations to non-government aid groups, and the decision to untie project aid was reaffirmed. In subsequent budgets, the Fraser government maintained the level of aid at about 0.45 percent of Gross National Product.

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Significantly, the Fraser government maintained the level of aid despite pressure from Treasury to reduce aid allocations. Moreover, in a climate percentage of GDP declined from 0.60 in 1975 to 0.42 in 1976. Albinski, ...Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1977, op. cit., p. 11 claimed that the 1976 budget did not change the level of aid in real terms while Millar, Australia in Peace and War, op. cit., p. 429, stated that the Fraser government did not reduce aid in its first budget. Albinski, ...Australian Foreign Policy, July to December 1977, op. cit., p. 11. See also Peacock, CPD, HR, vol. 109, 9 May 1978, pp. 2033-4.

In 1981, Hayden was critical of the level of aid allocated by the Fraser government. The leader of the Labor Party explained that: In 1975, the then Labor Government expended 0.65 per cent of gross domestic product on official development aid. [the highest level was actually 0.56 percent in 1974-75] We were on the threshold of fulfilling our commitment to be one of the few countries in the world providing 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product as official development aid.

Hayden also claimed that a Labor government would reach the UN objective of 0.7 percent of GDP on aid within one ter. of Parliament and committed the Labor Party to allocating 1.0 percent of GDP by, at the L.east, 1990. Hayden, CPD, HR, vol. 125, 13 October 1981, p. 1902. For Hayden, the architect of the 1975 budget, these strong commitments on aid policy were exaggerated and unbelievable.


See Eldridge, Diplomacy, Development..., op. cit., p. 7.
of financial constraint, the Prime Minister seemed to protect aid allocations over a long period of time. Indeed, Fraser must have won the fiscal argument that the level of aid was important in the process of achieving diplomatic and strategic foreign policy goals. This was a demonstration of the role played by Fraser that this argument prevailed, to a greater or lesser extent, for seven budgetary processes.

Similar to the maintenance of the level of aid, Fraser, Peacock and the Department of Foreign Affairs won the argument with Treasury on aid policies and aid administration. While Treasury wanted to reduce aid funding, including funds for aid administration, Fraser and Peacock had an interest in maintaining aid levels and aid administration capabilities in order to pursue diplomatic goals. At the margins, the Department of Trade attempted to link more closely issues of aid and trade. This argument had little influence on the foreign policy orientation of aid but the Department of Trade was successful in establishing the Development Import Finance Facility.

The structure of aid administration as the Australian Development Assistance Bureau within the Department of Foreign Affairs suited the aims of both Fraser and Peacock. However, by 1980, ADAB staff had been reduced by thirty percent, with the only consolation that the Bureau had survived Treasury pressure for abolition. At this time, the Auditor-General reviewed aid administration which caused a reorganisation of ADAB. This was immediately followed by the Review of Commonwealth Functions after the 1980 federal election which examined all government spending. From this, there was an attempt to make further savings in aid administration which eroded the relative autonomy of ADAB. This process included more reductions in staff while actually causing additional costs.

In response to the Auditor-General's review, the Parliamentary Joint Committee of Public Accounts provided a report on Australia's Bilateral

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255 ibid., pp. 18 & 35.
256 ibid., p. 23. On the issue of a greater role for commercial interests in the aid program, see Viviani, Aid Policies and Programmes, op. cit., p. 124. See also G.R. Webb, Australia's official development assistance: some future considerations, Australian Outlook, vol. 36, 1, April 1982.
257 Viviani, Aid Policies and Programmes, op. cit., p. 122.
258 See Auditor-General, Report on an Efficiency Audit: Administration of Australia’s Bilateral Overseas Aid Program by the Australian Development Assistance Bureau, AGPS, Canberra, 1981.
259 Eldridge, Diplomacy, Development..., op. cit., p. 36.
Overseas Aid Program.\textsuperscript{260} This report offered strongly worded comments on the impact of staff cutbacks on the efficiency of projects and reinforced the need for autonomy in aid administration. The Public Accounts Committee recommended that more ADAB staff should be posted overseas to ensure that Australian projects were given a distinctively Australian character.\textsuperscript{261} This report was used to support the argument that the professional role of ADAB should be upgraded and the social and developmental objectives of the aid program should be strengthened.

In conclusion, the Fraser government used the Australian aid program to achieve foreign policy goals. In political terms, the Prime Minister acted to direct aid policy at particular times in an effort to strengthen the argument for regional security, especially in opposing Soviet activity in the South Pacific. Fraser also used Australian aid in an overt manner against Vietnam and in support of Indonesia. Also, the geographical distribution of aid remained focused on Papua New Guinea and South East Asia, with small amounts allocated to other regions, including Africa. Significantly, after the Whitlam government had established a separate aid agency, the Fraser government subsumed the administration of aid into the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Rather than increase the level of aid to support the needs of developing countries, Prime Minister Fraser tended to shift aid, sometimes with explicit motives, to support Australia's relations with allies and potential allies. Therefore, at times, aid policy was a controversial issue for the Fraser government. In total, aid was utilised as one aspect of foreign policy and the Fraser government was open about the connections between aid and security, and thereby aid and the political objectives of foreign policy.

Conclusion

The combination of philosophies held by Prime Minister Fraser imparted a distinct outlook for Australia on relations with developing countries. Fraser established Australia's position in support of the interests of developing countries in the June 1976 statement and proposed to review this stance through the Harries report. While Fraser used the elements of


\textsuperscript{261} See ibid., pp. 44-8. See also Eldridge, \textit{Diplomacy, Development...,} op. cit., p. 52.
the Harries report that endorsed the government's position, the Prime Minister ignored the majority of recommendations which challenged the established foreign policy agenda. Further, Fraser demonstrated support for the developing countries through personal promotion of the ideas of a new international economic order and a Common Fund. The Fraser government pursued Australia's interests in these debates while expressing concern for the economic progress of developing countries.

In the Asia Pacific region, the Fraser government attempted to balance relations with the members of ASEAN and China, but this act merely revealed the tensions in Australia's position. Fraser reacted to the intervention of Vietnam into Kampuchea while not acting against Indonesia in East Timor, again revealing the regional security agenda of the Prime Minister. The Fraser government also built upon the historical relations with Papua New Guinea, including support for the independence process, and attempted to improve contacts in the South Pacific. In addition, the Australian aid program was used to support the Fraser government's policy objectives on developing countries. For example, Fraser used aid allocations for strategic political purposes in relation to Vietnam and the South Pacific.

In total, Fraser adopted key elements of Whitlam's approach toward developing countries, especially in generating an anti-racist and anti-colonial foreign policy for Australia. This international position provided the context for Prime Minister Fraser's active role on African issues.
Prime Minister Fraser established an anti-racist and anti-colonial foreign policy on Africa. Fraser's personal commitment to racial equality was an important factor in the construction of policies by the Liberal and Country Parties government, especially in provided explicit opposition to the minority regimes in Rhodesia and South Africa. Significantly, Fraser's position on Africa continued many of the policies established by the Whitlam Labor government. In the first instance, Fraser's stance against the racial discrimination in southern Africa was demonstrated at the 1977 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London and through the attempt to close the Rhodesia Information Centre in Sydney. Later, Fraser played a significant role in the negotiations on Rhodesia at the 1979 CHOGM in Lusaka. The Australian Prime Minister advocated the need for a new constitution and new elections in Rhodesia and acted as mediator between British Prime Minister Thatcher and Presidents Nyerere and Kaunda to produce an effective outcome from the Commonwealth meeting. This was a significant achievement for both Fraser and the Commonwealth.
As the international environment changed in 1980, Fraser continued to support the role of the Commonwealth and continued to oppose the apartheid system in South Africa. This position was clearly demonstrated through the 1981 CHOGM in Melbourne and in the preparations for the 1982 Commonwealth Games in Brisbane.

In total, Fraser's position on Africa became the Australian government's position on Africa. This was important because members of the Liberal and Country Parties held various positions on Rhodesia and South Africa, including the view of some in the government that the minority regimes should be supported. Given this, Fraser's alignment with the African leaders in opposition to minority rule in southern Africa was an important contribution to international politics.

**Fraser and Africa**

Prime Minister Fraser showed a personal interest and long-held commitment to racial equality as the necessary basis for Australian foreign policy. From the time Fraser entered the Parliament, this approach informed several speeches on South Africa, Rhodesia and the value of the Commonwealth. As Prime Minister, Fraser was, for ill-informed reasons, expected to adopt a conservative stance on the minority regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia. Instead, initial government policy reflected the personal views of Fraser, and this included an overt contempt for racial discrimination.

As a member of the Menzies government, Fraser had made two key speeches to the Parliament which focused on the Commonwealth and South Africa. The first was on 15 March 1956 in which the relatively new Member for Wannon signalled the value of the new Commonwealth as a transformation of the British empire.\(^1\) The second address on 12 April 1961 examined the question of South Africa's membership of the British Commonwealth.\(^2\) Fraser outlined the advantages and disadvantages of

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\(^2\) Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 30, 12 April 1961, pp. 769-73. In March 1960, South African government soldiers had shot and killed 67 residents of Sharpeville township and injured a further 186 residents. Given the international and domestic criticism of the apartheid regime, a referendum of white citizens in South Africa in October 1960 resolved to leave the Commonwealth. This was achieved in May 1961. See Claire Clark, ed., Australian Foreign Policy: Toward a Reassessment, Cassell, North Melbourne, 1973, pp. 144 & 257.
It could be argued that this is in part attributable to changes in the Commonwealth itself, however, the different positions of Manse and药业 remain important for understanding the development of the Liberal Party's approach toward the Commonwealth.
South African membership and discussed the effects of continued membership on the Commonwealth and for Australia. Significantly, Fraser identified that the common denominator of Commonwealth membership was racial equality. Accordingly, Fraser argued that South Africa should not continue in the Commonwealth. This position set Fraser apart from then Prime Minister Menzies who was reluctant to advocate the expulsion of South Africa from the Commonwealth. Fraser's position also demonstrated a high value placed on the role of the Commonwealth which was also different from the view of Menzies.

Once in government, Prime Minister Fraser offered strong support for the Commonwealth. In the June 1976 statement, Fraser explained that, 'as a means of fostering co-operation and consultation in many varied areas, it [the Commonwealth] retains a lasting importance.' Fraser embraced Whitlam's enthusiasm for the Commonwealth with the additional rationale that the forum could be made into 'a vital, innovative, problem-solving instrument, one capable of acting as a catalyst when deadlock or stalemate threaten'. This position was part of Fraser's commitment to multilateral relations which included active Australian participation in the United Nations.

Fraser's optimistic view of the Commonwealth fitted with the government policy on Rhodesia which stressed the need for a negotiated settlement. This stance argued for a rapid but non-violent transition to majority rule and included support for United Nations' imposed sanctions against Rhodesia. Fraser also emphasised that conflict could lead to the influence of external powers, namely the Soviet Union, which was linked with security concerns in southern Africa. Further, the Prime Minister boldly stated that apartheid would not work and that Australia would play a constructive role on South Africa within the frame of the Commonwealth.

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5 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2742.
8 Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2741.
Fraser's fervent opposition to apartheid and racial discrimination in South Africa and Rhodesia was based in a personal rejection of racism in all forms. Weller documented Fraser's comments to a colleague that 'there are not many issues of conscience you can afford to have as successful politician. Race is mine. I will never tolerate racism'. As Weller added, Fraser was not prepared to compromise on issues of racism and this personal stance was reflected in the government's policies on Rhodesia and South Africa.

In support of Fraser, Foreign Minister Peacock reiterated the government's policy towards southern Africa which involved:

- first, supporting both the ending of white minority rule and the protection of white minority rights. Secondly, Australia is concerned that the conflicts in the region shall be resolved by political compromise without the resort to force and the shedding of blood. Thirdly, we are concerned that the process by which a settlement is advanced should not involve the installation of a major power as a dominating influence in the region.

These objectives tended to coincide with the aims of the United States and Britain. In addition, the Fraser government hoped to build economic relations with post-independent South Africa and Rhodesia, and with southern Africa in general.

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10 With Weller, ibid., p. 316, Fraser reflected on the constant search for explanations or personal reasons for the stance against racism: 'People have to find a reason, because they think that somebody that lives in Nareen and was educated at Melbourne Grammar and Oxford couldn't possibly have these views. So they look for some other explanation'.
11 Peacock, CPD, HR, vol. 99, 1 June 1976, p. 2750. The priority on security in southern Africa was informed by the situation in Angola. Following the abdication of Portuguese colonial authority in Angola in 1974, there was a struggle between three nationalist movements to control the political process toward independence. The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) was supported by the Soviet Union, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) was supported by South Africa and the United States, while the National Front of Angolan Liberation (FNLA) appeared to be caught between the other two groups. Conflict intensified and by 1975, the MPLA, with assistance from Cuban troops, established a socialist regime in a new republic. This outcome was perceived to be a victory for communism in southern Africa. See Coral Bell, Australia in a World of Powers, chapter 2 in P.J. Boyce and J.R. Angel, eds, Independence and Alliance: Australia in World Affairs 1976-80, Allen & Unwin and the Australian Institute of International Affairs, Sydney, 1983, pp. 27-8, and Bell, Dependent Ally, op. cit., p. 155. See also Renouf, op. cit., p. 59 and see generally, Institute for the Study of Conflict, Angola after independence: struggle for supremacy, Conflict studies, no. 64, November 1975, Basil Davidson, Angola: a success that changes history, Race and Class, vol. 18, 1, Summer 1976 and Cclin Legum, The Soviet Union, China and the West in Southern Africa, Foreign Affairs, vol. 54, 4, July 1976.
At the domestic level, these aspects of foreign policy remained within the personal and political discretion of Fraser and Peacock, with assistance from the Department of Foreign Affairs. General public opinion was not strong on African issues. However, specific interest groups attempted to lobby the government on the policies toward southern Africa, notably, a conservative group in support of the minority regime in Rhodesia, while other groups attempted to weaken Australian links with South Africa and Rhodesia. Both sides in this debate were represented inside the Liberal and Country Parties government which suggested that this issue would not be easily resolved. Nevertheless, in the early months of government, the influence of Prime Minister Fraser meant that Australia formed part of the international consensus which opposed minority rule in southern Africa and stressed the need for safe majority governments.

This approach by the Fraser government was demonstrated at the United Nations in September 1976. In an address to the General Assembly, Foreign Minister Peacock condemned the South African government for the 'abhorrent' system of apartheid and the 'continued illegal occupation of Namibia'. The passionate language and open criticism of the South African government accorded with the vocal opinions in the General Assembly. Importantly, the speech by Peacock established the position of the new Australian government within the United Nations debates on southern Africa. Peacock's performance at the United Nations signalled the continuation of Australia's critical stance on the minority regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia as established by the Whitlam Labor government.

Continuity of foreign policy on Africa

The election of the Fraser government in December 1975 co-incided with international debates in which African issues were central. This atmosphere of political discussion provided Prime Minister Fraser with the opportunity to continue the policies of the Whitlam government on Africa.

13 ibid., p. 62.
The corollary here was Fraser's personal commitment to oppose racial exploitation and the minority regimes in southern Africa.

Indeed, African issues remained important to the Fraser government at a time when these political struggles could have been devalued within Australian foreign policy. The specific elements of continuity, such as the maintenance of aid to Mozambique, linked with Fraser's positions and actions within the Commonwealth on African issues in 1977-78 and with Fraser's role at the 1979 Lusaka CHOGM.

The continuity thesis from Whitlam to Fraser on African issues was embraced by the major commentators of the time. In the combative political climate of Australian politics in 1976, it might have been expected that Fraser would allow some time to pass before adopting particular policies of the Whitlam government. On Australian involvement in southern African issues, Renouf stated that 'Fraser owed a large debt of gratitude to Whitlam but it would have been unusual to acknowledge such a debt to an opponent'. However, Fraser demonstrated considerable political courage to quickly embrace the Whitlam government's policies on Africa. The Fraser government's position was publicly confirmed on 25 September 1976 when the Prime Minister declared the government's support for majority rule in Rhodesia:

> The Government welcomes reports that the authorities in Rhodesia have accepted the principle of majority rule . . . Such an outcome would accord with the long standing policy and conviction of the Australian Government . . .

This statement clearly acknowledged the continuity in policy on southern Africa from the Whitlam government.

Notwithstanding this example, neither Whitlam nor Fraser would readily admit to the value of continuity in foreign policy given the hostile domestic

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18 Renouf, ibid. Renouf commented that 'Fraser could easily have offered Whitlam an ambassadorship; Whitlam would have made an excellent ambassador, Fraser would have been regarded as magnanimous and the offer would not have entailed any cost to the Government'. See also Renouf, ibid., p. 133.

political environment. In 1976, the legacy of the Whitlam Labor government was not entirely clear but Higgott argued that Fraser's policies drew heavily on the inheritance from Whitlam.\(^{20}\) This was in direct reference to policies on South Africa and Rhodesia. More uncomfortable for Fraser was the argument of Millar that the major successes in the Liberal and Country Parties government's international affairs were grounded in the work of the Whitlam government.\(^{21}\) This position devalued the influence of Fraser in the construction and expansion of Australian foreign policy.

Nevertheless, the elements of continuity in the first term of the Fraser government were important. Within expectations of the time, several aspects of Australian foreign policy could have been entirely opposite. For example, Fraser decided to uphold the Labor government's commitment to send food aid to the Marxist government in Mozambique as compensation for costs incurred in enforcing sanctions against Rhodesia.\(^{22}\) Also, Australia did not resume the role of speaking for South Africa in the International Monetary Fund and did not reinstate the Cape Town Commission.\(^{23}\) As an international gesture, these decisions were highly symbolic and clearly pointed to an attitude of active support for majority rule in South Africa and Rhodesia.\(^{24}\)

Similarly, Fraser did not reverse the Labor government's policy of excluding racially selected South African sporting teams from Australia. This decision acted against the expectations of some within the Liberal and Country Parties government and in the electorate.\(^{25}\) Indeed, the South African Minister for Sport expressed considerable surprise at Fraser's attack on the apartheid sporting policies.\(^{26}\) Again, this largely symbolic act of limiting sporting contacts had an impact on the Australian public and on the

\(^{20}\) Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 245.
\(^{22}\) Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 247, Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 60, and Renouf, op. cit., p. 133. See also Millar, Australia in Peace and War, op. cit., p. 426 and Higgott, ...A Decade of Change and Growth, op. cit., p. 224.
\(^{23}\) Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 247, Higgott, ...A Decade of Change and Growth, op. cit., p. 224 and Nation Review, 26 April 1979. Nevertheless, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation was given authority to reinstate links with the South African intelligence agency.
\(^{24}\) Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 247. See also Renouf, op. cit., p. 133 and Australian, 9 March 1976.
\(^{25}\) Boyce, op. cit., p. 8. Prime Minister Fraser also wrote to state Premiers on 27 September 1976 to seek intervention to cancel the proposed tour of South Africa by members of state police forces.
\(^{26}\) See Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 53.
colonial South African population. At the level of popular debate, the Fraser government showed a determination to link sport with politics and therefore to isolate the apartheid regime in South Africa.

At the United Nations, Fraser did not alter the Whitlam government approach to international diplomatic debate. Continuity was apparent in the view that Australia would not advocate the expulsion of South Africa from the UN but would support radical resolutions in opposition to apartheid in both the General Assembly and the Commonwealth. Further, Fraser followed the lead of Whitlam in complying with the UN sanctions against Rhodesia which were extended in April 1976. This included a refusal to permit entry to Australia of Chief Chirau as a guest of the Australia-Rhodesia Association. This exclusion represented a literal observance of UN resolutions on Rhodesia which, in diplomatic terms, demonstrated a strict opposition to the minority regime. Strangely, during the time of the Whitlam government, Fraser had not supported anti-racist policies related to immigration and naturalisation.

Also at the United Nations, Australia continued to be a member of the General Assembly Committee on Decolonisation and the UN Council for Namibia. Indeed, during the 1970s, Australia was the only Western country to participate on both committees. Further, Foreign Minister Peacock was elected as one of the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly, a position which carried membership of the General (Steering) Committee of the Assembly. Australia was also elected to the Governing Council of the UN Development Program and the World Food Council. The election of Australia to committees which focused on issues central to developing countries showed an acceptance of Australia's stance in the United Nations.

On trade, Fraser continued to enforce the policies of disincentive established by the Whitlam government. The Liberal and Country Parties government contained differing viewpoints on trade with South Africa and

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28 Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 60. The UN resolutions limited immigration from Rhodesia and restricted entry to Australia from Rhodesia. Chief Chirau was subsequently one of the signatories to Rhodesia's internal settlement. See also Harry, op. cit., p. 90.
29 Renouf, op. cit., p. 133. Fraser's position prior to government coincided with the need for political gain rather than Fraser's personal views.
30 Harry, op. cit., p. 88. The Australian representative was chair of the Small Territories sub-committee and helped to formulate proposals suited to the needs of mini-states as they moved toward independence. See also Millar, *Australia in Peace and War*, op. cit., p. 426.
31 Harry, op. cit., p. 87. Also at the UN, Sir Robert Jackson was a Special Adviser on Aid.
these positions were supported by different groups in the community. While Fraser, and possibly the Department of Foreign Affairs, could find support for the discouragement of economic links from anti-apartheid community groups, others in the government could draw upon industry groups to argue for the restoration of trade relations with South Africa.\textsuperscript{33}

In particular, the Fraser government decided not to return a trade commissioner to Cape Town.\textsuperscript{34} Further, where Australia and South Africa had previously worked together in the International Wool Secretariat, it seemed that the two countries would be competitors in the areas of uranium sales and other commodities markets. It was not clear in 1976-77 that the discouragement of trade with South Africa and the promotion of trade with the rest of Africa was making an impact on the trade balance.\textsuperscript{35}

Given there were many policy decisions which supported the continuity argument from Whitlam to Fraser, there were some qualifications to this position. These related to policy details rather than the substantive aspects of Australia’s approach to South Africa and Rhodesia. Primarily, the Fraser government did not advocate widespread action against South Africa and, indeed, Peacock explained that Australia would maintain diplomatic and economic relations with South Africa.\textsuperscript{36} As an explicit policy, this was marginally more conciliatory than the Whitlam government position.

Linked to this approach was the Fraser government's determination not to support violent means in Africa, and thereby not to provide assistance to particular liberation movements. It was made clear that apartheid should be dismantled through peaceful methods. Therefore, aid which assisted liberation movements in southern Africa was stopped while the aid to Mozambique was understood as a separate matter.\textsuperscript{37} Also, in the UN

\textsuperscript{33} Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 58. See also Kenneth Good, South Africa's links with the world economy, \textit{World Review}, vol. 17, 2, June 1978.
\textsuperscript{34} Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 252. The Whitlam government had established a new trade commission in Nigeria in an attempt to promote trade with Africa and in 1976, Nigeria opened a High Commission in Canberra. Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 57.
\textsuperscript{35} See Goldsworthy, ibid., pp. 57-9. See also Higgott, ...A Decade of Change and Growth, op. cit., p. 225.
\textsuperscript{36} Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 55. See Peacock, CPD, HR, vol. 98, 4 March 1976, p. 569. The Foreign Minister prefaced the qualification with a clear statement on the premise of the government's policy:

\begin{quote}
We recognise and acknowledge the legitimate interests and aspirations of the governments and peoples of Africa and hope to continue to work with them for the attainment of shared objectives. While we will maintain a correct diplomatic relationship with South Africa, we are completely opposed to the system of apartheid.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{37} See Goldsworthy, op. cit., pp. 55 & 60-1.
General Assembly in 1976, Australia did not support a resolution advocating the use of violence to overthrow the minority regime in South Africa.\textsuperscript{38}

Also, with reference to sporting contacts with South Africa, the Fraser government did not favour a total boycott. Foreign Minister Peacock explained that the government would permit contacts, subject to reasonable conditions, which would encourage change in South Africa.\textsuperscript{39} Meanwhile, the Prime Minister supported the visits to Australia by individual South African sports people, such as cricketers playing in the World Series competition. Fraser argued that these people were clearly prepared to play in multi-racial competitions.\textsuperscript{40}

These qualifications to the continuity thesis gave the impression of subtly altered emphasis by Fraser in government policy toward the minority regimes in southern Africa. It was probably unfair of Goldsworthy to describe the alterations as 'noticeable departures from Whitlam policy' but, on sensitive international issues, these small shifts were important and may have been interpreted as a repudiation of earlier, strictly-enforced policy decisions.\textsuperscript{41}

In conclusion, these issues through 1976 provided Prime Minister Fraser with the opportunity to demonstrate Australia's continuing opposition to the minority regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia. As such, Fraser adopted significant elements of the Whitlam Labor government's agenda on Africa. The continuity in many areas of Australia's position on Africa provided an important starting point for Fraser in international debates on southern Africa. Indeed, the continuity of policies on Africa established a basis for Fraser's active position on southern African issues in the Commonwealth.

\textbf{South Africa and Rhodesia, 1977-78}

Following the initial questions of continuity on Africa, the Fraser government's foreign policy was focused at the Commonwealth Heads of

\textsuperscript{38} Higgott, \textit{Australia and Africa}, op. cit., p. 247. The Whitlam government had voted in favour of such a resolution the previous year.

\textsuperscript{39} Peacock, \textit{CPD, HR}, vol. 98, 4 March 1976, p. 569.

\textsuperscript{40} Fraser quoted in Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 56.

\textsuperscript{41} ibid., p. 60.
Government Meeting in London in 1977. Fraser's opposition to the policies of the minority regimes in southern Africa was displayed in London and was subsequently reinforced at Gleneagles during discussions on sporting contacts with South Africa. At home, Fraser attempted to close the Rhodesian Information Centre while confronting views in support of Rhodesia within the government. Also, the Fraser government had to decide whether to commit to a proposed United Nations force for Namibia. Through involvement in the Commonwealth and activity on related issues, the Fraser government built upon the initial continuity in policies from the Whitlam government. This position provided the context for Fraser's central role at the 1979 CHOGM in Lusaka.

In June 1977, Prime Minister Fraser and Foreign Minister Peacock attended the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London. As a key international forum, the Commonwealth of Nations became the 'major vehicle for promotion and development of Australia's foreign policy interests'. Indeed, Peacock stated that the Commonwealth was the centrepiece of Australia's foreign policy. As explained, Australia was able to adopt a leadership position within the Commonwealth because this forum was considerably smaller than the United Nations General Assembly. Alternatively, it was argued that Australia was able to play a significant role in the Commonwealth because this forum was relatively powerless in world affairs.

The London CHOGM was dominated by issues of racial discrimination and, in particular, by a condemnation of South Africa. In this context, Prime Minister Fraser attacked racism as 'an offence to human decency' and explained that Australia supported measures in opposition to apartheid. Fraser also called for majority rule in Zimbabwe and Namibia which placed the Australian Prime Minister as one of the first leaders to use the language

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43 Peacock quoted in McCarthy, op. cit., p. 343.
44 ibid.
45 Fraser quoted in *National Times*, 23 June 1979. See McCarthy, op. cit., p. 343 and Higgott, ...A Decade of Change and Growth, op. cit., p. 226. See also Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 248; Weller, op. cit., pp. 318-21; Renouf, op. cit., p. 133; and Albinski, op. cit., p. 4.
of the African nationalist movements. These statements and remarks were impressive in showing that some people outside of Africa supported the aspirations of African leaders for equality in terms of human and political rights. As a result, Fraser was invited to visit Zambia when convenient.47

At the time of the London CHOGM, Fraser illustrated the Australian government's theme of a moral concern for human rights, condemnation of apartheid, and demand for majority rule in southern Africa. This rhetoric aligned Fraser with the majority of Commonwealth members. For some of Fraser's allies, the pragmatic concern for security in South Africa and Rhodesia added to the strength of Australia's position. The underlying element in this position was majority rule as the best way to prevent international communist influence in southern Africa.48 For some in the Asia Pacific region, this immediately coincided with an anti-communist agenda. While Fraser did not seem to flaunt this element, it was nonetheless part of the Prime Minister's case, and it proved useful in relation to the anti-communist leaders in the region. Fraser emerged from the London CHOGM as an ardent opponent of racism in Rhodesia and

46 Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 53, Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 248 and McCarthy, op. cit., p. 343. During the London CHOGM, New Zealand Prime Minister Muldoon reminded Fraser that Aboriginal people in Australia lived with disadvantages. This particular criticism of Fraser may have brought the African leaders closer to the Australian Prime Minister as Muldoon was not well regarded in Africa. See McCarthy, op. cit., p. 343.

47 McCarthy, ibid., pp. 343-4. The invitation from Zambia was significant given President Kaunda's key role in southern Africa and within the Commonwealth, in conjunction with President Nyerere of Tanzania. Further, Weller recalled the story from Tony Eggleton, a senior member of the Australian delegation to the London meeting, on the impact of Fraser's statements and the development of personal contacts within the Commonwealth:

[Fraser] made some good interventions in the course of the first morning, about the strategy of warming relations with the Third World. I walked out to have my cup of morning tea and down this grand ornate staircase at Lancaster House came Malcolm. I just had to blink and look again, because there was Michael Manley with his arm around Malcolm, walking down the staircase. He had made a good impression at the start. He emerged from that meeting with a sudden international stature which was never quite appreciated in Australia.

See also Derek Ingram, Anguish over Africa, and Andrew Walker, Tackling world economic problems: Commonwealth conference 1977 - racial conflict, economic challenges and the problem of Uganda, Round Table, no. 267, July 1977 and Andrew Peacock, Australia in the modern Commonwealth, Round Table, no. 271, July 1978.

48 Goldsworthy, op. cit., pp. 54-5. In answering questions during a forum of government ministers at the NSW Liberal Party state convention, Fraser attempted to silence internal critics of the government's policy on Africa by asserting that 'if you want a door opened to communism in Africa, people will then support a racist white minority regime that denies political equality for the great and overwhelming majority'. Fraser quoted in Age, 20 August 1977 also made a personal commitment that:

I will never be persuaded that white people have some inalienable right to rule others because of the color [sic] of their skins. If anyone seeks to dissuade me from the views I hold in relation to southern Africa, I'm afraid I won't change my views because this is one of the issues on which my views are fixed.
South Africa and a champion of the Commonwealth. The meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government offered an international opportunity for Fraser to project a positive image of Australian foreign policy.

In addition, during the retreat at the Gleneagles Hotel in Scotland following the London CHOGM, Fraser supported the reaffirmation of the Commonwealth decision to discourage sporting links with South Africa.\(^4^9\) The Gleneagles Agreement on Sporting Contacts with South Africa was central to the Commonwealth's policy on apartheid.\(^5^0\) The difficulty with the agreement was that each member of the Commonwealth was responsible for interpreting the document in relation to their sporting contacts with South Africa.\(^5^1\) This freedom led to some flexibility in implementing the agreement, including Prime Minister Muldoon's relatively loose reading of the key clauses. Essentially, the success of the Gleneagles agreement relied upon the political will of the Commonwealth members to interpret the document in a strict manner. More importantly, the document was used to preserve the unity of the Commonwealth on the potentially divisive issue of sporting relations with South Africa.\(^5^2\)

Domestically, the Fraser government was faced with the presence and activities of the Rhodesia Information Centre in Sydney. Legislation was drafted to close the Centre in late 1977 in compliance with the United Nations injunction against the minority regime in Rhodesia. However, prior to introduction to the Parliament, it was made known that the legislation would be opposed by some members in the government who were sympathetic to Rhodesia or, separately, were concerned about 'freedom of speech'.\(^5^3\) It was decided within the Fraser government that the draft

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49 Harry, op. cit., p. 96. See also Renouf, op. cit., p. 139. The communique from Gleneagles was written by a small inner group. As New Zealand was the main source of problems, Prime Minister Muldoon was included in the group and Muldoon effectively vetoed Fraser's presence by refusing to participate if Fraser was invited to attend. Weller, op. cit., p. 321.


53 See Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 258. Members of the 'civil liberties' or 'freedom of speech' group included Mel Bungey (Liberal Party; Canning, WA), Don Cameron (LP; Fadden, Qld), Bruce Graham (LP; North Sydney, NSW), John Haslem (LP; Canberra,
legislation should be re-written and this issue remained unresolved at the time of the 1977 federal election.54

Prime Minister Fraser also demonstrated that the entire Liberal and Country Parties government would support the anti-apartheid argument promulgated in London and elsewhere. Following the December 1977 election, Queensland Senator Glenister Shiel was nominated by the Country Party to the ministry but was dropped from the list after the Senate made remarks in defence of apartheid in South Africa and the minority regime in Rhodesia, and indicated approval for an apartheid system for the Aboriginal peoples of Australia.55 The Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs and Deputy Leader of the Country Party, Ian Sinclair angrily rebuked Senator Shiel, stating that:

The Australian Government utterly repudiates and condemns such views . . . . Senator Shiel’s action in making this statement is to be regretted and deplored . . . . Senator Shiel’s views on these matters are entirely personal and are rejected totally by the Australian Government and by the overwhelming majority of Australians.56

In this context, Prime Minister Fraser insisted that apartheid was 'a pernicious and evil doctrine . . . It must be condemned'.57 This issue was important for the image of the Fraser government which was preparing for

ACT), Michael Hodgeman (LP; Denison, Tas), Alan Jarman (LP; Deakin, Vic), Senator Don Jessop (LP; SA), Senator Alan Missen (LP; Vic), Senator Peter Rae (LP; Tas), and Senator Reg Wright (LP; Tas). Members of the 'Rhodesia lobby' included Sam Calder (Country Party; NT), Senator Tom Drake-Brockman (CP; WA), Tom McVeigh (CP; Darling Downs, Qld), Senator Glenister Shiel (CP; Qld), and Senator Ian Wood (LP; Qld). See National Times, 26 September-1 October 1976 and Age, 18 August 1977. For 'freedom of speech' arguments, see Canberra Times, 19 August 1977 and Age, 5 November 1977. See also Higgott, ...Decade of Change and Growth, op. cit., p. 230 and see generally, M. Indyk, Influence without power: the role of the backbench in Australian Foreign Policy, 1976-1977, 20th Conference, Australasian Political Studies Association, Adelaide, 1978.

54 Albinski, op. cit., p. 4. Foreign Minister Peacock explained that the draft legislation was 'too wide in ambit' and that, in accordance with the sanctions voted by the UN Security Council, the government would conform to the international obligations in due course. Peacock’s qualification was that the government would not present legislation to the Parliament that would 'trample over the rights of individual Australians to participate in political matters and express a particular view about Rhodesia'. See questions from Whitlam to Peacock, CPD, HR, vol. 106, 20 September 1977, pp. 1290-1 and CPD, HR, vol. 107, 1 November 1977, pp. 2587-9. See also National Times, 26 September-1 October 1977.


57 Fraser quoted in Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 54.
the Commonwealth Heads of Government Regional Meeting to be held in Sydney in February 1978. The conference may have been boycotted by particular regional leaders if swift action was not taken against Senator Shiel.\textsuperscript{58}

The Fraser government continued to build constructive relations with Africa through the United Nations, particularly on Namibia. As stated, Australia was the only Western country on the UN Council for Namibia and the Decolonisation Committee, and was elected Vice-President of the Council in 1979. Australia supported all UN resolutions on Namibia except, in 1978, the resolutions calling for the recognition of the South West African People's Organisation as the 'sole representative of the Namibian people' and support for the 'armed struggle of the Namibian people'.\textsuperscript{59} Instead, Australia adhered to a Security Council resolution calling for a peaceful resolution and thus provided the voice of moderation in the Council for Namibia. The Fraser government continued to provide a contribution to the UN Fund for Namibia which was small in economic terms but not insignificant in political terms.\textsuperscript{60}

In an important departure, Foreign Minister Peacock stated in August 1978 that Australia would not commit troops to a proposed Namibia Peacekeeping Force.\textsuperscript{61} Essentially, the Fraser government lacked the political will to be involved to this extent in Namibia. However, by February 1979, the Prime Minister announced that Australia was indeed willing to provide an engineering contingent for the proposed UN Transitional Assistance Group in Namibia.\textsuperscript{62} In the end, this initiative did not materialise. It was not clear whether Australia made a genuine commitment of resources and personnel to the UN force or whether Fraser suspected that the Transitional Assistance Group would not gain sufficient support and therefore made a diplomatic victory from the previous negative position. Nevertheless, Australia was seen to take a cautious

\textsuperscript{58} ibid., p. 54-5.

\textsuperscript{59} Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 256.

\textsuperscript{60} ibid.


approach to the allocation of troops to Namibia and, after some debate, decided to contribute a degree of political commitment to a complex African conflict.

In sum, Prime Minister Fraser presented Australia's position on Africa at the 1977 London CHOGM, and subsequently at Gleneagles. These meetings of the Commonwealth provided a forum for Fraser to build personal contacts with African leaders in opposition to the minority regimes in Rhodesia and South Africa. At the same time, Fraser was forced to confront opposing views within the Liberal and Country Parties government, particularly in relation to the proposed closure of the Rhodesia Information Centre in Sydney. Fraser built upon the initial continuity in foreign policy with the Whitlam government by expanding relations with Africa, especially through the Commonwealth. Both the maintenance of Whitlam government policies and the development of foreign policy on Africa through 1977 and 1978 provided a considerable basis for Fraser's participation at the 1979 Lusaka CHOGM.

Rhodesia and the 1979 Lusaka CHOGM

The difficult issue of a political settlement in Rhodesia was prominent in international debates from 1977 to 1980. Negotiations were facilitated, an internal solution was proposed, a referendum was conducted and eventually a general election was held to establish a majority government in the newly proclaimed Zimbabwe. Prime Minister Fraser played an active role in the discussions on Rhodesia, with an emphasis on the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in August 1979 in Lusaka. The timing and agenda of this conference tested the capacity of the Commonwealth to provide effective outcomes to international conflicts.63

Indeed, Fraser's participation was grounded in the initial continuity with the Whitlam government and the constructive work at the 1977 London CHOGM. Fraser was firm in displaying Australia's opposition to the minority regime in Rhodesia and formed alliances in Lusaka with the more radical African leaders. In the end, Fraser's role at the Lusaka CHOGM was a highlight in Australian foreign policy.

63 See Renouf, op. cit., p. 139.
Through 1977, the United States and Britain engaged in discussion on the situation in Rhodesia. By September, the Carter administration, with British support, announced the Anglo-American proposals on Rhodesia. The main elements of this offer were the restoration of the rule of law, a transitional period under British authority, the drafting of a democratic constitution, majority rule with the protection of rights for all citizens, and impartial elections under British supervision and international observation. The Australian position on these proposals was unclear. While the British approach to Rhodesia was essentially the Australian position, the Fraser government was not vocal in supporting the Anglo-American proposals which suggested some reticence in proclaiming support for the details of the plan. Nevertheless, Australia supported the proposals of the United States and Britain some time later.

The confusion on Australia's position was illustrated when an internal settlement was proclaimed in Rhodesia in February 1978. This arrangement excluded the Patriotic Front liberation armies, was not a move toward majority rule in Rhodesia and was not understood as more legitimate than the Unilateral Declaration of Independence of November 1965. The Fraser government may have favoured the internal settlement as a peaceful solution but, more likely, the official silence from Australia reflected a need to wait for both Britain and the United States to clarify their reactions to the Rhodesian outcome, and to gain impressions from Africa, principally Zambia and Tanzania, on the internal settlement. Another option was that Prime Minister Fraser opposed the internal settlement and needed

64 ibid., p. 140. See also Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 62. 
66 Roger Bell, Problems in Australian Foreign Policy, July-December 1979, Australian Journal of Politics and History, vol. 26, 1, 1980, pp. 17-18. While the internal settlement claimed to institute a majority government, the constitution gave the four percent colonial population more than a quarter of all seats in Parliament, various Commissions could by-pass the new Parliament, and African citizens were effectively prevented from holding senior positions in the armed forces, police force or judiciary. See Australian policy on Rhodesia, Background, no. 196, 25 July 1979, pp. 16-19 and see generally, I.R. Hancock, Against the odds: a triumph for the internal settlement in Rhodesia, Australian Outlook, vol. 33, 2, August 1979. 
67 Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 62. See also Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 249. See question regarding internal settlement in Rhodesia from Wheeldon to Withers, Minister representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, CPD, Senate, vol. 76, 7 March 1978, p. 353. On support for the internal settlement within the Liberal Party, see Higgott, ...A Decade of Change and Growth, op. cit., p. 230, Canberra Times, 5 August 1979 and Australian, 1 August 1979.
some time to convince a majority in the Liberal and Country Parties government that Australia should be critical of an arrangement which did not accord with Fraser's understanding of majority rule. By late 1978, the details of Australia's international stance on Rhodesia were important in the prelude to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting planned for August 1979.

In the context of the continuing guerilla war, political events in Rhodesia appeared to be deteriorating. As a result, elections previously planned for December 1978 were postponed until 20 April 1979.68 In late 1978, Foreign Minister Peacock explained that the internal settlement in Rhodesia had not brought about a ceasefire or conditions in which free and fair elections could be held and that the Australian government accordingly believed that it was unrealistic to expect the ceasefire to be effective unless all the parties were involved.69 Further, Peacock addressed the United Nations General Assembly in October 1978 to state that:

> the Australian government would continue to support efforts for a peaceful settlement in Zimbabwe which provides for majority rule and independence. We believe that the Anglo-American proposals on Zimbabwe still provide the best available basis for such a settlement.70

The Foreign Minister was clear in expressing that Australia advocated the need for majority rule in Rhodesia. On this issue, the Fraser government was aligning with the African leaders in refusing to entertain more limited options and, to a large extent, was maintaining the international pressure on Rhodesia.

As a prelude to the scheduled elections, a majority of voters in Rhodesia, within the limited franchise, endorsed the need for majority rule through a referendum on 30 January 1979. This result averted the immediate collapse of the Ian Smith-Bishop Muzorewa interim government. The next task was to hold elections with a complete franchise of more than six million African voters and 250000 other voters. The elections would be conducted despite of the violent opposition of the Patriotic Front liberation armies led by Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo.71

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68 McCarthy, op. cit., p. 306.
The April 1979 Rhodesian elections were observed by international representatives, including an unofficial delegation from the Australian Parliament. These observers claimed that the elections were free and fair but others, primarily the United States representative to the United Nations, Andrew Young vehemently disagreed. The more critical position claimed that the elections were not sufficient to ensure majority rule despite the situation that Bishop Muzorewa now led the government.\(^72\) This approach also implied that sanctions would be maintained in an attempt to coerce the Rhodesian government to implement greater reform.

While debate continued over the implications of the Rhodesian election, the Thatcher government was elected on 3 May 1979 in Britain. The view of this government on Rhodesia was unknown. There could have been some support for the previous minority government forces in Rhodesia, with others offering pragmatic support for the Muzorewa regime in recognition of the need for a peaceful outcome. The personal views of Prime Minister Thatcher were unclear and, at the time, the authority of Thatcher could have dismantled any progress on political reform in Rhodesia. Nevertheless, at the insistence of the British Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington, diplomatic efforts with the United States were reignited in relation to the principles of the Anglo-American proposals.\(^73\)

Meanwhile, Fraser was faced with opposition from within the government in relation to Australia's policy on Rhodesia, similar to the opposition to legislation to close the Rhodesia Information Centre.\(^74\) Indeed, it seemed that Fraser and Peacock were advocating policies more progressive than the position adopted by some in the Labor Party. Similar to the critique emerging from the Liberal dissenters, Labor Senator Wheeldon favoured the earlier internal settlement and recognition of the Muzorewa government.\(^75\)

Despite the differing opinions in the domestic debate, the Fraser government announced in July 1979 that Australia would not recognise the new government of Bishop Muzorewa and that Australia would maintain

\(^{72}\) ibid., p. 307. Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 249, explained that the basis for the Australian position, and for others including the US, was that recognition of the government led by Bishop Muzorewa, but controlled by the Rhodesian Front of Ian Smith, would not end the guerrilla war and would provide the opportunity for further Soviet involvement in southern Africa.

\(^{73}\) Renouf, op. cit., pp. 140-1.

\(^{74}\) Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., pp. 258.

\(^{75}\) See Wheeldon, CPD, Senate, vol. 82, 28 August 1979, pp. 282-9.
sanctions against the government of Rhodesia. Significantly, Bishop Muzorewa had expressed a willingness to request assistance from South African troops to defeat the Patriotic Front. Nevertheless, Fraser appeared to be influenced by the position of the Carter administration, although the Australian stance had been clear for some time under Fraser and Peacock. The Australian policy also reflected a desire to align with, and a commitment to support, the African states in the Commonwealth. Moreover, Prime Minister Fraser was attempting to provide support for the idea of a new settlement plan for Rhodesia to be debated at the Lusaka CHOGM.

In contrast, the Thatcher government foreshadowed that Britain would recognise the Muzorewa regime. Interestingly, Prime Minister Thatcher did not immediately provide legitimacy to the Rhodesian regime upon assuming office. The foreshadowing of recognition provided time for Lord Carrington to dispatch emissary Lord Harlech to Africa in June and July 1979. The emissary reported that there was some potential for reform in Rhodesia and this news apparently made an impression on Thatcher.

As the Lusaka Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting drew closer, Fraser and Peacock focused their energies on gaining a more acceptable and restructured outcome in Rhodesia. The Prime Minister liaised with Jamaican Prime Minister Michael Manley on the necessary discussions to be arranged prior to the CHOGM. To this end, Fraser organised talks with Prime Minister Thatcher in Canberra prior to the conference. Over several hours, Fraser apparently shifted Thatcher's view to consider negotiations on Rhodesia, while Thatcher continued to publicly proclaim the contrary position. Thus, Fraser held confidential information about Thatcher's capacity to shift on Rhodesia with which to reassure other Commonwealth leaders that a constructive and alternate outcome could be manufactured in Lusaka.

The first task for Fraser was to write to the Commonwealth leaders to outline a plan for Lusaka. This four-point plan was to provide a lead into a

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76 See David Goldsworthy, Zimbabwe: a question the West must face, Age, 16 July 1979. See also Age, editorial, 26 July 1979 and Rolf Hasse, Why economic sanctions always fail- the case of Rhodesia, Interconomics, no. 7/8, July/August 1978.
77 R. Bell, op. cit., p. 17.
78 Renouf, op. cit., p. 141.
79 Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 249.
revised settlement in Rhodesia, and asked the conference to:

- recognise the Muzorewa government as a transitional step only;
- acknowledge the need for constitutional changes which would give the majority greater access to power;
- recognise the need for change without permitting small details to hinder progress;
- and appreciate that a lasting settlement depends on broad acceptance by African states.81

The conciliatory tone of this proposal would have appealed to Britain which would thereby not oppose this form of settlement while providing a starting point for the African leaders to involve the resistance groups in Rhodesia.

Further to the letters, Fraser and Peacock met with several African leaders prior to the meeting in Lusaka.82 Given Australia’s international position on Rhodesia and Fraser’s personal efforts on the issue, the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister were welcomed by the African leaders. In particular, Fraser travelled to Nigeria to talk with General Obasanjo.83 This was an important meeting because General Obasanjo would not be attending the CHOGM due to an impending presidential election.84

Also, Peacock conducted separate discussions with representatives of the British government and the Rhodesian government in London, and with the leaders of the Tanzanian and Kenyan governments.85 At these discussions, both Fraser and Peacock confirmed that Australia would not recognise the Muzorewa government in Rhodesia.86 The efforts of Fraser and Peacock were rewarded with a seat for Australia on the small Steering Committee established to organise proceedings at Lusaka.87

The accumulation of Fraser’s efforts prior to the Lusaka CHOGM provides evidence that the Australian Prime Minister played a significant role in the

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81 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 July 1979 and *Age*, 26 July 1979. See also R. Bell, op. cit., p. 18.
83 See *Age*, 1 August 1979 and Weller, op. cit., p. 326.
84 Instead, the Foreign Affairs Commissioner, General Adefobe represented Nigeria in Lusaka and participated in all deliberations at the CHOGM. See Derek Ingram, Lusaka 1979: A Significant Commonwealth Meeting, *Round Table*, no. 276, October 1979, p. 279.
87 Renouf, op. cit., p. 141.
negotiation process on Rhodesia. Fraser ensured that Australia projected a policy which opposed the minority regime of Rhodesia and offered a critique of the internal settlement and subsequent election of Bishop Muzorewa. For Fraser, these events did not provide a sufficient model of majority rule in Rhodesia. In terms of the work conducted before the Lusaka meeting, Fraser acted in a prominent role which was instrumental in achieving a breakthrough on the Rhodesia issue.

As expected, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Lusaka from 1 to 7 August 1979 was dominated by the Rhodesia issue. The meeting centred on the continuing conflict in Rhodesia and the need to secure constitutional change and new elections in order to ensure majority rule. Also at Lusaka, there was a fear that the health of the Commonwealth was under threat if British Prime Minister Thatcher unilaterally recognised the Muzorewa government in Rhodesia. This act would have split the Commonwealth leaders and could have caused irreparable damage to the forum.

In an address at the opening session of the meeting, Prime Minister Fraser stressed that the Commonwealth should proceed with moderation and compromise on the issue of Rhodesia in order to provide an equitable solution. This approach did not resile from the principles of racial equality:

The issues involved in Southern Africa, and in particular in Zimbabwe, are enormously complex ones. They present different member States with different problems, both domestic and international . . .

Formidable as the differences on some issues are, I believe that . . . they are differences about means and timing, not about ends. We must not allow means to dominate ends.

. . . Mr. President, I think it is clear that if a non-violent solution to the problem of Zimbabwe is to be found it must involve flexibility on all sides - flexibility not about the objective of a non-racialist society, but concerning the process of arriving at that objective and the individual interests of the principals. Compromise and moderation should be seen not merely in terms of establishing a bridge between different positions. They should be seen as positive values in their own right - the essential values both of democratic politics and of peaceful relationships between States which are simultaneously sovereign and interdependent. There is an urgent need to rally and invigorate the forces of

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88 Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 249. See also Higgott, ...A Decade of Change and Growth, op. cit., p. 227.
Nawhar, M.E.K., A Useful CHok!i: Lusaka 1979, Australian Outlook, 92, 3, 1988
moderation and reasonableness in international affairs. We should advocate and proclaim moderation not apologetically and out of expediency, but confidently - even passionately - as a matter of fundamental principle. If we do so, the bridges are likely to emerge of their own accord.

Mr. President and fellow delegates, it is our solemn duty at this meeting to contribute positively to the search for comprehensive, equitable and peaceful solutions to the problems of this region. At the end of the day it is vital that we will have reached agreement among ourselves which will enable constructive negotiation and consultation to proceed.89

This impassioned appeal to the Heads of Governments revealed Fraser's agenda for the meeting in attempting to bring the divergent interests in Rhodesia to an acceptable outcome.

The Commonwealth Secretary-General, Shridath Ramphal suggested the establishment of a small contact group to work on the Rhodesia issue during the Lusaka meeting. The obvious participants in the group, namely Kaunda (Zambia), Nyerere (Tanzania), Thatcher (Britain) and Manley (Jamaica), with Ramphal, agreed that Nigeria and Australia should be invited into the group.90 It was important to include Nigeria in order to gain African approval for any outcome, even when President Obasanjo was not in Lusaka, and Fraser had been vocal on Rhodesia and was perceived as a useful linkage within the group.91

In addition to forming the contact group, the Secretary-General specifically asked Fraser to play a mediation role between the new British Prime Minister and the African leaders.92 Thus, in the morning before the contact

89 Prime Minister Fraser, Address at opening session of CHOGM, 2 August 1979, in Backgrounder, no. 198, 8 August 1979, Annex pp. i-iii. See also Weller, op. cit., pp. 327-8. It seems that Rhodesia was transformed into Zimbabwe following the elections in April 1979. Both names for the country were used through 1979-80 with an indication of the political persuasion of any speaker denoted by their use of either Rhodesia, to signify the value of the past, or Zimbabwe, to note the value of majority rule. Through 1979, Rhodesia was the most common nomenclature in international debates which provided added impact for Prime Minister Fraser when consistently using the name of Zimbabwe. See also Peacock, Address to the United Nations General Assembly, 29 September 1976, op. cit., p. 5 and Peacock, Statement to the United Nations General Assembly, 6 October 1978, op. cit., p. vii. For the reason of accuracy, I have defined the point for changing nomenclature from Rhodesia to Zimbabwe as the February 1980 election.

90 National Times, 18 August 1979. See also Derek Ingram, Lusaka 1979: A Significant Commonwealth Meeting, Round Table, no. 276, October 1979, p. 278 and Sydney Morning Herald, 6 August 1979.

91 Indeed, Australia's role was crucial in the absence of a strong lead from Canada. Ingram, op. cit., p. 278. See also Sydney Morning Herald, 6 August 1979.

92 National Times, 18 August 1979. See also National Times, 11 August 1979.
group met, Fraser talked with Nyerere and, separately, with Thatcher to
gauge the level of flexibility in their respective positions. With Thatcher,
Fraser needed to establish whether Britain would agree to new elections
with a new constitution in Rhodesia. The mediation process appeared to
provide the context for a significant shift in position by Thatcher,
notwithstanding Fraser's prior knowledge of Thatcher's propensity for
change from their previous meeting in Canberra. Fraser was able to play the
role of mediator effectively because the Australian Prime Minister was
closer to the African position than to the British position, and thereby Fraser
had the confidence of Kaunda and Nyerere.93

Following Fraser's consultations, the contact group was able to agree on a
nine-point program for Rhodesia.94 This outcome implied that Thatcher
had conceded the requirement for a new constitution and new elections in
Rhodesia and that Nyerere had agreed to convince the Patriotic Front on the
need for a ceasefire. Also, the agreement signalled Nigeria's compliance
with the position of Zambia and Tanzania.95

For the Commonwealth as a whole, the agreed outcome was a significant
achievement. Until the last moment, there remained significant doubt on
Thatcher's willingness to negotiate on Rhodesia and therefore on the ability
of the Commonwealth Heads of Government to influence the most
important issue of the time. The role of Fraser was central to this outcome
and there were several reasons for Fraser's success as a mediator in Lusaka.

First, Fraser's position within the Commonwealth was built upon a high
level of goodwill generated through Australia's relations with Africa. This
included the policies of the Whitlam government, Fraser's consistent
opposition to apartheid, and Fraser's constructive role at the 1977 CHOGM

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93 See Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 249 and Coral Bell, Mr Fraser and Australian
Foreign Policy, *World Today*, vol. 35, October 1979, p. 414. See also Age, editorial, 26 July
1979.
94 Ingram, Lusaka 1979..., op. cit., p. 279, claimed that the group concluded
on the plan 'in
little more than an hour on the Saturday morning of the weekend retreat at Lusaka's State
House'.
95 After complaining that nothing had changed in Rhodesia since 1977 and again hinting
that Nigeria was reconsidering its position in the Commonwealth, General Adefobe
appeared to agree with Kaunda and Nyerere on the need for a negotiated outcome on
Rhodesia. Incidentally, on the eve of the Lusaka CHOGM, Nigeria had announced the
nationalisation of BP assets to the fury of Britain's Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary,
Lord Carrington. ibid., pp. 279-80.
in London. This goodwill translated into a level of credibility for Fraser with the African leaders in Lusaka.96

Second, a major ingredient in Fraser's successful mediating role was the Australian Prime Minister's friendship with the Jamaican Prime Minister Michael Manley. This unlikely alliance arose from Fraser's position in support of the developing countries' demands for international economic change, especially in relation to the proposed Common Fund. Manley also saw Fraser as both a passionate anti-racist and a conservative leader. This combination made Fraser a useful ally and credible actor with African leaders and with Britain.97

Third, Fraser's mediation was assisted by knowledge, attained in meetings with Prime Minister Thatcher in Canberra prior to the Lusaka CHOGM, that Britain may be prepared to negotiate on an alternative settlement in Rhodesia. This information, and the recent history of long discussions with Thatcher, helped Fraser in reassuring the African leaders about Britain's position and in securing Thatcher's support for a negotiated outcome for Rhodesia.98

Fourth, from the collection of Commonwealth leaders gathered at Lusaka, Fraser was the only participant capable of gaining significant concessions from Thatcher. Further to the value of holding knowledge about Britain's position on Rhodesia, Fraser was seen to be a conservative leader, similar to Prime Minister Thatcher in terms of domestic economic outlook, and anti-communist like Thatcher in relation to southern Africa. Moreover, Secretary-General Ramphal explained that 'Malcolm Fraser was the only leader from the older Commonwealth countries that could help us bridge the gap between the old and the new, between Africa and Britain'.99 A more appropriate mediator could not have been found in the circumstances of the Lusaka CHOGM and the issue of Rhodesia.

Somewhat surprisingly, Fraser leaked details of the outcome on Rhodesia to the Australian press prior to agreement from all the Heads of Government. In fact, Tony Eggleton, federal director of the Liberal Party and senior

96 In fact, Patriotic Front leaders had discussions with Peacock which demonstrated a degree of trust in the Australian delegation in Lusaka. Higgott, ...A Decade of Change and Growth, op. cit., p. 228.
99 Ramphal quoted in Weller, op. cit, p. 325.
member of the Australian delegation, revealed the information to several Australian journalists. Understandably, Prime Ministers Thatcher and Muldoon were angry about the leak.

Fraser’s motive in prematurely releasing the agreement was based in a combination of objectives. The immediate allegation was that the leak was designed to promote Fraser’s involvement in negotiating the document on Rhodesia. More likely, the leak was intended to secure any reluctant Commonwealth leaders such as Prime Ministers Thatcher and Muldoon. Further, Fraser seemed to be the most appropriate leader to leak the details. That is, Kaunda and Nyerere were not critical of Fraser’s actions which suggested some approval for the timing and method of the leak. Also, it was more difficult for Thatcher to berate Fraser and the Australian press than the African leaders and the African press. Again, Fraser’s position as an anti-racist and conservative participant proved useful to the Commonwealth.

The Lusaka CHOGM produced a lengthy communique. On southern Africa, the communique stated that:

Heads of Government had a frank discussion on the current problems of southern Africa and their implications for the Commonwealth and the wider international community. While recognising that certain developments since their meeting in London have added new dimensions, they remained concerned by the potential dangers inherent in the existing situation. They therefore stressed the urgent need for finding satisfactory solutions to the remaining problems of this region.

On the situation in Rhodesia, the Heads of Government:

a. confirmed that they were wholly committed to genuine black majority rule for the people of Zimbabwe;
b. recognised, in this context, that the internal settlement constitution is defective in certain important respects;

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100 National Times, 18 August 1979. See also Higgott, ...A Decade of Change and Growth, op. cit., p. 228 and Age, 8 August 1979.
101 Renouf, op. cit., p. 142, Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 250 and Weller, op. cit., pp. 329-30. Muldoon’s anger was manufactured given the New Zealand Prime Minister had leaked the details of the outcome to two New Zealand journalists the previous night. National Times, 18 August 1979.
102 The communique included a section on southern Africa, part of which was released on 5 August, and referred to the Lusak Declaration of the Commonwealth on Racism and Racial Prejudice which was released on 7 August. See full text of the final communique and the Lusaka Declaration in Backgrounder, no. 198, 8 August 1979, Annex pp. xi-xxvi.
c. fully accepted that it is the constitutional responsibility of the British Government to grant legal independence to Zimbabwe on the basis of majority rule;
d. recognised that the search for a lasting settlement must involve all parties to the conflict;
e. were deeply conscious of the urgent need to achieve such a settlement and bring peace to the people of Zimbabwe and their neighbours;
f. accepted that independence on the basis of majority rule requires the adoption of a democratic constitution including appropriate safeguards for minorities;
g. acknowledged that the government formed under such an independence constitution must be chosen through free and fair elections, properly supervised under British Government authority, and with Commonwealth observers;
h. welcomed the British Government’s indication that an appropriate procedure for advancing towards these objectives would be for them to call a constitutional conference to which all the parties would be invited; and
i. consequently, accepted that it must be a major objective to bring about a cessation of hostilities and an end to sanctions as part of the process of implementation of a lasting settlement.103

This outcome on Rhodesia accorded with the aims of the African Commonwealth leaders, and the views of Fraser, while the details also reflected the objectives of the Patriotic Front. In this case, it seemed that the other Commonwealth leaders agreed, or were convinced to agree, with the African agenda. Certainly, the proposed conference to be convened by Britain and the recognition of the need for a new constitution and new elections in Rhodesia were significant outcomes for the Lusaka CHOGM.

The communique also endorsed the Lusaka Declaration of the Commonwealth on Racism and Racial Prejudice which focused on South Africa. Importantly, the committee which drafted this Declaration was chaired by the Australian Foreign Minister:104

The peoples of the Commonwealth have the right to live freely in dignity and equality, without any distinction or exclusion based on race, colour, sex, descent, or national or ethnic origin.

We reject as inhuman and intolerable all policies designed to perpetuate apartheid, racial segregation or other policies based on theories that racial groups are or may be inherently superior or inferior.

103 Lusaka Communique, ibid., pp. xv-xvi.
104 See Age, 8 August 1979.
We reaffirm that it is the duty of all peoples of the Commonwealth to work together for the total eradication of the infamous policy of apartheid which is internationally recognised as a crime against the conscience and dignity of mankind and the very existence of which is an affront to humanity.105

For an internationally agreed document, the Lusaka Declaration employed extremely strong language to condemn the system of apartheid. The Declaration was also important in reconfirming the commitment of the Commonwealth to isolate South Africa while apartheid remained.

In addition, the Commonwealth was critical of South Africa's administration of Namibia:

Heads of Government deplored South Africa's continued refusal to implement the relevant Security Council Resolutions providing for Namibia's independence... They commended the positive response of those Commonwealth Governments which had been requested by the Secretary-General to provide military or civilian personnel as part of the proposed UN Transitional Assistance Group for Namibia.106

In total, the Communique provided a clear direction from the Commonwealth on complex and protracted political issues.107 In addition, it appeared that Prime Minister Fraser achieved long-held objectives in the negotiated outcome on Rhodesia.

Immediately after the Lusaka CHOGM, the press in Australia lauded Fraser's mediating role between the Commonwealth leaders and attributed the Zimbabwe settlement as a major diplomatic achievement for the Fraser government.108 For example, Stuart Simson in the National Times claimed that:

105 See Lusaka Declaration..., op. cit., p. xi. See also Lusaka Communique, section 16, op. cit., p. xvi.
106 Lusaka Communique, ibid., pp. xvi.
107 Harry, op. cit., p. 96 and Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 250. Among other initiatives, the Heads of Government agreed to convene a committee under Heinz Arndt from the Australian National University to examine international trade issues. See also Bell, Mr Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 420, Age, 8 August 1979 and see generally, Ingram, Lusaka 1979..., op. cit.
Malcolm Fraser's ambition to become a genuinely influential international figure is now closer to realisation than ever before. This is the significance of Lusaka where Fraser's determination at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting was instrumental in the compromise agreement over the future of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia.\textsuperscript{109}

In the atmosphere of the congratulations from the press, Fraser was modest in explaining the Australian delegation's role at Lusaka. In a ministerial statement to the Parliament, Fraser praised the role of Prime Minister Thatcher in reaffirming Britain's unqualified commitment to the goal of majority government in Rhodesia and recognised the important contributions of the leaders of Zambia and Tanzania:

President Kaunda and President Nyerere showed a restraint and patience, and a confidence in the British Government which were an essential element in creating the trust necessary for agreement and progress.\textsuperscript{110}

Fraser's role as mediator between Thatcher and the African leaders was understated and did not need to be expanded because this aspect had been highlighted by the Australian press.

In relation to the proposed solution, Fraser explained to the Parliament, especially to the members of the Liberal and Country Parties, that an end to the conflict was essential. Indeed, the Prime Minister argued that an intensification of the violence in Zimbabwe would lead to more involvement by communist countries in supplying arms to the forces in opposition to the Muzorewa regime.\textsuperscript{111}

Significantly, Hayden commended Fraser on the position adopted at the Lusaka CHOGM. The Labor Party leader conceded that Fraser's role in the negotiation process was impressive, constructive and important.\textsuperscript{112}

Further to this praise, Fraser's leadership position within the government seemed to be strengthened at a time of discontent from the backbenches on Australia's approach to southern Africa. Indeed, prior to Lusaka, there were suggestions of a leadership challenge from Peacock.\textsuperscript{113} However, because

\textsuperscript{109} National Times, 18 August 1979.

\textsuperscript{110} Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 115, 23 August 1979, p. 577.

\textsuperscript{111} Fraser, CPD, HR, vol. 115, 23 August 1979, p. 579.

\textsuperscript{112} Hayden, CPD, HR, vol. 115, 23 August 1979, p. 581. See also R. Bell, op. cit., p. 18.

\textsuperscript{113} See National Times, 11 August 1979.
Thatcher endorsed the outcome on Rhodesia as mediated by Fraser, the opponents of Fraser within the Liberal and Country Parties government were momentarily silenced.\textsuperscript{114}

Given the apparent success of Fraser at Lusaka, it was disappointing for the Prime Minister to gain little public reward for the government from the electorate. African issues remained a low priority in domestic debates.\textsuperscript{115} The venture in Lusaka implied that ambitious and progressive foreign policy options were only viable when the government held a secure majority in the Parliament and a federal election was not due. Indeed, Fraser may have been forced to alter Australia's approach on Zimbabwe if the Lusaka meeting had coincided with an election campaign.

The importance of the Lusaka CHOGM in the Zimbabwe settlement may have been overstated by the participants and the press. It was argued that the Commonwealth meeting merely finalised an agreement which had been brokered elsewhere and that greater credit should have been allocated to the diplomatic work of Britain and the United States.\textsuperscript{116} This position contradicted the praise heaped upon Prime Minister Fraser for the work apparently completed through the Commonwealth, especially in Lusaka.

Upon reflection, Lord Carrington provided the catalyst role in the process of the Zimbabwe settlement where Fraser acted to moderate the differences in the Commonwealth.\textsuperscript{117} Certainly, the timing of the CHOGM in 1979 placed pressure on Britain to hasten toward a satisfactory resolution. The British government was wary of international condemnation in Lusaka. Also, without the concessions on Zimbabwe granted by Thatcher, or the constructive work of Tanzanian President Nyerere among the African leaders, the Fraser initiatives would have failed.\textsuperscript{118} However, these qualifications do not devalue the long-term role played by Fraser, and Peacock, on Zimbabwe. Fraser's initiatives to bring the Commonwealth leaders to a point of agreement was crucial for the outcome.

At the international level, the Lusaka agreement provided the basis for a meeting of Zimbabwe groups at Lancaster House in London in September-

\textsuperscript{114} See *National Times*, 18 August 1979.
\textsuperscript{115} Higgott, *Australia and Africa*, op. cit., p. 259 and Higgott, *...A Decade of Change and Growth*, op. cit., p. 231.
\textsuperscript{116} Renouf, op. cit., p. 139.
\textsuperscript{117} Renouf, ibid., p. 142, quoted Cyrus Vance in stating that Fraser played a powerful role in moderating the differences at Lusaka.
\textsuperscript{118} R. Bell, op. cit., p. 18.
October-November 1979. The central characters were representatives of the Patriotic Front, namely Nkomo and Mugabe, the Zimbabwe government including Muzorewa, and the British Foreign Minister Lord Carrington acting as facilitator. These negotiations eventually produced the course of action which had been proposed in Lusaka. The parties agreed to a cease-fire which would permit new elections under the supervision of a British Governor and a Commonwealth monitoring force. Australia’s role at the Lancaster House meeting was to again mediate between the old and new Commonwealth members through the Australian High Commissioner in London.

With a significant breakthrough agreed in London, Australia decided to follow Britain in lifting sanctions against Zimbabwe. The Fraser government asserted that:

with signature of an all-parties settlement and British authority re-established in Rhodesia, the Australian Government can be satisfied that the objectives for which sanctions were imposed have been achieved. The Australian Government will therefore now take the necessary steps to remove sanctions against Rhodesia.

For Fraser, the lifting of sanctions against Rhodesia at the time of an agreement between all parties in London conformed to the Lusaka communique which referred to the need for 'an end to sanctions as part of the process of implementation of a lasting settlement'. Other governments decided to maintain the sanctions until the elections were held. On this, the Fraser government aligned Australia with Britain on the issue of sanctions which was different from the previous position in support of the African nations. Fraser appeared to placate Prime Minister

119 See ibid. and Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 251.
120 R. Bell, op. cit., p. 18, Higgott, Australia and Africa, op. cit., p. 251, and Higgott, ...A Decade of Change and Growth, op. cit., p. 228. The Australian High Commissioner was Gordon Freeth.
121 See statement on Rhodesia, 18 December 1979, in Backgrounder, no. 217, 16 January 1980, p. ii. See also Sydney Morning Herald, 19 December 1979. Previously, Peacock had signalled that, if the talks were successful, Australia would lift sanctions and provide a contingent for a ceasefire monitoring force. Peacock, Ministerial statement: Rhodesia, CPD, HR, vol. 116, 22 November 1979, pp. 3386-9. However, Lionel Bowen was cautious on the proposal to lift sanctions while the Rhodesian armed forces continued to cross into Zambia to sabotage key installations, such as the destruction of the Chambesi River bridge. Essentially, Bowen wanted to provide support for President Kaunda in Zambia by maintaining sanctions on Rhodesia for a longer period. Bowen, CPD, HR, vol. 116, 22 November 1979, pp. 3389-91. See also Statement on Rhodesia, Backgrounder, no. 213, 21 November 1979, pp. ii-iii, Sydney Morning Herald, 23 November 1979, including editorial, and R. Bell, op. cit., p. 19.
122 Lusaka Communique, op. cit., p. xvi.
Thatcher with the early removal of sanctions and may have succumbed to the business-based Rhodesia lobby in Australia.\textsuperscript{123}

As part of the implementation of the Lancaster House agreement, Australia contributed a contingent of 150 Army personnel to the Commonwealth Military Cease-fire Monitoring Force. These troops began duty in Zimbabwe in December 1979 and remained until March 1980.\textsuperscript{124} The objective of the Commonwealth Force was to monitor rather than attempt to enforce the cease-fire. Again, this constructive international activity by the Fraser government attracted little attention, and thereby little opposition, in Australia.\textsuperscript{125}

In February 1980, the supervised elections in Zimbabwe resulted in an overwhelming majority for the party led by Robert Mugabe.\textsuperscript{126} In April, Rhodesia became the independent state of Zimbabwe and was admitted to the United Nations. Prime Minister Fraser was a welcome guest at the independence celebrations.\textsuperscript{127} Subsequently, in July 1980, the Fraser government doubled Australian economic aid to Zimbabwe to $10 million over two years.\textsuperscript{128}

\textsuperscript{123} R. Bell, op. cit., p. 19.

\textsuperscript{125} Smith, op. cit., p. 50.


\textsuperscript{127} Stockwin, op. cit., p. 349 and Harry, op. cit., p. 83.

In conclusion, the Fraser government’s position on Rhodesia centred on the Prime Minister’s role before and during the CHOGM in Lusaka in August 1979. Prior to the meeting, Fraser shifted the position of Prime Minister Thatcher in relation to Britain’s view of the internal settlement in Rhodesia and Fraser built upon the personal relationships with key African leaders. At the Lusaka meeting, Fraser’s role in mediating between Thatcher and the African leaders was crucial to the negotiated Commonwealth outcome. After the meeting, Fraser continued to support the process of a peaceful transition into elections in Rhodesia. Fraser ensured that Australia was consistent in opposing the minority regime in Rhodesia while playing a significant role in the international negotiations on a settlement in Rhodesia. Further, Fraser was an important actor in maintaining Australia’s anti-racist and anti-colonial posture in international affairs through the Commonwealth forum and thereby with key African countries.

South Africa and the Commonwealth, 1980-83

By late 1980, the international context had changed with the conflicts in Iran and Afghanistan, and the election of Reagan as United States President. This combination of events heralded a renewed security agenda in world politics. While Fraser embraced this change, the Prime Minister continued to provide explicit support for the Commonwealth and continued to oppose the apartheid regime in South Africa. Thus, as host of the 1981 CHOGM in Melbourne, Fraser ensured that the outcome of this meeting offered support for the developing countries and opposed apartheid. Similarly, as organiser of the 1982 Commonwealth Games in Brisbane, Fraser mediated between the renegade New Zealand government and the African members to stage a successful event. In both examples, Prime Minister Fraser traded on an established standing within the Commonwealth as a fierce opponent of apartheid and explicit supporter of Africa.

This approach formed the background to the preparations for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting scheduled for Melbourne in September-October 1981. The Melbourne CHOGM again focused on southern Africa and the Heads of Government condemned apartheid and

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129 For example, Australia sent two representatives to the Commonwealth observer team to monitor elections in Uganda in December 1980. The Fraser government also contributed toward the cost of the elections. Lim, op. cit., p. 14.
the minority government of South Africa. In addition, the Commonwealth expressed concern about continuing international economic debates. Prime Minister Fraser managed to emerge from the Melbourne CHOGM with an enhanced credibility as an international leader.

Immediately prior to the Melbourne CHOGM, the Fraser government increased the level of Australian aid by 15.8 percent in the 1981-82 budget. This increase contrasted with the continual decline in Australian aid through the late 1970s. The aid increase was a political attempt to ensure the success of the Melbourne CHOGM and in particular, it was a gesture to boost Prime Minister Fraser's standing as the apprehensive host of the Commonwealth meeting. Moreover, Renouf claimed that the obviously timed decision to provide more money to Commonwealth countries illustrated Fraser's method of conducting diplomacy with developing countries.

To host the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Melbourne was the climax in Fraser's efforts to build the Commonwealth into a major international organisation. The CHOGM was the largest international meeting ever held in Australia with the attendance of 42 Heads of Commonwealth governments. The purpose of this meeting was to recommit the Commonwealth to a number of key issues and to reinforce the prestige of the Australian Prime Minister within the Commonwealth, particularly in terms of restating Fraser's commitment on questions of southern Africa. Prior to the meeting, there was some jousting among Prime Ministers Muldoon, Mugabe, Thatcher and Fraser which raised interest in the deliberations. In the end, the Melbourne CHOGM reinforced the high standing of Fraser within the Commonwealth.

As a guide to the content of discussions during the Melbourne meeting, the CHOGM Communique was a substantial document which outlined, at

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130 Eldridge, op. cit., p. 2. With a different method of calculation, Renouf, op. cit., p. 149 claimed that there was an 18 percent increase in real terms in the 1981-82 budget.

131 Renouf, ibid., p. 150, explained that:

almost invariably, before the Prime Minister attended a meeting dominated numerically by developing countries, [Fraser] would direct that a packet of 'goodies' be put together for presentation. Possibly, the developing countries were impressed with Australia's new generosity. More likely, some at least regarded [Australia] as pretentious and patronising.

length, the Commonwealth position on many international topics. Some of the words used in the Communique revealed the influence of Prime Minister Fraser. In a self-congratulatory tone on Zimbabwe, the Communique stated that:

Heads of Government recalled with particular satisfaction the Commonwealth's role in helping to bring Zimbabwe to independence under majority rule following their Meeting in Lusaka. They were encouraged by this demonstration of the contribution their Meetings could make to the resolution of long-standing international problems.

The Commonwealth leaders reaffirmed their 'total and unequivocal condemnation of apartheid as a crime against humanity' and resolved to act against the minority regime in South Africa.

The Heads of Government also reaffirmed their Gleneagles Agreement of 1977 which restricted sporting contact with South Africa. Prime Minister Muldoon threatened to withdraw from the Gleneagles Agreement if New Zealand was subject to further boycotts or attacks on the issue. Indeed, Muldoon clashed with Mugabe and departed early from the conference.

It was a show of support for Fraser from Nyerere and Mugabe that the clash with Muldoon did not divert the conference. As Higgott documented, the diplomatic course chosen by the African leaders was 'due in no small part to the high regard in which they held Malcolm Fraser and their desire not to detract from a conference into which Fraser had put so much effort and personal capital'. Further, Mugabe refused to raise the cause of the

133 The Communique was agreed by all attending members of the Commonwealth: Australia, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Botswana, Britain, Canada, Cyprus, Fiji, The Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Kiribati, Lesotho, Malawi, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, New Zealand, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, St Lucia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Tanzania, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Vanuatu, Western Samoa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. See text of the Melbourne Communique, CPD, HR, vol. 125, 13 October 1981, pp. 1893-1900.
137 Higgott, ...A Decade of Change and Conflict, op. cit., p. 229.
Aboriginal people protesting against the Fraser government during the conference. If Fraser's standing among the African leaders had not been so high, the issue of Indigenous rights could have been used against the Australian Prime Minister.\textsuperscript{138}

The Commonwealth argued for greater levels of economic aid, and appeared to acknowledge the effort of Australia to increase aid in the 1981 budget.\textsuperscript{139} The Heads of Government also expressed concern about food security in many developing countries and endorsed recommendations from the Commonwealth Ministerial Meeting on Food Production and Rural Development held in February 1981 in Dacca. Further, the Commonwealth welcomed the decision of the Australian government to establish the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research.\textsuperscript{140} Fraser explained that Australia was satisfying its obligations under the world food program targets and highlighted that Sir John Crawford had agreed to be the initial chair of the Centre for International Agricultural Research.\textsuperscript{141}

The CHOGM also produced the Melbourne Declaration on economic problems faced by the developing countries, issued partly to influence the forthcoming North-South Summit Meeting in Cancun. Specifically, the Declaration stated that:

\ldots the gross inequality of wealth and opportunity currently existing in the world, and the unbroken circle of poverty in which the lives of millions in developing countries are confined, are fundamental sources of tension and instability in the world.\textsuperscript{142}

The Melbourne Declaration seemed to be ineffectual because Fraser was not able to secure an invitation to Cancun and thus this document was not debated.\textsuperscript{143}

\textsuperscript{138} ibid.
\textsuperscript{140} Melbourne Communique, \textit{CPD}, HR, vol. 125, 13 October 1981, p. 1899. The Commonwealth also welcomed the decision of the Canadian government to initiate a training program for agricultural extension workers which would reflect the important role of women in agricultural production.
\textsuperscript{141} Fraser, \textit{CPD}, HR, vol. 125, 13 October 1981, p. 1891.
\textsuperscript{143} Renouf, op. cit., p. 143. The North-South Summit failed because US President Reagan refused to acknowledge the demands of the developing countries. See also Walter Goldstein, \textit{Redistributing the world’s wealth}, \textit{Resources Policy}, vol. 8, 1, March 1982.
Nevertheless, the Prime Minister proclaimed that the Melbourne CHOGM was a success for Australia and the Commonwealth:

> I believe we have emerged from the meeting with an enhanced reputation as an active and concerned member of the Commonwealth and as an enlightened and responsible middle power.\(^{144}\)

In response to Fraser's statement, Hayden initially commended the Prime Minister again in relation to the settlement in Zimbabwe and explained that the Labor Party supported a number of initiatives in the Commonwealth Communique and the Melbourne Declaration.\(^{145}\) In particular, Hayden concurred with the condemnation of racism in southern Africa and congratulated Fraser in persisting with this position despite the efforts of some colleagues in the government. However, Hayden also reminded the Parliament that the Melbourne CHOGM had been criticised by some of the participants. Notably, Prime Minister Mahathir suggested the CHOGM was 'just talk and very little progress' while Prime Minister Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara had remarked that the meeting had been 'full of good intentions with little action'.\(^{146}\)

In the end, within terms of Commonwealth diplomatic objectives, the Melbourne CHOGM could be proclaimed a success.\(^{147}\) Despite the various critiques of the Commonwealth and the Melbourne meeting, Fraser emerged as an international leader and a progressive actor for change within a group of diverse nations.

In the wake of the Melbourne CHOGM, the Commonwealth Games scheduled for September-October 1982 in Brisbane involved a number of political issues for the Fraser government. The question of which nations would agree to participate in the Games related to the Gleneagles Agreement, the resolve of the Commonwealth, Australia's credibility as a

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member country opposed to apartheid, and Fraser's personal influence on these inter-related topics.\textsuperscript{148}

The difficulties centred on New Zealand's proposed involvement in the Commonwealth Games. During 1981, the South African rugby union team had played matches in New Zealand, without the approval of the New Zealand government but not halted by the government. Many Commonwealth members, especially the African nations, felt this tour constituted a breach of the Gleneagles Agreement which prohibited sporting contact with South Africa.\textsuperscript{149}

In late 1981 and early 1982, a number of Commonwealth nations threatened not to participate in the Brisbane Commonwealth Games unless New Zealand was specifically excluded. The Fraser government was caught between wanting to uphold the rules of the Games which encouraged extensive participation and wanting the African nations to attend. Minister for Foreign Affairs Tony Street commented that an African boycott 'would harm the Commonwealth, and could undermine community support in Australia for the Government's policy on sporting contacts with South Africa'.\textsuperscript{150}

There were further distractions to the debate with New Zealand rugby officials visiting South Africa and British cricketers travelling to South Africa. Also, the Premier of Queensland, Joh Bjelke-Petersen was arguing for New Zealand's participation in defiance of the African view.\textsuperscript{151} Further, there was considerable confusion within the Labor Party on whether New Zealand should participate. Hayden stated that it would be a disappointment if the African countries decided not to attend the Brisbane Commonwealth Games and that, if this threat continued, Fraser should attempt to exclude New Zealand to avert a boycott.\textsuperscript{152} However, others in the Labor Party disagreed, and Hayden was persuaded to change position and thereby not oppose the participation of New Zealand.\textsuperscript{153}

\textsuperscript{149} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{150} Street, statement on African participation in Commonwealth Games, 2 March 1982, in \textit{Backgrounder}, no. 322, 3 March 1982. See also Albinski, ...Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1982, op. cit., p. 334, \textit{Australian}, 4 March 1982, and Age, 5 March 1982.
\textsuperscript{151} See Albinski, ...Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1982, op. cit., pp. 334-5.
\textsuperscript{153} See Albinski, ...Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1982, op. cit., p. 335.
Further, Aboriginal peoples in Australia threatened to protest at the Commonwealth Games and attempted to persuade African Commonwealth nations to boycott the Games on the issue of discriminatory policies affecting Aboriginal peoples. A delegation of Aboriginal peoples travelled to Africa in June 1982, with former Prime Minister Whitlam as diplomatic adviser. While this group denied they were seeking support for a boycott, the African governments indicated that they would not stay away due to the issue of discrimination against Aboriginal peoples. The African nations made a distinction between the Aboriginal land issue which was not seen as relevant, while the notion that New Zealand rugby union was encouraging discrimination was understood as central.154

The Fraser government adopted two actions to reinforce African views of Australia's credentials on the issue. The first initiative involved explicit criticisms of individual Australian cricket players proposing to tour South Africa.155 The second action was to authorise a new air service to Zimbabwe while reaffirming the ban on the Qantas service to South Africa.156 These efforts were supported by a diplomatic campaign through bilateral channels and through the Commonwealth. Australia traded on its continuing opposition to the apartheid regime with the African nations and exploited Fraser's personal standing within the Commonwealth.157

The Australian diplomatic efforts succeeded. There was no boycott of the Brisbane Commonwealth Games and the unity of the Commonwealth was secured. The Commonwealth Games Federation decided that the Games

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154 ibid., pp. 334-5. Further, the Fraser government was able to capitalise on a letter sent from the South African Embassy in Canberra to all federal Members of Parliament. The letter emphasised the economic and strategic links between South Africa and Australia and argued for closer relations as the two countries were 'derived largely from common stock'. This statement offended some Members of Parliament and the Fraser government ensured that the critical reaction from the Foreign Minister was noticed by all Commonwealth nations. See Senator Guilfoyle, answer to question, CPD, Senate, vol. 93, 25 March 1982, pp. 1157-8. See also Canberra Times, 26 March 1982. On the position of the Aboriginal peoples in relation to the Commonwealth Games, see Margaret Ann Franklin, Racism Australian style, Australian Quarterly, vol. 5, 3, September 1979 and Colin Tatz, Aborigines and the Brisbane Games, Social Alternatives, vol. 2, 2, August 1981.155 See Street, answer to question, CPD, HR, vol. 127, 23 March 1982, pp. 1228-9 and Sydney Morning Herald, 24 March 1982.156 See Minister for Transport, Ralph Hunt, answer to question, CPD, HR, vol. 127, 20 April 1982, p. 1611 and Hunt, answer to question, CPD, HR, vol. 127, 20 April 1982, p. 1601. See also Albinski, Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1982, op. cit., p. 353; Canberra Times, 28 January 1982; Sydney Morning Herald, 26 March 1982; and Australian, 21 April 1982.157 Albinski, Australian Foreign Policy, January to June 1982, op. cit., p. 336. Fraser did not allow the South African rugby union team to transit in Australia during a flight to New Zealand in 1981. The South African team was forced to fly to New Zealand via the United States.
code was to be rewritten to provide that any Commonwealth member found in contravention of the Gleneagles agreement would be expelled from the Commonwealth Games. Secretary-General Shridath Ramphal, influential on the Games resolution, added that:

the Commonwealth nations owed their attendance and participation to the government and people of Australia who had taken a sustained and resolute stand against apartheid.\footnote{Ramphal quoted in ibid., p. 336.}

Apart from the protests by Aboriginal peoples, the Commonwealth Games in Brisbane were seen as a resounding success for the Fraser government and the Commonwealth.\footnote{T.B. Millar, Problems of Australian Foreign Policy July-December 1982, Australian Journal of Politics and History, vol. 29, 1, 1983, p. 10. Aboriginal peoples were protesting against the discriminatory policies of the Bjelke-Petersen state government of Queensland rather than the Fraser government.}

Through the final term of the Liberal and Country Parties government, Fraser was seen to oppose the apartheid regime in South Africa and support the African members of the Commonwealth. As host of the Melbourne CHOGM, Fraser's standing within the Commonwealth was boosted while the Commonwealth continued to display an overt opposition to apartheid. It was Fraser's personal agenda and interest which fuelled Australia's active involvement within the Commonwealth in opposition to the apartheid regime in South Africa. Through both the Melbourne CHOGM in 1981 and the Brisbane Commonwealth Games in 1982, Fraser demonstrated a consistent position in support of the African members of the Commonwealth.

Conclusion

The Fraser government placed Australia in the centre of discussions on African issues. Indeed, Prime Minister Fraser's arguments in opposition to the minority regimes in Rhodesia and South Africa were integral to Australian foreign policy. Fraser offered a personal commitment to racial equality in Africa as a basis for the government's foreign policy.

As Africa became pivotal to international debates, Fraser was provided with the opportunity to continue many policy positions on Africa established by the Whitlam Labor government. Beyond this, Fraser demonstrated more
practical support for the arguments of African leaders than had Whitlam. 160 On South Africa and Rhodesia, Prime Minister Fraser displayed Australia's opposition to the minority regimes at the 1977 CHOOG in London. Also, Fraser attempted to close the Rhodesia Information Centre which was operating in Sydney while catering with dissenting voices on southern Africa within the government. In a mixed outcome, Fraser managed to quieten the rumblings from the Liberal and Country Parties but was unable to restrict the activities of the Rhodesia Information Centre.

At the 1979 Lusaka CHOOG, Fraser was instrumental in the negotiations on Rhodesia. In playing the role of mediator between Britain and the African countries, Prime Minister Fraser was central to the process which led to a new constitution and new elections in Rhodesia. Fraser showed that Australia would continue to argue from an anti-racist foreign policy position in relation to the minority government in Rhodesia. Fraser was also active in opposing apartheid in South Africa, with significant assistance from Peacock, and demonstrated a faith in the Commonwealth to provide effective outcomes to international conflicts.

With a change in the international context in 1980, Fraser continued to support the role of the Commonwealth within a renewed security agenda. The Prime Minister successfully hosted the 1981 CHOOG in Melbourne and demonstrated Australia's support for the interests of developing countries and Australia's continuing opposition to apartheid. As organiser of the 1982 Commonwealth Games in Brisbane, Fraser again negotiated between political positions in the Commonwealth, notably securing an agreed resolution on participation consistent with the demands of the African leaders. In both cases, Fraser utilised the personal standing established earlier with the African countries to deliver effective outcomes.

Fraser played an important role in the construction of Australian foreign policy on Africa. Fraser's personal commitment to racial equality, and thereby strident opposition to the minority regimes in Rhodesia and South Africa, did not accord with the view of the Liberal and Country Parties. In this, it was clear that Fraser led the government to a position which consistently opposed racial discrimination in southern Africa.

Conclusion

This thesis shows that Whitlam and Fraser produced similar foreign policy positions on Africa from quite different political perspectives. Both Prime Ministers actively opposed racial discrimination in South Africa and Rhodesia. This outcome was based on the personal influence of Whitlam and Fraser within their respective governments in constructing Australian foreign policy. Indeed, both Prime Ministers were important, even central, to the setting of Australia's international agenda and the implementation of Australia's foreign policy initiatives.

Prime Ministers Whitlam and Fraser established different positions on some general issues in international relations, such as the extent of criticism of the Soviet Union. However, I have shown that both Whitlam and Fraser aligned Australia with the demands of the developing countries and that this was the context for Australia's policies on Africa. This analysis is particularly important in demonstrating the continuity in Australian foreign policy from the Whitlam Labor Party government to the Fraser Liberal and Country Parties government.
In relation to the literature on Australian foreign policy, this thesis highlights the value of the foreign policy initiatives of both Whitlam and Fraser. Again, this is particularly important with reference to Fraser's adoption of an anti-racist foreign policy and the linking of issues within Fraser's foreign policy. This thesis also offers original analysis of specific topics which have hitherto not been examined at length. For Whitlam, this includes the idea of an Asia Pacific forum, changes to aid policy and administration, and the economic relationship with South Africa. For Fraser, I have provided new analysis on the strategic situation in the Indian Ocean, policy on Kampuchea, and Fraser's role in the settlement of conflict in Rhodesia. Overall, this thesis is unique in comparing the foreign policies of Whitlam and Fraser, especially with a focus on Africa.

Through the structure of the thesis, I have demonstrated that Whitlam and Fraser established connections between the general and specific elements of foreign policy. This argument rests on the analyses of foreign policy issues within each government and the linking of specific topics across the two governments. I have illustrated the extent of change and continuity in Australia's foreign policy positions by projecting a matrix of comparisons of key issues.

On the domestic context of foreign policy, Whitlam was able to amend the Labor Party Platform to reflect the need for substantial change in Australia's international outlook, particularly in moving away from a racist position on immigration and to oppose racial discrimination in general. This new approach to foreign policy was announced and confirmed in the November 1972 Labor Party policy speech delivered by Whitlam as leader and this outline was used as the template for action in government.

Similarly, Fraser dominated the construction of the Liberal and Country Parties foreign policy agenda and established the parameters for government action in the June 1976 statement in the Parliament. Fraser's personal understanding of international politics was an important element in setting the direction of Australian foreign policy. Indeed, Fraser combined an anti-Soviet view with an anti-racist position to provide a distinct outlook for Australia.

The analysis of the domestic contexts to foreign policy for both Whitlam and Fraser demonstrates the different starting points for each Prime Minister in implementing their view of Australian foreign policy. While
the political perspectives of Whitlam and Fraser were expected to be divergent, the views of both Prime Ministers dominated the construction of Australia's international position and directed that Australia would oppose the minority governments in South Africa and Rhodesia.

On Australia's international relationships, Whitlam was more critical of the United States compared with the previous Australian governments which had aligned with the US and Britain in an unquestioning manner. While Whitlam, and members of the Labor government, criticised the actions of the United States in Vietnam, Prime Minister Whitlam was also careful not to challenge the fundamental basis for the alliance, that is, the US military facilities located in Australia. In addition, Whitlam supported the notion of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean, in conjunction with the littoral states, but this position by Australia was tainted by the continuing presence of the secret naval facilities at North West Cape.

Significantly, Whitlam changed Australia's image in the United Nations by adopting a voting pattern independent of the United States and Britain. Thus, on occasions, Australia was aligned with a variety of smaller nations in the UN General Assembly. Whitlam also advocated the value of the United Nations and Australia's new approach in the UN was important for the implementation of more constructive relations with countries in the Asia Pacific region, the Indian Ocean region, and Africa.

In response, Prime Minister Fraser attempted to strengthen the alliance with the United States given the perception that Whitlam had weakened this important relationship. Fraser was particularly concerned about the intentions of the Soviet Union in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean and therefore tried to involve the US to a greater extent in the security of these regions. Fraser was fervently opposed to the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan and supported the US argument for a boycott of the Moscow Olympic Games. Further, Fraser was pleased to support the international approach of President Reagan which accorded with the Australian Prime Minister's anti-Soviet view.

The international outlooks of Whitlam and Fraser were quite different and this reflected their personal understandings and their political allegiances within distinctive political parties. The divergence of views on particular issues also emerged from the domestic political context which determined that Fraser needed to be seen to be significantly different from Whitlam.
It was Whitlam's intention to move Australia away from a racist international image and to provide an anti-racist and anti-colonial approach to foreign policy. Obviously, this new position was important in constructing relationships with African countries and in opposing the minority governments in South Africa and Rhodesia. Prime Minister Fraser also advocated an anti-racist and anti-colonial position in implementing Australia's relations with the developing countries, thereby continuing Whitlam's approach. In particular, Fraser supported the agenda of the developing countries in the North South debate and actively promoted the idea of a Common Fund for the stabilisation of commodity prices.

In the Asia Pacific region, Whitlam developed constructive relations with many countries in contrast to the reluctant approach of previous Australian governments. Fraser extended these relationships based on Whitlam's work in removing the racist image of Australian foreign policy. On China, Whitlam immediately recognised the Peoples' Republic and Fraser was pleased to extend diplomatic exchanges and trade with China as an opponent of the Soviet Union. However, Fraser was only partially successful in balancing Australia's relations with China and with the members of ASEAN.

Whitlam struggled to deal with the shifting political events in Cambodia while Fraser was faced with the Khmer Rouge regime and the intervention of Vietnam into Kampuchea. While Whitlam had battled with members of the Labor government over recognition of various groups in Vietnam, Fraser conformed with the anti-Soviet approach to condemn Vietnam's movement into Kampuchea.

On Indonesia and East Timor, Whitlam was enthusiastic about closer ties with the Indonesian government while advocating self-determination for the people of East Timor. Events overtook the Whitlam government and Fraser was confronted with Indonesia's annexation of East Timor. Over time, Fraser extended relations with Indonesia and did not actively oppose the incorporation of East Timor. For both Whitlam and Fraser, the principle of self-determination, in opposition to colonialism, was placed in contrast to effective relations with Indonesia which was a key actor in the Asia Pacific region.
Whitlam embraced the movement toward independence in Papua New Guinea when previous Australian governments had resisted this path, notwithstanding the efforts of Peacock in the last months of the McMahon government. Whitlam offered financial and political encouragement to end the colonial relationship between Australia and Papua New Guinea. Subsequently, Fraser supported the independence of PNG as part of the continuing anti-colonial approach of Australia foreign policy.

Part of the new, constructive stance on developing countries was Whitlam's attempt to improve Australia's aid program. A separate aid agency was established, against considerable opposition, and a new vision for the implementation of aid was proposed. However, Fraser understood aid policy to be a part of foreign policy and therefore subsumed the administration of aid into the foreign affairs bureaucracy. Within the aid program, Whitlam and Fraser were unwilling to substantially increase the level of aid while, at times, using aid allocations for explicitly political purposes. Overall, aid policy was employed by both Prime Ministers to complement foreign policy objectives.

It was significant that Fraser continued to promote the anti-racist and anti-colonial image of Australian foreign policy that was established by Whitlam. This was an important difference between the Fraser foreign policy and the international approach of the Liberal and Country Parties prior to the Whitlam government. This position by both Whitlam and Fraser was central to Australia's policies on Africa.

The most profound change in Australian foreign policy was the explicit opposition to the minority governments in South Africa and Rhodesia which had gained support from the previous Liberal and Country Parties governments. Both Whitlam and Fraser rejected the systems of apartheid and racial discrimination in southern Africa. Whitlam initiated this important shift in policy, quite obviously in the United Nations in the first days of government in December 1972, and Fraser ensured that the Liberal and Country Parties government continued this stance. Significantly, Australia's position on South Africa and Rhodesia was opposed to many other countries, notably Britain.

Prime Minister Whitlam opposed apartheid but continued to trade with South Africa in an era when economic sanctions were not instituted. Fraser was more resolute in opposition as international pressure mounted against
the apartheid system. Fraser was particularly successful in opposing the minority government in Rhodesia with a commendable performance at the 1979 CHOGM in Lusaka which precipitated constitutional and political change in Rhodesia. Indeed, Fraser's role in consistently opposing the discriminatory structures in Rhodesia were a highlight in Australian foreign policy.

In essence, Whitlam's rewriting of foreign policy on Africa was a central component of the new international position for Australia. Fraser's continuation and extension of this anti-racist position was important for Australia's standing in the United Nations and the Commonwealth, and thus with the United States, Britain and others. This shift was intimately linked with Australia's relations with developing countries and thereby with the countries in the Asia Pacific region. In total, Whitlam and Fraser established a new anti-racist and anti-colonial foreign policy for Australia.
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