AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND CAMBODIA:

INTERNATIONAL POWER, REGIONALISM AND DOMESTIC POLITICS

A sub-thesis presented by

Helen Marshall

to the

Department of International Relations

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts (International Relations)

Research School of Pacific Studies

Australian National University

1992
This thesis is my own work, containing to the best of my knowledge and belief, no material published or writted by another person except as referred to in the text.

Helen Marshall
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My warm and sincere thanks go to my supervisor, Richard Leaver, for his encouragement, stimulating discussion, criticism and friendship. Much of what is in this thesis would not have been possible without the help and assistance of others. I am especially indebted to officials in Vietnam and Cambodia for valuable insights into their perspectives on Australian foreign policy, the Cambodian conflict and the UN plan. I am also grateful for useful discussions with Australian officials in AIDAB and DFAT, as well as NGO personnel in both Canberra and Phnom Penh. Thanks are also due to academics and holders of public office for their opinions and useful discussions, and to Brian Murray and Hillas McLean from the Parliamentary Library for allowing me valuable access to MICAH resources.

Finally, and most importantly, I wish to thank Jon Lloyd who managed to care for, support and even marry me during the writing of this thesis.
List of abbreviations

ADF - Australian Defence Force
AIDAB - Australian International Development Assistance Bureau
ALP - The Australian Labor Party
ASEAN - Association of South East Asian Nations
CGDK - Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea
DFAT - Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
ICJ - International Commission of Jurists
JANGOO - Joint Australian Non-Government Organisation Office (Phnom Penh)
JIM - Jakarta Informal Meeting
KR - Khmer Rouge
NGO - Non-government organisation
NCR - Non-communist resistance
P5 - The Permanent Five of the United Nations Security Council
PRK - Peoples Republic of Kampuchea
SNC - Supreme National Council
SOC - State of Cambodia (previously PRK)
STV - Standard Total View (after Vickery 1984)
UNGA - United Nations General Assembly
UNTAC - United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
UNAMIC - United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia
## CONTENTS

### Introduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chapter 1. The analytical context

| The Hawke Labor government and foreign policy: the political and institutional context | 10 |
| The Vietnam War, its aftermath and the de-recognition of Pol Pot: the historical context | 19 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chapter 2. The development and implementation of Labor's Indochina policies

| Aid to Vietnam | 26 |
| Australia's relations with ASEAN | 32 |
| Australian aid to Cambodia | 45 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chapter 3. The "Red Book" proposal

| Background to the "Red Book proposal: changes in the external political and strategic environment | 53 |
| Australia's position and role | 57 |
| The issue of aid to Vietnam and the question of official Australian representation in Phnom Penh | 61 |
| Cambodia's seat in the United Nations General Assembly | 64 |
| The domestic policy debate | 66 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Hawke Labor government came to power in March 1983 committed to playing a more active role in finding a solution to the Cambodian conflict, improving bilateral relations with Vietnam and restoring Australian aid\(^1\). This signalled a departure from the Fraser government's minimal involvement in the issue, and reflected a closer identification of Australia's interests with the Asia-Pacific region. As Foreign Minister, Bill Hayden, explained:

> The war in Cambodia, in all its many dimensions, is the greatest unresolved source of tension in Southeast Asia...The future of Australia lies in developing a mature and balanced set of relationships with its neighbours in Southeast Asia. Indochina is part of that neighbourhood\(^2\).

The Cambodian conflict, in its recent phase, began with the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea in December 1978 which followed a period of rising hostility between the two neighbouring states\(^3\). That invasion ousted the brutal Khmer Rouge regime led by Pol Pot and installed a new government under Heng Samrin. The conflict which ensued was drawn out and complex, and involved both superpowers as well as China, the ASEAN states, France, and four rival Khmer factions. It ended when the factions and 18 other countries signed an agreement in Paris in October 1991. Several countries were instrumental in bringing that agreement about: France hosted the Paris peace conferences; Indonesia played the role of interlocuter between ASEAN and Vietnam, and provided a meeting place for informal talks; Thailand envisaged a marketplace instead of a battlefield and moved to improve relations with Hanoi; the Soviet Union drew back from the conflict while the United States opened up a dialogue with Vietnam; and Australia provided the framework for a comprehensive settlement. Realistically, however, it was China

---

2 Hayden, Bill, Commonwealth Parliamentary Documents (CPD), House of Representatives, 7 December 1983, pg 3404, 3406.
3 The term Cambodia will be used throughout this work as the most familiar English rendering of the Khmer name. Depending on the period or regime referred to, however, the following terms will also be employed: Kampuchea, or Democratic Kampuchea, (DK), in reference to the Pol Pot regime which ruled Cambodia from April 1975 to January 1979; The Peoples Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) refers to the regime headed by Heng Samrin, which was installed by the Vietnamese in 1979; The State of Cambodia (SOC), was adopted by the PRK in the in April 1989.
and Vietnam, as backers of the Khmer Rouge and Phnom Penh government respectively, who brought about the Paris agreement.

Australia was not a party principle to the Cambodian conflict. The Hawke government's interest stemmed from a desire to reduce regional polarisation over the issue, and the view that as a major country of resettlement for Indochinese refugees, Australia had a right to express an opinion on actions which were not seen as helpful in reducing their numbers4. The government's policy started from judgements that Vietnam wished to maintain a degree of independence from the Soviet Union and a military solution to the conflict was not possible5. Under Foreign Minister Bill Hayden, Australia pursued an active diplomatic role as facilitator in the Cambodian conflict. In this context, Australia sought to promote dialogue between the various parties to the conflict as a first step towards an eventual settlement. Under his successor, Gareth Evans, Australia sought to play the role of mapmaker, with the presentation of a series of working papers outlining a strategy for the achievement of a comprehensive settlement based on an enhanced UN role.

The Hawke government's Indochina policies must be situated within the context of Australia's overall foreign policy framework. Prime Minister Bob Hawke outlined the foreign policy perceptions of his new government in a speech to the Washington Press Club, in June6. He said Australia would pursue an "independent and self respecting foreign policy" based on an objective assessment of "Australia's genuine national interest". It would be both "realistic and relevant", which meant priority would be given to relations with Australia's neighbours in the Asia-Pacific region, and to major industrialised countries with which Australia shared significant relationships, especially the United States and Japan. However, it was on the

4 Harris, Stuart, "Vietnam: Ten years on", AFAR, 56(7):582-589, July 1985, pg 588. As Vincent has argued: "It behoves governments...especially governments in societies which are popular destinations for migrants and refugees, to take account of developments abroad which might lead to a rise in the numbers of people seeking entry". This involves receiver governments in the problems of others whether they like it or not. Vincent, R.J., "Human rights and foreign policy", Australian Outlook 36(3):1-5, December 1982, pg 3.
5 Harris, ibid, pg 588.
Southeast Asian and Pacific region that the government would "focus its primary attention in the years ahead"\textsuperscript{7}.

This thesis considers Australia's foreign policy towards Cambodia under the Hawke Labor government. It examines the external and domestic determinants of Australia's Indochina policies in order to explain the perceptions and policies which prevailed\textsuperscript{8}. Its main focus is on the formulation and implementation of Australia's Indochina policies following Labor's election to office in March 1983, which involved a restructuring of Australia's relations with all the countries of the region, and the Red Book proposal for a settlement of the Cambodian conflict, tabled at the Jakarta Informal Meeting (JIM) in February 1990.

Cambodia is of particular relevance in the context of Labor's overall foreign policy framework because the Hawke government viewed Australia's Indochina policy as the "frame of reference through which Southeast Asia sees Australia"\textsuperscript{9}. The way in which that policy was pursued, therefore, had implications for Australia's broader relations with the region. In this context, the Cambodian issue served as a focal point for the development and definition of an Australian role in the Asia-Pacific region.

Before discussing the formulation and implementation of Labor's Indochina policies and the Red Book proposal, the analytical, political, institutional and historic contexts that situate this case study of Australian foreign policy, will be outlined. Each of these illuminates the foreign policy process from a different perspective and can contribute to an understanding of the interplay between domestic political factors and external constraints in determining policy outcomes. An understanding of modern Cambodia history, especially the events of 1975-79,

\textsuperscript{7} Hawke, Ibid, pg 270.
\textsuperscript{8} After the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea, Australia did not have a separate policy towards Cambodia, but an Indochina policy. Cambodia increasingly came to be treated separately. This could be attributed both to a growing awareness of the strength of Khmer nationalism and progress in the Cambodian negotiations.
would also be useful, but this aspect of the conflict was so often overshadowed by the political and strategic goals of the various players, that its relevance to the foreign policy process was correspondingly diminished. This study is concerned with how events in Cambodia were perceived by Australian foreign policy makers and the way those perceptions shaped the Hawke government's policy choices.

Chapter one briefly examines the literature in the sub-field of foreign policy analysis in order to demonstrate the relevance of domestic political structures and processes in explanations of state behaviour. It is argued that foreign policy is not simply the means by which states pursues objective judged to be in the national interest, but the product of domestic political processes of negotiation and bargaining in which domestic political structures and institutions, coalitions and ideology are important variables. This will be illustrated in relation to the Hawke government's Indochina policies by examining the interests and stance of relevant foreign policy institutions and decision makers in the domestic political context.

Foreign policy is not only a product of, and response to, contemporary structural and political factors, but is historically constituted. The last section of Chapter One examines the recent history of Australia's relations with Indochina because of its relevance in explaining the Hawke government's policies towards Cambodia. The perceptions on which those policies were based had their origins in Labor's opposition to Australia's involvement in the Vietnam war, and in the wake of the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea, opposition to the continued recognition of Pol Pot by the Fraser Liberal government. While Labor's policies thus had a basis in moral and humanitarian considerations, they were also a response to the groundswell of sympathy and support for the Cambodian and Vietnamese people within the ALP and the broader domestic constituency. The Vietnam War had a significant impact on the perceptions and attitudes of the age cohort represented in the Hawke Labor government.

Chapter Two will look at the development and implementation of the Hawke government's Indochina policies. While those policies were consistent with the regional focus of Labor's
foreign policy and met the government's domestic political objectives, they were out of step with the policies of Australia's allies, the United States and ASEAN, and also China, an important trading partner. This conflict of interest between different aspects of Labor's foreign policy stance created difficulties for the government in the implementation of its Indochina policies. While the government was forced to adjust its policy stance in response to the external constraints it sought to do this in a way which did not jeopardise party or constituent support. The extent to which the Hawke government was able to circumvent constraints and gain the acceptance of Australia as a party with a legitimate interest in the Cambodian conflict, owed much to the personal commitment and effort of the Foreign Minister, Bill Hayden. This achievement was important in paving the way for the role his successor came to play in negotiations to achieve a settlement.

Chapter three provides an overview of the changes in the structure of the conflict and the interests of the various players, and examines Australia's response to these under Foreign Minister Gareth Evans. Evans aligned Australia's policies more closely with those of the US and ASEAN, and sought an active role in the Cambodian peace process. The withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia before the achievement of a settlement served to focus international concern on the problem posed by the Khmer Rouge. The Evans initiative had its genesis in the failure of the 1989 Paris Conference on Cambodia. The "Red Book" proposal advanced the idea of an enhanced UN roll in an interim government in Cambodia which would circumvent the problem of power sharing between the warring factions as well as offset domestic criticism of Australia's support for the participation of the Khmer Rouge in a quadripartite interim government in Cambodia. The proposal was timely in terms of the interests of the superpowers and regional countries in ending the conflict, and with an elections due, also from a domestic political perspective. The Hawke government developed and brokered the UN plan, although the idea had come from the Americans.

In January 1990 the P5 agreed to adopt the framework developed by Australia as the basis of a negotiating text. Chapter Four looks at the international responses to the Red Book proposal and
charts the course of progress in the negotiation processes. The shift in US policy announced in July and the dialogue opened up between China and Vietnam were key developments in pushing the parties towards a resolution. The withdrawal of Eastern bloc aid from Indochina, the resurgence of fighting on the ground, and the intransigence of the Cambodian factions prompted renewed calls in Australia for a policy shift. The last section of the chapter examines the domestic debate and the way the issue was used in the domestic political context.

The final and concluding chapter situates Australia's policies towards Cambodia within the context of the Hawke government's broader foreign policy framework. Under Foreign Minister Bill Hayden, Australia's Indochina facilitated the restructuring of Australia's relations with the countries of the region. Under Gareth Evans, Australia played a "middle power" role in brokering agreement on the UN plan. The role of morality in Australian foreign policy will be considered in this context because it occupies an ambiguous place in middle power foreign policy, while questions and judgements of morality in relation to the Cambodian conflict were central in the domestic debate.

Finally, it will be argued that Australia's Cambodia policy lay at the nexus of the Hawke government's regionalism and its preoccupation with the central balance. While this had benefits with regard to Australia's role in brokering a settlement in Cambodia, the evidence from this case study suggests that even in the politically polarised international environment of the early 1980's, the Hawke government had difficulty reconciling both these elements in its foreign policy thinking.
Chapter One

The analytical context

In the study of relations between states in the international system, political realism has long been the dominant explanatory paradigm. Realism holds that the behaviour of states is determined by their place in the international system, and is characterised by the pursuit of interest defined as power. Structural realist models, however, are unable to explain changes in state behaviour which have a domestic political source. The shift in Australia's Indochina policies which followed the election to power of the Hawke Labor government, against a background of stalemate in the Cambodian conflict, provides a case in point.

Since the end of World War Two, the increasing interdependence of states has made the relationship between international and domestic affairs more complex. This theme has been dealt with by integration theorists such as Deutsch and others, by Keohane and Nye in their work on interdependence, and in Katzenstein's study of the domestic determinants of foreign economic policy. Interdependence, mass communications, especially television, and in Australia, a population which is ethnically mixed, have increased the saliency of international events in domestic politics. Foreign policy thus lies at the nexus of the domestic and international systems, and it is the role of central executives to mediate the pressures from both spheres. This process has been described by Putnam as a two level game:

At the national level, domestic groups pursue their interests by pressuring the government to adopt favourable policies, and the politicians seek power by constructing

---

coalitions among these groups. At the international level, national governments seek to maximise their own ability to satisfy domestic pressure, while minimising the adverse consequences of foreign developments. Neither of the two games can be ignored.

In democratic societies, leaders not only have to justify their policies and actions to voters, but citizens can insist that governments give expression to widely held community values in their foreign policies. These values may include moral concerns and demands for justice which fall outside the traditions of realpolitik.

Foreign policy can be defined as "a goal oriented or problem oriented program by policy makers...directed towards external entities" and is a means by which states pursue the goals they judge to be in the national interest. However, there is no objective definition of "national interest", and in pluralist societies, disagreement over foreign policy objectives and priorities is common. This was underscored by Gareth Evans when he observed that:

The history of Australia’s involvement in Indo-China underlines the fact that, contrary to some views of international relations, national interests do not exist a priori. The different elements that make up the national interest, and our capacity to advance it, are not necessarily self evident at all.

How a problem is perceived by leaders has significant consequences for policy outcomes. For this reason, in his critique of the rational actor paradigm, Allison emphasised the importance of the "conceptual models" employed by foreign policy makers. Even when shared images lead to agreement on objectives, there is often disagreement over the means by which to achieve them. This arises from the difficulty of the problems themselves as well as personal differences related to education, background, experience, understanding of history and other

---

factors which effect the perceptions of decision makers\textsuperscript{9}. Particularly relevant to this study is Steinbruner's work on decision making and the tendency of decision makers to resolve uncertainties by resort to a general belief structure or stereotyping\textsuperscript{10}. It explains, in part, the conflicting perceptions and interpretations of events in Indochina of Australian foreign policy makers, interest groups, the media and public.

Domestic structures and institutions are also relevant to the foreign policy process because they determine how political systems respond to society's demands. However, structural models alone are over simplistic. Within societies and political systems, coalition building processes and ideological cleavages are also important\textsuperscript{11}. As Allison put it: "To explain a government decision or pattern of behaviour, it is necessary to identify the games and players, to dispel the coalitions, bargains, and compromises, and to convey some feel for the confusion"\textsuperscript{12}.

While bureaucracies are important actors in the foreign policy process, assessing the role of bureaucratic politics in decision making is difficult from the outside, while at a theoretical level, there is disagreement over the relevance of bureaucratic models in explanations of state behaviour\textsuperscript{13}. Clearly the question is one which has to be considered on a case by case basis. An account of the domestic determinants of foreign policy, according to Putnam, "must stress


\textsuperscript{11} Allison, "Essence of Decision..." pg 147; Risse-Kappen, "Public opinion, domestic structure and foreign policies in liberal democracies", World Politics 43:470-512, 1991, pg 485; Katzenstein, "Domestic and international forces and strategies of foreign economic policy".

\textsuperscript{12} Allison, "Essence of Decision..." pg 147.

\textsuperscript{13} For example, Gordin has argued that the interplay of executive and legislative organisations, public and private interests, as well as personalities, "is a determinant of foreign policy no less than events abroad or at home". Gordin, Kermit, In Halperin, Morton.H. Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy, The Brookings Institute, Washington, D.C., 1974, pg ix; In contrast, Krasner insists that: "However much departmental infighting distorts policy, its basic thrust is provided by the deeper structure of a society and its ideology". Krasner, S.D., Are bureaucracies important? (Or Allison in Wonderland), Foreign Policy, No.7, pp 159-179, Summer 1972.
politics, (including) parties, social classes, interest groups, legislators...public opinion and elections, not simply executive officials and institutional arrangements"\textsuperscript{14}. This case study brings some of these threads together from the information available on the public record, as well as from private interviews.

The political and institutional context

The executive dominates foreign policy in Australia and is largely independent of Parliament. The tradition of weak departments and dominant Prime Ministers has been explained by Edwards as a legacy of Australia's past as a colony and Dominion within the Empire-Commonwealth\textsuperscript{15}. More specifically, Knight argued that the most important reason for the executive dominance of Australian foreign policy was the constitutional, traditional and historical effect of the royal prerogative\textsuperscript{16}. While primary responsibility for foreign policy rests with the Foreign Minister, in practise, it is subject to the role the Prime Minister himself chooses to play\textsuperscript{17}. Like most Australian Prime Ministers, Hawke took a major personal interest in foreign affairs. His main focus was Australia's alliance relationship with the United States, as well as bilateral relations with Japan and China, Australia's major trading partners. In day to day foreign policy matters the Cabinet, headed by the Prime Minister, is the "pinnacle of power in the Australian parliamentary system", and the foreign Minister is

\textsuperscript{14} Putnam, "Diplomacy and domestic politics...", pg 432.
\textsuperscript{15} Edwards, P.G., Prime Ministers and Diplomats. The Making of Australian Foreign Policy 1901-1949, AIIA-OUP, Melbourne, 1983, pg 192.
\textsuperscript{16} Knight, John, "The royal prerogative and foreign policy: notes on an assumption", \textit{Australian Outlook} 30(1):35-43, April 1976, pg 39. Other explanations and/or justifications include arguments that: Foreign policy requires little legislation or budgetary approval; domestic issues take precedence over international ones for most politicians; foreign policy requires a constant series of reactions to complex external developments; only the executive has access to the necessary information and expertise to respond to these; only the executive has the capacity to assess the large volume of information available to it. Knight, ibid, pg 39; Hocking, B.L., "Parliament, parliamentarians and foreign affairs", \textit{Australian Outlook} 30(2):280-303, August 1976, pg 291; Indyck, Martin, \textit{Influence Without Power: The role of the Backbench in Australian Foreign Policy 1976-1977}, APSA/Parliamentary Fellow Monograph No. 1, Australasian Political Studies Association and The Parliament of Australia, July 1979, pg 1.
\textsuperscript{17} Evans, Gareth & Grant, Bruce, \textit{Australia's Foreign Relations in the World of the 1990's}, Melbourne University Press, Victoria, 1991, pg 47.
guided by its wishes. The increasing salience of foreign policy issues to domestic policy departments has meant that ministers routinely participate in discussions at Cabinet level. Hawke gave his ministers considerable autonomy and scope for reform, while maintaining tight control over his cabinet. Although the secrecy of Cabinet’s deliberations, according to Henderson, allows it “to exercise enormous power, which cannot be constitutionally checked, at the expense of the legislature or Parliament”, foreign policy can be effected by the cumulative weight of decisions made at the middle and lower levels of foreign policy making, as by policy choices in Cabinet.

In this middle level is the backbench. Its role in Parliament is to “try to control it by means of advice, criticism, publicity and scrutiny, thereby keeping the government responsive to the underlying currents of public opinion”. Although lacking formal power, which is reinforced by party discipline, the backbench has some influence, and can bring pressure to bear on the government in several ways: Firstly, a united effort by backbenchers, on a particular issue, can force a minister to reconsider a proposal or position; secondly, within the parliamentary Labor party, it is caucus which elects, removes and replaces ministers; and thirdly, the backbench provides a crucial link between the electorate and executive, whose members depend on both for their positions. It is also significant that as foreign policy issues have become more salient to domestic politics, Caucus has come to play an increasingly prominent role in policy formulation.

---

18 He did this by having caucus agree to a small Cabinet of only 13 members selected by himself and insisting on Cabinet solidarity, which meant ministers would support Cabinet decisions in Caucus and not attempt to overthrow them. Kelly, Paul, The Hawke Ascendancy. A Definitive Account of its Origins and Climax 1975-1983, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1984, pg 435.
21 Indyck, Influence without power..., pg 1.
22 In the Labor caucus, a pledge ensures members cannot vote against the party in Parliament. Henderson, Parliament and Politics..., pp 59-60.
23 Henderson, Ibid, pg 250.
24 Henderson, Ibid, pg 250; Indyck, Influence without power..., pg 2.
The role of the Parliamentary opposition is to "criticise, check and question the performance and policies of the government and provide the electorate with a possible alternative government"\(^{25}\). Faction fighting and lack of unity within the opposition, however, can make it ineffective, as occurred between 1983 and 1987 in the Liberal Party, when the "wets" and the "dries" struggled for control\(^{26}\). That struggle partly explains the poor performance of the Liberal-NP opposition during the period of the Hawke government Indochina initiatives. Generally, however, few would quarrel with Indyck's\(^{27}\) argument that Parliamentary debates and questions are defective mechanisms of policy control, and Hocking's\(^{28}\) observation that Parliament is deficient in the way it discharges its responsibilities. Furthermore, the opposition now tends to offer advice and opinions on foreign policy directly to the media\(^{29}\). In practice, there is a large degree of bipartisanship in foreign policy\(^{30}\), and both major parties are represented on the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade\(^{31}\). While the Committee does not have a substantial policy making role, it can be effective in setting policy constraints\(^{32}\). Parliament is most effective when its activities are part of a wider campaign to influence foreign policy\(^{33}\). This occurred when Parliamentarians from both sides took up the issue of Australia's recognition of Pol Pot and forced the Fraser government to reverse its policy.

While the ALP's policies are decided at the party's biennial National Conference, Labor platforms are best seen as reflections of party philosophy and have frequently been waived in

\(^{26}\) Henderson, Ibid, pg 56.
\(^{27}\) Indyck, *Influence Without Power...*, pg 27.
\(^{28}\) Hocking, "Parliament, parliamentarians and foreign affairs", pg 302.
\(^{29}\) Evans & Grant, *Australia's Foreign Relations...*, pg 50.
\(^{30}\) According to former Foreign Minister, Andrew Peacock, foreign policy is one of the few areas where bipartisanship is good for its own sake because continuity is important in relations with other countries. Interview, Canberra, 14 November 1991.
\(^{31}\) The Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence was formed in 1951 to "give detailed study to the great problems of the day and to pass on to the Parliament the expert knowledge which it will in time acquire", according to Spender. In Hocking, "Parliament, parliamentarians and foreign affairs", pg 291.
\(^{32}\) On its formation, Spender and McMahon found it necessary to issue a warning that foreign policy remained the responsibility of the executive. Indyck, *Influence Without Power...*, pg 4.
the face of practical obstacles to implementation. The broad range of views represented in the ALP creates difficulties in the conduct of foreign policy, although it raises the level of party and community interest in foreign policy issues. As Hayden observed, "the Labor Party is an emotional party", and while this was "one of the attractive things about it...it can get carried away with that emotion at times". This applied particularly to Indochina. Within the Labor Party and caucus there are a large number who were sympathetic to Vietnam and believed Australia had a moral obligation to make up for its past involvement in the Vietnam war. Labor's approach, both in opposition and government, was based on "the ALP's policy since before 1975 of recognising the strength of the desire for independence on the part of all the countries of Indochina".

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade plays a key role in the foreign policy process. The policy advice it provides to government is crucial because it is based on extensive reporting of fact and opinion received from posts, and representations from other governments. As Foreign Minister, Hayden was disadvantaged by the previous position of the Department and its focus on the ASEAN countries. From the outset it was clear the new leadership did not share the foreign policy perceptions of the previous Liberal government. When Hayden became Foreign Minister, Peter Henderson, Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs, advised senior diplomats that:

He wants precise details of a country's objections to any unpopular Australian proposals and a thorough explanation of why it is in our interests that we should react to

34 Smith, Ibid, pg 33.
38 Evans & Grant, Australia's Foreign Relations..., pg 48.
39 Australia enjoyed full bilateral relations with the ASEAN countries, incorporating trade, cultural exchange and education. Furthermore, Australia is one of ASEAN's 7 dialogue partners and was the first country to support ASEAN in this way. Macintyre, Andrew, "Comprehensive engagement and Australia's security interests in Southeast Asia", in Fry, Greg (ed), Australia's Regional Security, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1991, pg 112.
them...There can be no assumption that the government will go along with policy proposals simply because of past practice.40

Views of Hayden within the Department, according to his political biographer John Stubbs, were generally critical, "although some officials welcomed the shakeup he had given to its hierarchy and the challenge he had made to some of the assumptions on which it had previously operated". There is always a period of adjustment with a change in foreign minister, and as officers in the Department came to terms with Labor's more radical approach, Hayden enjoyed good relations with his senior staff although they sometimes disagreed.

Hayden did not at first make drastic changes to the Department and kept Peter Henderson, son-in-law of former Liberal Prime Minister, Robert Menzies, as Secretary. He strengthened his position in the Department a year later when he replaced him with Stuart Harris, formerly a senior trade official. Hayden could not rely on support for his Indochina policies from middle ranking officers who were sympathetic to the position of Australia's allies, the US, ASEAN and China, and it was not unknown for them to slow down, if not obstruct, his initiatives. Few in Foreign Affairs were interested in Indochina at that time, and those who were tended to be committed, which was a disadvantage in itself. This group included junior staff on the Indochina desk who were not only enthusiastic and supportive of the Minister, but included specialists with Vietnamese language training. That Hayden sought independent advice from at least one academic specialist on Indochina suggests he never entirely trusted the advice his Department gave him, although it also reflected his high regard for academic scholarship.

40 Quoted in Stubbs, Hayden, pg 286.
41 Stubbs, Ibid, pg 285.
42 According to John Stubbs, this was because Hayden had not originally intended to stay on as Foreign Minster. He sacked Henderson about a year later, after he decided to stay, thereby adding to the bitterness and confusion within the Department. Stubbs, Ibid, pg 268.
43 This coincided with a growing recognition of the saliency of economic issues in Australian foreign policy, and it was Harris who oversaw the merger of the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Trade in 1987.
44 Leach, Jeff, former Foreign Affairs and AIDAB officer, interview, Canberra, 21 November 1991.
Most foreign policy issues have implications which impinge on the interests of other government departments. According to Viviani, there is generally tension between departments with domestic constituencies to satisfy and DFAT, which has to respond to the actions and concerns of other countries, and this tension is resolved through interdepartmental committees\(^{45}\). Within the Canberra bureaucracy, Cambodia has been of interest to various departments and authorities, the most important of which was AIDAB\(^{46}\), through its association with NGO's. Others include: The Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs because of its role in determining the refugee status of illegal Cambodian arrivals in Australia, as well as broader concerns about Indo-Chinese refugees; the Department of Industry Technology and Commerce, in relation to OTC Australia's telecommunications contracts in Indochina; and the Department of Defence, which has been a strong advocate of, and is now playing a major part in, the United Nations peace keeping effort in Cambodia. While a solution to the Cambodian conflict is in the interests of all these bureaucratic players, each saw the issue from a different perspective.

The Department of Immigration\(^{47}\) worked closely with Foreign Affairs in formulating Australia's response to the continuing exodus of refugees from Indochina, for example, but each had a different interest in the problem. The Foreign Minister saw the issue as one of regional security. In this context, Hayden had two main concerns: That the Cambodian refugees on the Thai border, as well as Vietnamese military pressure, posed a serious threat to the security of Thailand and to the stability of the region\(^{48}\); and that the imbalances arising out of Vietnam's involvement in Cambodia, and the resulting neglect of its own economic development at a time

---

\(^{45}\) Viviani, Nancy, "The official formulation of foreign policy", In Mediansky, F.A. & Palfreeman, A.C.,(eds), In Pursuit of National Interests, Pergamon Press, Sydney, 1988, pg 46. Some scepticism about their effectiveness is warranted, however. Reports written during the 1970's which were highly critical of the IDC's, highlighted some of their "insurmountable defects", including the fact that members saw themselves as delegates protecting the interests of their various departments. Boyce, "The Foreign Policy Process in Australia", pg 15.

\(^{46}\) Australian International Development Assistance Bureau, previously ADAB.

\(^{47}\) Now the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs (DILGEA).

\(^{48}\) Hayden, Bill; "Address to the Foreign Correspondents Club of Thailand", Bangkok, AFAR 55(8):777-783, August 1984, pg 780.
when other states in the region were experiencing dynamic economic growth, created the potential for long term regional instability.

For the Immigration Minister, Stewart West, the issue was closer to home. Against a background of heated and often bitter domestic debate about Asian immigration, his concern was to ensure that Australia, being the region's only major resettlement nation, did not carry the burden alone. Australia had a common interest with the ASEAN countries of first refuge in stemming the flow of Indochinese refugees. Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore acknowledged that Australia's recognition of the Vietnamese government meant it could play a useful role in discussions with Hanoi, as their own political positions and antagonisms ruled out direct negotiations with Vietnam. It can be inferred that the Minister for Immigration and his Department favoured a resumption of aid to Vietnam because its suspension had deprived the Australian government of an important source of influence. According to West, however, the issue was never formally submitted to Cabinet for discussion.

The Department of Prime Minister and the Cabinet played a lesser role in foreign policy under the Hawke government than under that of his predecessor. However, the Prime Minister and his Department prevailed over his Ministers when their position clashed with Hawke's main foreign policy concerns, particularly Australia's alliance relationship with the United States. As with previous governments, the Office of National Assessments and the Joint Intelligence Organisation also provided analysis and advice. Although both institutions can be considered

49 As Hayden put it: "History abounds with examples of the hostility and even violence that can result from such asymmetry". Hayden, ibid, pg 780.
50 West, Stewart, News Release, 4 August, AFAR, 54(8), August 1983, pg 441. On occasion, the government exploited domestic concern about Asian immigration to shore up support for the government's Indochina policies, by linking Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia to the exodus of Vietnamese refugees.
51 For example, the Thai government, with more than 200,000 refugees in camps along the border, suggested that Canberra's discussions with Vietnam include the repatriation of Khmers and Laotians. West, Stewart, News Release, 18 August, AFAR, 54(8), August 1983, pg 455.
53 As Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser expanded the role of the Department's International Section. Boyce, "The Foreign Policy Process in Australia", pg 16.
members of the "western intelligence club", the judgements of their Indochina analysts tended
to diverge from those of the United States agencies, which were often ideological.

No aspect of the study of foreign relations, as Holsti has pointed out, "is more difficult to
generalise about than the relationship of public opinion to a governments objectives and
behaviour". Empirical studies have shown that changes in public attitudes follow
government actions, demonstrating that governments not only respond to public attitudes but
help create them. The media plays an important role in this process: It not only reflects
foreign policy, but also has an input into the foreign policy process, by determining what
becomes an issue, how much publicity it receives and even how it is reported. More
importantly, the media is where public debate on foreign policy issues takes place and it is used
by government as well as other political parties, lobby groups, individuals and the
bureaucracy, either officially or through leaks. Much of this debate reflects efforts to
persuade, influence or signal, and is part of the process of competitive bargaining. These
efforts are necessarily stepped up at election time, although foreign policy issues are usually
overshadowed by domestic ones.

Because the majority of Australians have little interest in, or knowledge of, foreign affairs, it is helpful to distinguish between the "attentive" public and the remainder. Yet as Boyce has pointed out, many of the "attentive public" are single issue or sectional critics who "do not see the interconnectedness of policies or the grand overview of national interests". The media has contributed to this problem. Although reporting of international issues in the daily newspapers is often poor, Australia is well served across the range of print and electronic outlets. More seriously, the "limiting prism" through which Southeast Asian news is

---

55 Holsti, Ibid, pg 347. Holsti was referring here to literate societies, therefore Australia can be included in the generalisation.
56 Harris, Stuart, "Vietnam: ten years on", AFAR, 56(7):582-589, July 1985, pg 589.
57 Smith, "Foreign policy and the political process", pg 39.
58 Boyce, "The foreign policy process in Australia", pg 23.
59 Evans & Grant, Australia's Foreign Relations..., pg 51.
filtered in Australia\textsuperscript{60} means that had they relied on media reports, even those who followed the Cambodian issue closely would have little understanding of the root causes of conflict. In terms of scholarship, however, over the past decade Australia has become the "centre of gravity" of Indochinese studies in the western world, with academic specialists covering areas such as Cambodian history, society and politics\textsuperscript{61}. The links between foreign policy makers and specialist scholars reinforced the independence of Australian assessments of events in Indochina.

Pressure groups seeking to influence foreign policy tend to focus on the executive. They seek influence directly by meetings with ministers, attempt to shape public opinion and try to gain representation on departmental bodies advising the minister\textsuperscript{62}. According to Evans and Grant, the "most formidable" of the external lobbyists are the NGO's\textsuperscript{63}. The non-government aid organisations, particularly the umbrella group ACFOA\textsuperscript{64}, played an important role in the Hawke government's Cambodia policy. There were two main reasons for this: Firstly, because neither Australia or any other western country had an official presence in Phnom Penh, NGO's were an important source of information about conditions and events in the country. As one senior foreign affairs official put it: "Having staff on the ground...NGO's can provide a vital link in giving assessments and information to the outside world" and enable governments "to maintain international contact with countries which are politically isolated, such as Kampuchea"\textsuperscript{65}. Secondly, the government channelled significant amounts of aid to Cambodia through NGO's, including the provision of support on a matching grants basis\textsuperscript{66}. Thirdly, AIDAB welcomed lobbying by ACFOA and the NGO's because it helped secure government funding

\textsuperscript{60} Tiffen, Rodney, \textit{The News from Southeast Asia: The Sociology of Newsmaking}, ISEAS, Singapore, 1978, pg 5.


\textsuperscript{63} Evans & Grant, \textit{Australia's Foreign Relations}... pg 50.

\textsuperscript{64} The Australian Council for Oversea's Aid.


\textsuperscript{66} Flood, Ibid, pg 367.
for aid projects\textsuperscript{67}, while their public relations efforts were valued because they ensured community support for government spending on foreign aid. These arrangements had important political implications which will be covered in the next chapter.

The Vietnam war, its aftermath and the de-recognition of Pol Pot: The historical context

For many in the Labor leadership, the commitment of Australian troops to Vietnam, and the bitter conscription debate which followed, were seminal events. The Hawke government's Indochina policies have to be seen against the background of the Vietnam war, and Australia's military involvement that conflict, which "sent shock waves through at least some of the home population and...was to have a continuing impact on Australian thought and society"\textsuperscript{68}.

Up to and during the Vietnam war, Australia's Indochina policy was based on a fear of the downward thrust of communism\textsuperscript{69}. The decision to become involved in the war was motivated largely by a desire to keep the United States engaged in the security of Southeast Asia. Thus in 1964, Australia's Ambassador to Washington, Alan Renouf, sent a cable to Canberra advising that:

South Vietnam is an area in which Australian can, without disproportionate expenditure, pick up a lot of credit with the United States. Our objectives should be to achieve such habitual closeness with the United States and a sense of mutual reliance

\textsuperscript{67} Charleton, Peter, AIDAB, personal interview, Canberra, 8 November 1991.
\textsuperscript{69} The Minister for External Affairs, Percy Spender, articulated an early version of the "domino theory" as the French were about to lose Indochina, when he said that if the Vietminh were to govern the whole country and the forces of communism prevail, Malaya is in danger of being outflanked and it, together with Thailand, Burma, and Indonesia, will become the next direct object of further communist activities". Quoted in Lockhart, Greg, "Fear and dependence. Australia's Vietnam policy, 1965-1985", \textit{In Maddock, Kenneth & Wright, Barry (Eds), War. Australia and Vietnam}, Harper & Row, Sydney, 1987, pg 15.
that in our time of need...the United States would have little option but to respond as we would want70.

Later in the war, Australia's apparent opposition to negotiations with Vietnam under any circumstances, and the public encouragement given by Australian ministers to continued United States bombing, indicated that Canberra was less interested in a successful outcome in Vietnam than keeping the United States engaged on the Asian mainland71. Freudenburg has argued that: "A policy so wrongly based could never have succeeded and it did not deserve to succeed". But for a generation of Australian leaders who remembered the war against Japan in the Pacific, the importance to Australia of American power was self evident.

Not only were Australia's objectives in Vietnam doubtful, but as Frost has argued, "Australian analyses of the origins and nature of the conflict within Vietnam were based to a considerable extent on historical and political misconceptions72". These included the claim by Minister for External Affairs, Barwick, that there was no genuine support in the south for the North Vietnamese cause73. This formed an important element in official justifications of Australian policies, including those of the Department of External Affairs, as did the assumption articulated by Menzies, that the takeover of South Vietnam "must be seen as part of a thrust by Communist China"74. As Freudenburg bluntly put it, "the governments of the intervening powers...almost invariably lied and almost invariably (were) wrong"75.

70 Quoted in Freudenburg, Graham, The Australian Labor Party and Vietnam, Australian Outlook 33(2):157-165, August 1979, pg 161. Freudenburg is highly critical of Renouf's telegram, but it was the only advice the minister would have accepted from him at that time. Renouf later wrote that: "Australia should not have sought to tie herself, in political and defence terms, so tightly and so unquestioningly to the United States...the perceptions at the base of Australia's policy...were also wrong". Renouf, Alan, The Frightened Country, Macmillan, Melbourne, 1979, pg 531.
73 The conclusions of scholars such as Race and Thayer, as well as assessments in the "Pentagon Papers", point to political and social grievance in South Vietnam as the basis of support for the struggle by the National Front for Liberation in the south. Frost, Ibid, pg 2.
74 Enough was known of the Sino-Vietnamese relationship to cast doubts on this claim, including the failure of the Chinese to support the Vietminh's goal of unification at Geneva in 1954. Lockhart, "Fear and dependence...", pg 16.
At the time of the Vietnam war, Australia enjoyed a "special relationship" with Cambodia, while its leader, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, struggled to preserve both his country and its neutrality. Cambodia asked Australia to represent its interests in South Vietnam after Sihanouk broke off relations with the United States, a request Hasluck described as an expression of "real confidence in us". At the same time, Australia was asked to represent American interests in Phnom Penh. Merrillees has argued that Washington’s request was made on the basis of “Australia’s perceived independent stance”, and suggested that this new role made Australia a more equal partner of the United States. She is wrong on both counts: Firstly, Australia’s enthusiasm for SEATO, which Sihanouk refused to recognize, and Canberra’s perception of events in Indochina through the narrow lens of commitment to the US alliance, refute any notion of “independence”, and point instead to Australia’s reliability as an ally as the reason Washington trusted Canberra with this responsibility; Secondly, far from making Australia more equal, it locked Australia into the strategic interests of the United States, and it did this without the knowledge of the Australian people. The Australian Embassy relayed messages between Washington and Phnom Penh and the Australian Security Intelligence Service took over the CIA’s network of agents. After the coup in 1970 which toppled Sihanouk, and at Washington’s urging, Australia provided financial aid and military advice to the Lon Nol government.

77 Merrillees, Ibid, pg 53.
78 For Dulles, the South East Asia Treaty Organisation was critical to the containment of China; Australia valued it because it committed the United States to the fight against communism in Southeast Asia.
80 According to Toohey & Pinwill, the CIA told the Hope Royal Commission that ASIS had engaged in “unique operations and reporting in Cambodia”. Toohey, Brian & Pinwill, William, Oyster. The Story of the Australian Secret Intelligence Agency, William Heinemann, Melbourne, 1989, pg 127. William McMahon was less impressed with their efforts, and described the ASIS reports on Cambodia he had received as Foreign Minister between 1970-1972 as “bar room gossip and not worth repeating”. Knightley, Phillip, "Grit in the Oyster", The Independent Monthly, August 1989, pg 36.
81 Shawcross, Nixon, Kissinger and the Destruction of Cambodia, pg 220.
While the Labor party was opposed to America's involvement in Vietnam, in practice it sought to compromise. According to Freudenburg, this resulted from "a dichotomy between opposition to America's war on the one hand and the unwillingness to oppose America outright on the other". Labor's dilemma was resolved "for all practical purposes" when Menzies announced, only months after the reintroduction of conscription, that a battalion of Australian troops would be sent to Vietnam, ostensibly at the request of the Diem government. The decision averted the possibility of an ALP split over the issue. Not only had anti-communists within the party shared Menzies views, but many ALP members were Catholics who sympathised with the government in Saigon, which like its supporters, was predominantly Catholic.

Hayden was amongst the earliest opponents of both the America war in Vietnam and Australia's involvement, and was more in tune with the emotional mood of the left in the Labor Party than others. He regarded the conflict as a post-colonial civil war in which neither the United States or Australia had a legitimate or useful role to play, viewed Diem as a "corrupt, nepotic, despotic administrator" and judged his government to be illegitimate. In contrast, Whitlam and Calwell initially supported America's involvement in Vietnam, at least in part to neutralise criticism of Hayden, Cairns and Cameron, as well as to avoid the electoral backlash which would follow if Labor left itself open to charges of being soft on communism.

The advent of the Whitlam government saw forward defence jettisoned in Australia, in favour of regional economic assistance, diplomacy and trade. After leading Labor to victory in 1972 Whitlam ended Australia's military involvement in Vietnam, strongly criticised the US

82 For example, the Labor Party Federal Executive accepted the American version of the Gulf of Tonkin incident, and called upon the US to exercise restraint in any retaliation. Freudenburg, "The Australian Labor Party and Vietnam", pg 160.
83 The reintroduction of conscription had been approved on the basis of concern about Indonesia's confrontation with Malaysia.
84 Freudenburg, Ibid, pg 160.
85 Stubbs, Hayden, pp 67-68.
87 At one stage, he even advised Hayden that because of his opposition to US involvement in Vietnam he should consider getting out of the Labor Party. Stubbs, Ibid, pg 64.
88 Lockhart, "Fear and dependence..." pg 20.
89 The commitment to withdraw all Australian troops from Indochina had been made by McMahon, his predecessor.
bombing of North Vietnam and tried to achieve a balanced relationship with Saigon and Hanoi\textsuperscript{90}. Although outraged by American support for Lon Nol and the coup which brought him to power, Whitlam was careful to weigh this against Australia's loyalties to the United States and ASEAN\textsuperscript{91}. When the Lon Nol regime fell to the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia in April 1975, he moved quickly to recognise the new regime in Phnom Penh.

The Fraser government retained the thrust of the Whitlam government's policies. However, Sihanouk's removal from any role in the Cambodian government, and the declaration of the state of Democratic Kampuchea, made it clear by early 1976 that the Royal Government of National Union had been a fiction\textsuperscript{92}, while reports of the atrocities perpetrated by the Pol Pot regime had begun to leak by this time. Defending the government's continued recognition of the Pol Pot regime, the Foreign Minister, Andrew Peacock, stated: "I do not believe it would assist the process of an early return to peace in Cambodia if we were to withdraw our recognition of the Cambodian government\textsuperscript{93}, and as late as December 1978 he declared Australia would open negotiations with the Pol Pot regime, with a view to re-establishing diplomatic relations\textsuperscript{94}. The Liberal government's position on Cambodia was based on a reluctance to offend ASEAN or act in a manner which would countenance a Vietnamese invasion\textsuperscript{95}.

Malcolm Fraser responded to the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in December 1978 by suspending Australia's $7 million aid program and all cultural contacts with Vietnam early in the New Year. He did this against the advice of the Foreign Minister and the Department of

\textsuperscript{90} In 1973 an Australian diplomatic mission was opened in Hanoi and a reciprocal DRV mission was established in Canberra. Thayer, Carlyle, Australia and Vietnam, 1950-1980, Part 11, \textit{Dyason House Papers} 6(3):5-12, March 1980, pg 5. By 1975, the trade embargoes had been lifted, bilateral aid programs set up and cultural exchanges begun. Lockhart, "Fear and dependence...", pg 26.

\textsuperscript{91} Merrillees, "Australia's attitudes and policies towards Kampuchea...", pp 61-2.


\textsuperscript{93} Quoted in Merrillees, "Australia's attitudes and policies towards Kampuchea...", pg 64.

\textsuperscript{94} This decision was made in the same month Pol Pot's brutal record was being denounced in the United Nations. Osborne, "Kampuchea: the politics of recognition", pg 9.

\textsuperscript{95} Osborne, Ibid, pg 10.
Foreign Affairs\textsuperscript{96}. Fraser's response was determined by an almost "obsessive concern" about the projection of Soviet power in the region\textsuperscript{97}. He looked to China and the United States to balance that power, and used the issue of Vietnam's invasion and the continuing refugee exodus, in an attempt to paint Vietnam as the "sole villain of the piece" in international forums\textsuperscript{98}. More importantly, as Carlyle Thayer argued, Australia used the Kampuchea and refugee issues "to associate - if not insinuate - itself more closely with the ASEAN states"\textsuperscript{99}. The Cambodian conflict facilitated closer cooperation and consultation between Australia and ASEAN, which overshadowed the serious trade disagreements between them\textsuperscript{100}. Australia supported the ASEAN resolutions in the UNGA of 1979 and 1980, which recognised the inviolability of national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and backed the claim of the Khmer Rouge to Cambodia's UN seat\textsuperscript{101}.

Australia's recognition of the ousted Pol Pot regime led to strong disagreement between the government and opposition, and between Malcolm Fraser and his Foreign Minister. In July 1980, with the support of most Liberal backbenchers and the backing of his department, Andrew Peacock pressed the government to de-recognise Kampuchea, but was rebuffed by Fraser and Cabinet\textsuperscript{102}. The government's position was defended by Ian Sinclair, who argued

\textsuperscript{96} Australia's diplomatic representative in Hanoi, Graham Alliband, resigned because of his opposition to Fraser's actions. Andrew Peacock was in Geneva at the time but was consulted over the phone by Ian Sinclair. Peacock now claims that because the issue involved "certain things we were doing with the Americans" at that time, he "absolutely agreed with the (Prime Minister's) decision". Peacock, Andrew, interview, Canberra, 14 November 1991.

\textsuperscript{97} John Edwards, quoted in Girling, "Australia and Southeast Asia...", pg 11. As Lockhart observed, Vietnam had earlier been a 'puppet' of China, but now that Australia was friends with Beijing, Vietnam had become a 'puppet' of the Soviet Union. Lockhart, "Fear and dependence...", pg 27.

\textsuperscript{98} After the invasion Fraser sought the support of 18 countries and frequently issued statements critical of Vietnam, for example, at the 1979 ANZUS Council meeting and CHOGM. Thayer, "Australia and Vietnam...", pg 10.

\textsuperscript{99} Thayer, ibid, pg 11.


\textsuperscript{102} Ross, Estelle, Australia, the Indochina problem and the derecognition of the Pol Pot regime, Australia-Asia Papers, No 28, Centre for the Study of Australian-Asian Relations, Griffith University, Nathan, Qld, 1984, pg 44; Schneider, Russel, The Colt From Kooyong. Andrew Peacock: A Political Biography, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1981, pg 76.
that recognition "did not necessarily bestow any significance on the politics or philosophy...nor on the actions taken" by the government of Pol Pot. The question of recognition was again raised in Cabinet when Peacock threatened to resign over the issue, immediately after Fraser declared an October 18 election date. In the face of strong public opposition and a Labor party policy which called for the de-recognition of Kampuchea, and despite the fact that he viewed Peacock's action with hostility, Fraser reversed Cabinet's earlier decision "in the interests of the government's future". This triumph of humanitarian principle over realpolitik saw Australian policy depart from that of the ASEAN countries. According to Angel, "it was sensitivity to this difference which largely accounted for the delay between the indication of Australia's intentions and the formal withdrawal of recognition in February 1981. In 1982, ASEAN assisted in the formation of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK), designed to play down the stigma attached to the Pol Pot regime and prevent the Vietnamese backed government of Hun Sen from occupying Kampuchea's seat in the UN. However, because Pol Pot remained part of the coalition government in exile, Australia continued to abstain from voting on the issue of Kampuchea's seat in the UN.

103 Ross, Australia and the Indochina problem..., pg 23.
104 Although Cabinet was divided on the issue, most members felt they could not let themselves be blackmailed over the issue by Peacock. Schneider, The Colt From Cooyong, pg 79. Peacock now admits he did not treat the issue as professionally as he might have done, but the tragic human dimension of events in Cambodia made him overly emotional. Peacock, Andrew, Interview, Canberra, 14 November 1991.
105 Schneider, The Colt From Cooyong, pg 79.
106 Angel, "Australia and Southeast Asia", pg 226.
107 The CGDK comprised the opposition factions of Prince Sihanouk, the Khmer Peoples National Liberation Front (KPNLF) led by Son Sann, and the Khmer Rouge's Democratic Kampuchea (DK), under the nominal leadership of Khieu Samphan.
Chapter Two

The development and implementation of Labor’s Indochina policies

You can lay down all these general principles, but that is not a policy...if you are to have a policy you must take particular situations and consider what action or inaction is suitable...and it is quite clear that as the situations and conditions of foreign affairs continually change from day to day, your policy cannot be stated once and for all.

The general principles laid down in the 1982 ALP platform were the starting point for the Hawke government in formulating its policies towards Indochina. That platform committed Labor to the resumption of two aid projects in Vietnam which had been suspended in January 1979, and to "strenuous diplomatic efforts" to promote a regional solution to Indochina's problems. The first comprehensive statement outlining the new government's perceptions and policies towards Indochina was made by the Foreign Minister, Bill Hayden, in a speech to the Parliament on 7 December 1983. Australia's policy towards Cambodia remained "as set out in (that) statement" until the end of Hayden's term in office. Labor's policies, therefore, were largely developed in the period from March to December 1983. Although sympathetic to the principles outlined in the ALP platform, the December statement was more pragmatic in its view of what Australia might be able to achieve and its recognition of the constraints on the government's policy options. This chapter will examine those constraints, and the ways in which the Hawke government sought to meet its commitment to the restoration of aid and the promotion of a resolution to the Cambodian conflict in spite of them.

4 Hayden, Bill, CPD, H of R, 26 May, 1988, pg 3215.
Hayden bought to his portfolio a long standing personal interest in Indochina, dating back to the Vietnam war days, and Labor's policies were largely a product of his thinking and initiatives. Hawke had to be particularly sensitive in his dealings with Hayden, whom he replaced as leader around the time the election was called. As a result of that circumstance Hayden had a much freer rein in foreign affairs than his successor, Gareth Evans, or indeed his predecessors, ever had. Hawke could not afford to alienate his Foreign Minister, who was more in tune with the views of important elements in the party and had the overwhelming support of cabinet and caucus. Hawke's support was crucial when Hayden's role in the development and implementation of Labor's Indochina policies saw him become "deeply embroiled" in the conflicts which followed. Those conflicts centered on two main issues: The resumption of aid to Vietnam and Australia's relations with ASEAN.

**Aid to Vietnam**

On taking office, Hayden sought to gauge the attitude of allies to the resumption of Australian aid to Vietnam. The Chinese Premier, Zhao Ziyang, during a visit to Australia in early April, expressed strong opposition to the proposal, claiming that aid would "inflate the aggressive arrogance of the Vietnamese." Although Hawke assured Zhao that any aid would be "humanitarian, modest and certainly not be anything which would...support or encourage the

---


7 This was put to Senator Chris Schacht who agreed, stating that there was "no doubt" Hayden had had a freer rein because of the circumstances of the Labor leadership spill. Schacht, Chris, interview, Canberra, 15 January 1992. Hayden also owed his relative autonomy to the fact that his foreign policy agenda was rather different to that of Hawke's.


military effort in Vietnam\textsuperscript{11}, he said that no decision would be made before consultations had taken place. Hayden gave a similar assurance to Indonesian Foreign Minister Mochtar Kusumaatmadja during his first visit to the ASEAN states\textsuperscript{12}, and indicated government policy would not necessarily follow Labor resolutions when he said that:

These are matters for interpretation, application and administration by the Labor government. The implementation of any of our policy or resolutions, the timing, rate of implementation, the manner, these are all matters which are determined by circumstances relevant at any particular time and especially the internal and external best interests of Australia\textsuperscript{13}.

The reaction of all the parties consulted was negative. The ASEAN states were emphatic that no aid should be given as long as Vietnamese troops remained in Cambodia, and President Reagan warned aid should be considered only in the context of a comprehensive settlement and not before\textsuperscript{14}. Both Beijing and Washington maintained that a unilateral move by Australia would have a demoralising impact on ASEAN, where much effort had gone into developing the anti-Vietnamese coalition\textsuperscript{15}. The proposal was shelved in the face of overwhelming opposition. This explanation fits the "rational actor" model of state behaviour.

The reality was more complex. According to journalist Brian Toohey, Hawke decided to drop the proposal for the resumption of aid shortly after his election victory, and before consultations took place, in response to a phone call from George Shultz expressing strong American opposition\textsuperscript{16}. Although Hayden realised it would be impossible for Australia to restore aid, he was not prepared to simply fall in behind Washington. The Foreign Minister preferred to handle the issue in his own way, in part to ensure the government's position remained viable at

\textsuperscript{11} O'Brien, Ibid, pg 8.
\textsuperscript{12} O'Brien, Ibid, pg 7.
\textsuperscript{13} FEER, 21 April 1983, quoted in O'Brien, Ibid, pg 7.
\textsuperscript{14} Lipski, Sam, "Labor's risk of creating new tensions", The Bulletin, 29 March 1983, pg 92.
\textsuperscript{15} Lipski, Ibid, pg 90.
home, but also because he viewed foreign policy as a multi-faceted task and was unwilling to treat the issue separately from Australia's broader relations with the region, or commit himself to a position prior to discussions with regional leaders.

The government not only faced opposition from ASEAN, but also from the relevant desk officers in the Department of Foreign Affairs, who felt that the resumption of aid would significantly set back Australia's relations with the ASEAN countries, particularly Indonesia. The pro-ASEAN faction had the upper hand in debate within the Department at that time. The backdown on aid came at a Hong Kong press conference in August, when Hayden announced that "the government had no inclination to implement it". The shift followed a meeting between Hayden and ASEAN foreign ministers in June and was made in the interests of Australia's broader relations with the region and to ensure Australia's "future involvement in contributing to a settlement". By consulting with regional parties first, therefore, Australia had sought to gain acceptance as a party to the Cambodian dialogue in return for a backdown on aid.

The government endeavoured to offset domestic criticism and minimise the backlash which would surely follow the backdown on aid. They did this in three ways: Firstly, Labor defended its position on the resumption of aid in principle, refuting any suggestion that such aid might "help prolong the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea". Secondly, the government tried to avoid the appearance of a backdown through a flexible interpretation of Labor policy which tied the resumption of aid to a resolution of the Cambodian conflict, thereby shifting the goalposts. This was made clear in Senator Tate's statement that "our policy which speaks of providing

20 This point was made by Senator Michael Tate during a Parliamentary debate on the opposition motion that no aid be sent to Vietnam while its troops remained in Cambodia. Tate, Michael, CPD, Senate, 5 May 1983, pg 302.
humanitarian and development aid cannot be implemented in isolation from the other part of our policy", which related to the independence of the Indochinese states. In practical terms, this meant that:

the timing of any resumption of humanitarian or development aid will be the decision of the government...it will be made at a time and at a level when it serves the realisation of our whole policy towards Indochina...that policy embraces the goal of independence for Kampuchea, Laos and Vietnam. That manifestly requires the withdrawal of any outside forces...

Thirdly, the government effectively exploited the widely accepted distinction between "humanitarian aid" and "development assistance" to channel aid to Indochina through multilateral institutions and NGO's.

For persistent critics of the government's backdown, Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach provided Hayden with a way out. During a visit to Canberra in March 1984, Thach waved the question of aid aside, stating that: "we are not beggars". He assured Hayden that from Vietnam's point of view, the most valuable aid was the support and sympathy of the Australian people and the continuation of the government's initiative to facilitate the search for a solution to the Cambodian problem. This cut the ground from beneath the feet of those who had refused to let the aid issue drop, and at the ALP's conference the same year, the government was successful in having the commitment dropped from Labor's platform.

---

21 Tate, Michael, ibid, pg 302.
22 Tate, Michael, ibid, pg 302.
24 Evans, Gareth, CPD, Senate, 19 October 1983. pg 1723.
25 Australian Labor Party Constitution and Rules, 1984, pg 103. Hayden argued at the conference that "Vietnam...has asked us not to proceed with that...not to declare that sort of commitment publicly...if it is to damage our influence in the region". Ibid, pg 507.
The Hawke governments Indochina policies were developed and pursued, in part, to compensate for Labor's backdown on East Timor. They also had to compensate for the backdown on aid. The linkage between the two issues goes further than this, however. As Mackie observed, Canberra could not afford to antagonise Jakarta over East Timor, and at the same time expect Indonesian support within ASEAN for Australia's efforts to promote a resolution in Cambodia. The Director of ACFOA, Russell Rollason, was more specific when he suggested Australia may have reached a tacit agreement with Indonesia not to press the Timor issue in exchange for cooperation on Indochina.

Against this background, the Parliamentary debate on the resumption of aid was irrelevant. At that time, the Liberals were preoccupied with rebuilding their Party after their resounding electoral defeat in March, and together with the persistence of the differences which had caused the Fraser-Peacock split, this weakened the opposition's attack on Labor's stance. The extent to which opinion within opposition ranks was polarised on the issue can be illustrated by contrasting the positions of Liberal Senators John Carrick and Robert Hill. Carrick argued that Australia should adopt a hard line against Vietnam because the invasion of Cambodia was "part of the domino situation", behind which lurked the Soviet threat. In contrast, Robert Hill's stance was moderate. While Hill could not endorse the resumption of aid in the Senate debate, he did not explicitly oppose it either. His views accorded with those of the both the government and former foreign minister, Andrew Peacock, whom he quoted with approval, stating that:

...it is important that the actions of others do not weaken the forces working towards moderation, cooperation and concentration on internal development, and do not limit

---

26 The 1982 Labor Party platform called for Australia to reverse its recognition of the Indonesian occupation of East Timor. The Hawke government backed down on this in the interests of Australia's relationship with Indonesia.


29 Carrick, John, CPD, Senate, 26 May 1983, pp 924-945.

30 For example, he said he accepted ACFOA's argument that because Australia's aid program had been directed towards overcoming malnutrition, especially amongst children, it could not be construed as assisting the occupation of Cambodia. Hill, Robert, CPD, Senate, 26 May 1983, pp 931-2.
their range of choices by making them highly dependent on the communist great powers for the aid they need.\(^{31}\)

If the opposition had been unable to exploit the issue of aid, the government's efforts to promote a resolution in Cambodia, because of the rift it caused in Australia's relations with ASEAN, played into their hands.

**Australia's relations with ASEAN**

In Manila, during his first visit to the ASEAN states, Hayden announced that Australia would play a facilitating role in Cambodian conflict, and set out a six point proposal for settlement\(^{32}\), based on a conviction that a military solution was not possible. Hayden was under no illusions about the government's ability to influence events, and recognised that the Cambodian issue was touchy and could be potentially damaging for Australia. According to John Edwards, the proposal had come from Hawke, and was pressed on Hayden despite his protestations that "it will be much more difficult than solving an industrial dispute.\(^{33}\)

Hawke believed his government was well placed to take an initiative. As he explained on his first visit to Washington, a capacity to talk to Vietnam, as well as good relations with the US, ASEAN and China, meant Australia was in a unique position to engage in dialogue.\(^{34}\) Furthermore, as David Chandler noted, the ALP's opposition to Australia's involvement in the

\(^{31}\) Hill, Robert, CPD, Senate, 26 May 1983, pp 924-925.

\(^{32}\) The proposal called for: an end to Vietnam's isolation; the phased withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Cambodia matched by an effective arrangement to prevent Pol Pot and his forces from returning to power; self-determination for the Cambodian people; the creation of conditions which would allow the peaceful return of displaced Cambodians; the acceptance by all parties of a neutral, independent and non-aligned Cambodia; and the normalisation of relations between Vietnam, ASEAN, China and the west. *The Canberra Times* 25&26 April, cited in Leng & Silwood, "Australia and the Kampuchean crisis", pp 101, 105. Hayden's Manila speech was not reprinted in *AFAR*.

\(^{33}\) Edwards, "How Bill Hayden is growing into foreign affairs", pg 96.

Vietnam war and Whitlam's gracious welcome of Vietnam's unification, gave Labor important advantages over its predecessor in this respect\textsuperscript{35}.

Australia's offer to play a facilitating role met with qualified approval from the ASEAN countries, Vietnam and the United States. Singapore's Foreign Minister, Dhanabalan, said he was unsure what the term "facilitator" meant but had no objection to Australia playing such a role provided it did not interfere with ASEAN's efforts\textsuperscript{36}, while the Thais were cautiously optimistic\textsuperscript{37}. The Vietnamese Ambassador in Canberra, Phan Nhu Sam, said Hanoi was willing to accept Australia as mediator as long as Australia did not take sides and support the ASEAN countries against Vietnam\textsuperscript{38}. Significantly, George Shultz supported Hayden's role at the 1983 ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference in Bangkok, although he had previously labelled it as "stupid"\textsuperscript{39}. This was a trade-off for the backdown on aid. According to O'Brien, during Hawke's visit to Washington, Reagan had agreed that Australia could act as an intermediary between ASEAN and Vietnam, provided the resumption of aid was only considered in the context of a comprehensive settlement in Cambodia\textsuperscript{40}. Predictably, China's reaction to the Australian offer was cool.

Tensions first appeared in Australia's relations with ASEAN at the 1983 Post Ministerial Conference, when Hayden expressed doubts about the claim that "demographic changes" were being imposed on Cambodia by Vietnamese occupation forces, and questioned the effectiveness of ASEAN's strategy\textsuperscript{41}. This was seen by the ASEAN countries as evidence of a drift by Australia towards Vietnam, a view reinforced by both the warm reception Hayden received when he visited Hanoi, and his announcement of measures to improve and upgrade Australia's bilateral relations with Vietnam. While ASEAN saw this as deliberately undermining their own efforts,

\textsuperscript{36} O'Brien, The Making of Australia's Indochina Policies..., pg 8.
\textsuperscript{37} Chandler, "Australia, ASEAN and Cambodia", pg 10.
\textsuperscript{39} Chandler, "Australia, ASEAN and Cambodia", pg 10.
\textsuperscript{40} O'Brien, The Making of Australia's Indochina Policies..., pg 9.
Hayden was undeterred, convinced that: "any policy of isolating and punishing Vietnam...substitutes a policy of frustration for one of positive action (and) simply doesn't work"42. The critical test of Canberra's attitude, for both Vietnam and the ASEAN countries, was how Australia would vote in the annual ASEAN-sponsored resolution on Cambodia in the United Nations General Assembly in October43.

Australia's refusal to co-sponsor the annual resolution precipitated a crisis in Australian-ASEAN relations. It was intensified by Hayden's failure to refer to the Vietnamese invasion or condemn the continued occupation of Cambodia in his speech, which drew strong criticism from ASEAN members. Singapore's Foreign Minister Dhanabalan was the most strident, saying it was "tantamount to condoning aggression" and Hayden "could not have done a better job of antagonising others and losing friends"44. According to Senator Chris Schacht, George Shultz was behind their response and it was at his urging that the ASEAN foreign ministers all turned on Hayden and criticised him for "giving help and succour to the Vietnamese"45. The Australian Ambassador to the UN, Richard Woolcott, tried to defuse the issue, pointing to Australia's past condemnation of the invasion and stressing that the principles on which the resolution was founded were "fully consistent with those advocated by Australia"46. He explained that Australia had not co-sponsored the resolution because of concern that "the reference to the coalition could be taken as recognising the claims to legitimacy of the Khmer Rouge".

43 Mediansky, F.A. 'Options which are open to Australia', The Bulletin, 1 November 1983, pg 113.
44 Quoted in O'Brien, The Making of Australia's Indochina Policies..., pg 11. Dhanabalan accused Australia of "trying to bend over backwards to please the Vietnamese", and called for specific assurances from Hawke before his Bangkok visit, which Hayden described as an "intolerable set of preconditions". O'Brien, Ibid, pg 12. While Singapore was strong on rhetoric, however, Singaporean registered ships could be observed in the harbours of Vietnam and Cambodia unloading electronic and other consumer goods.
46 Woolcott, Richard, 'Statement to the UNGA', 26 October, AFAR 54(10):645-647, October 1983, pg 646.
The ASEAN countries also expressed their displeasure by suspending all dialogue with Australia until the Prime Minister clarified Canberra's position when he visited Bangkok in November, one month later\textsuperscript{47}. Their main concern was that Australia's stand might set an undesirable precedent and undermine their strategy of isolating Vietnam\textsuperscript{48}. Hayden accompanied Hawke on a fence mending visit to Bangkok, where the Prime Minister defended Australia's right to an independent foreign policy. Hawke placated Thai concerns by condemning the invasion and occupation of Cambodia, and stressed that on the "main issues of principle there is fundamental agreement"\textsuperscript{49}. From Bangkok, Hayden visited Indonesia while Hawke went on to the CHOGM meeting in New Delhi, where he had discussions with the Foreign Minister's of Malaysia and Singapore. Thus all four key members of ASEAN were consulted and received clarification of Australia's position. Because the ASEAN countries also wanted the conflict defused they were prepared to accept Australia's assurances, and the suspended ASEAN-Australia meeting was scheduled to take place in January 1984.

The ASEAN criticisms were seized upon and elevated to headline status by the Australian media, provoking a heated domestic debate. The central issue was whether the Hawke government had jeopardised Australia's important relationship with the ASEAN countries in its bid to gain credibility with Vietnam. In its defence, the government chose to focus on the right of Australia to an independent foreign policy. Before leaving for Bangkok, Hawke asserted that "no country...is going to dictate to Australia how it shall determine its interests"\textsuperscript{50}, while Hayden made the point that if Australia were to change its policies whenever other countries criticised or protested, "implies some awesome consequences"\textsuperscript{51}.

\textsuperscript{47} O'Brien, \textit{The Making of Australia's Indochina Policies...}, pg 11.
\textsuperscript{48} Leng & Silwood, "Australia and the Kampuchean crisis", pg 102.
\textsuperscript{49} Hawke, Bob, "Speech at the state dinner hosted by Thai Prime Minister, Prem Tinsulanonda", \textit{AFAR} 54(11):485-688, November 1983, pg 688.
\textsuperscript{50} \textit{The Courier Mail}, 20 November, quoted in O'Brien,\textit{The Making of Australia's Indochina Policies}, pg 13.
\textsuperscript{51} Hayden, Bill, CPD, H. of R., 9 November 1983, pg 2496.
In Parliament, the Liberal opposition claimed the decision on the UN vote had cost Australia credibility with allies as well as the opportunity to play a future role\textsuperscript{52}. How the Hawke government could have played a "useful" role in a strategy which it believed would not work and was morally wrong, however, was unclear. The opposition also argued that Australia's trade with ASEAN was threatened by the crisis\textsuperscript{53}. This is nonsense - it was ASEAN's anger at Australia's high levels of protection and the persistent trade imbalance in Australia's favour, which threatened trade relations between them\textsuperscript{54}. These criticisms were weakened by the narrow focus of the attack, and their failure to address the underlying causes of the conflict in Indochina. This was demonstrated when Senator Teague, who had accused the government of "going on extravagant missions" at the expense of Australia's relations with ASEAN, later admitted that the Vietnamese occupation in Cambodia prevented the return of the Khmer Rouge, "which would be worse"\textsuperscript{55}.

Labor again tried to exploit differences of opinion within conservative ranks, pointing to the concordance between Peacock's comments as Foreign Minister and the government's stance. Thus Hayden cited Peacock's comment that "Vietnam has legitimate interests to protect in Kampuchea"\textsuperscript{56}, while Hawke quoted the argument he put forward in 1981 opposing continued Australian recognition of the Khmer Rouge in which he said that: "On moral grounds, on political grounds, on legal grounds, recognition gave an impression of support to a butchering regime which had no effective control of territory and was unacceptable to the majority of Australian citizens"\textsuperscript{57}. Hawke further claimed that because the governments position was consistent with the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence in its report on Indochina, which had received endorsement from both sides of Parliament, it was

\textsuperscript{52} Senator Hill argued that as a result of the decision on the UN vote, ASEAN no longer wanted Australia's views and that Hayden had "blundered out of the game". Hill, Robert, CPD, Senate, 1 December 1983, pg 3132.

\textsuperscript{53} Andrew Peacock argued the decision would cost Australia its trade relationship with ASEAN. Peacock, Andrew, CPD, H. of R., 9 November 1983, pg 2485.

\textsuperscript{54} This was made clear to the Australians at the ASEAN Five Plus One Meeting. For example, see comments by Shafie, Tan Sri Ghazali, 'Opening statement by Malaysian Foreign Minister at the Australian-ASEAN Five Plus One Meeting', \textit{AFAR} 54(6):249-250, June 1983, pg 249.

\textsuperscript{55} Teague, Baden, CPD, The Senate, 1 December 1983, pp 3132, 3134.

\textsuperscript{56} Hayden, Bill, CPD, H. of R., 18 October 1983, pg 1813.

\textsuperscript{57} Hawke, Bob, CPD, H. of R., 10 November 1983, pg 2581.
a bipartisan one\textsuperscript{58}. However, the differences between the government and opposition were over means rather than objectives. As MacKellar put it, "the crucial thing is that the government opposes all efforts to resist physically the occupation of Cambodia by Vietnam\textsuperscript{59}."

The opposition were more concerned about the crisis in Australia's relations with ASEAN and their decision to suspend all dialogue with Australia, which was viewed as a "serious development\textsuperscript{60}".

The Australian media played a key role in the controversy. Their critical reporting of the government's handling of the issue provoked strong criticism from Attorney General, Gareth Evans, who countered that "the events of the past week did not justify the description disturbing, let alone some of the more extravagant commentary", and said Australia's differences with ASEAN "had been overstated"\textsuperscript{61}. Hawke did not so much criticise the media as appeal to them, when he pointed out that the exaggerations were not only damaging, but "the best interests of the country are not served by an attempt...to overstate the situation\textsuperscript{62}". By late November the domestic aspect of the crisis had largely been defused, assisted by the favourable and more balanced reports which had followed earlier sensationalist articles.

Hawke now referred to the "commendable degree of maturity and understanding" now evident in press commentary, citing editorials in the major dailies as "compelling evidence of a great degree of support and understanding of the government's position"\textsuperscript{63}. Hayden's November speech to Parliament addressed all the main criticisms which had been levelled at the government's Indochina policies. He argued that the two main policy options open to the government - support for the ASEAN strategy of isolating Vietnam, and acceptance of the status quo in Cambodia - were not viable in the long term. Labor's policies therefore represented a

\textsuperscript{58} Hayden, Bill, CPD, H. of R., 7 December 1983, pg 3405.
\textsuperscript{59} MacKellar, Michael, CPD, H. of R., 7 December 1983, pg 3411.
\textsuperscript{60} MacKellar, Michael, CPD, H. of R., 8 November 1983, pg 2367.
\textsuperscript{61} He cited as an example reports that the Malaysian Prime Minister walked out of Hayden's speech at the ASEAN meeting - he later apologised to Hayden for leaving and explained that he had had a prior engagement. Evans, Gareth, CPD, Senate., 11 October 1983, pg 1370.
\textsuperscript{62} Hawke, Bob, CPD, H. of R., 8 November 1983, pg 2467.
\textsuperscript{63} Hawke enjoyed a long honeymoon with the press after his election victory and they given him substantial support during the election campaign. His treatment of them reflects this.
realistic and principled third option, with little prospect of immediate realisation, but logically sound over the long term.

The clash with ASEAN was an outcome of the Hawke government's efforts to change the status quo and was inevitable because the ASEAN countries had come to take Australia's support for granted. The criticisms of Australia's actions by the ASEAN countries cannot be accepted at face value, however, but have to be considered in the context of the ASEAN process as well as the interests of the individual ASEAN countries in the Cambodian conflict. Three points are worth noting in this context. Firstly, Hayden wanted closer relations between Australia and Vietnam, and by implication Cambodia, than the ASEAN countries were prepared to tolerate. They understood what Australia was trying to do but were concerned that Australia should not get ahead of them. ASEAN's reaction therefore had little to do with the merits or otherwise of Australia's position, but was driven by the view that Australia posed a threat to ASEAN's role in Indochina. This was a particular concern of Indonesia, as ASEAN interlocuter, and Thailand, as front line state. Mochtar, for example, had warned Hayden before he visited Jakarta that "it might be prudent...for Australia to leave the matter to us". As Leng and Silwood noted, there were "delicate and sensitive aspects of the diplomacy which could not be ignored", and Australia would have to learn how to deal with them. It was clear that the role Australia played would be determined by what others were prepared to accept and allow.

Secondly, the reporting of ASEAN criticisms in Australia was misleading. Although ASEAN maintained a protocol of unity, there were differences in the views of individual ASEAN members on the Cambodian issue, and tensions between them did exist. Furthermore,

---

64 According to Leng & Silwood, Australia's UN vote, and the furore which followed, also "smacked of poor preparation and inadequate consultation". Leng & Silwood, "Australia and the Kampuchean crisis", pg 102. There may be some truth in this but the claim is difficult to assess, and how much consultation is "adequate"?

65 This was the assessment of Jeff Leach, who accompanied Hayden to the ASEAN Post Ministerial Meetings. Leach, Jeff, interview, Canberra, 21 November 1991.


67 Leng & Silwood, Ibid, pg 103.

according to Indonesia's Foreign Minister, Mochtar, "ASEAN members also differed in their assessment of Australia's attitude"\(^69\). While their main concern was to deny sanction to the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia, the viability of ASEAN itself was also at stake. As Mochtar put it, "If we had not taken the stand that we did then it could well be that ASEAN would have gone into oblivion"\(^70\).

While the ASEAN states were all concerned about the growing Soviet military presence in Southeast Asia, they did not see the situation as their responsibility, nor did they see the Soviet Union itself as a threat\(^71\). As the front line state, Thailand perceived Vietnam to be a major security threat, and drew upon Chinese support for self protection\(^72\). In deferring to the security concerns of Thailand, however, the ASEAN countries adopted a position which locked them into the strategic interests of the United States and China\(^73\). The result was that ASEAN's strategic response to the Cambodian crisis was increasingly determined in Beijing and Washington\(^74\). ASEAN attempted to bring pressure to bear on Vietnam to consider a political solution through the formation of the CGDK, but as Buszynski observed, "this was as far as

\(^{69}\) AAP report, quoted in Hayden, Bill, CPD, H. of R., 18 October 1983, pg 1813.


\(^{71}\) According to Sheldon Simon, the most disturbing feature of the Soviet-Vietnam alliance from ASEAN's point of view was the necessity of moving closer to the United States and China, thereby sacrificing their preferred equidistant posture. Simon, Sheldon, 'ASEAN security prospects', *Journal of International Affairs* 44(1):17-37, 1987, pg 21.

\(^{72}\) Buszynski, "ASEAN: a changing regional role", pp 766-768.

\(^{73}\) According to Buszynski, ASEAN's strategy increasingly came to be based on the hope that the external powers could be influenced to promote a solution to the conflict. Instead, ASEAN's influence was limited and the external powers chose to pursue their own interests. Buszynski, Ibid, pp 768-769.

\(^{74}\) The 1981 draft declaration for an International Conference on Kampuchea, proposed by ASEAN, and drawn up mainly by Lee Kuan Yew, for example, was surprisingly conciliatory towards Vietnam. It acknowledged the legitimate security concerns of the Vietnamese and implicitly laid part of the blame for the invasion of Cambodia on the Khmer Rouge's adventurism and China's military presence in Kampuchea. The draft endorsed the establishment of an independent non-aligned government in Cambodia by eliminating the Khmer Rouge through the electoral process. This would allay Thai and Vietnamese concerns, and deprive China of a pretext to intervene in Southeast Asian affairs. The draft was watered down in the face of strong opposition by China and the United States, and ASEAN was pressured by the Americans to accept the Chinese position. The "stormy encounter between ASEAN and China" over the draft, which Singapore's Tommy Koh described as the "bitterest in my thirteen years at the UN", exposed the gulf beneath the common opposition to the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia. Chanda, Nayan, *Brother Enemy. The War After the War*, Macmillan, New York, 1986, pp 387-389.
their own efforts could go in a dispute in which external powers had such an overriding role\textsuperscript{75}. The ASEAN countries recognised that Vietnam was "not in some way going to drift away from Southeast Asia\textsuperscript{76}", and accepted the fact that eventually a political solution would have to be reached, but one which excluded the Khmer Rouge, whom they could not support\textsuperscript{77}.

In Australia, ASEAN's position has not always been recognised for what it is: "a broad common policy which does not closely restrict the participants options"\textsuperscript{78}. When the ASEAN countries cannot reach an accommodation, they remain silent\textsuperscript{79}. As Stuart Harris pointed out, internal consultation between the ASEAN states allows different views to be argued out, but Australia is not a part of that process; "We either express our differences - and draw upon our heads ASEAN criticism - or we must automatically accept the ASEAN position"\textsuperscript{80}. At the same time, ASEAN has access to Australia's media through which "to express their criticisms forcefully", and the media could usually be relied upon to uncritically report, if not exaggerate the criticisms, in order create an issue.

Thirdly, diplomacy between the ASEAN countries has relied to a large extent on personal relationships between heads of state. It took time for the new Labor leadership to develop an understanding and good personal relations with their ASEAN counterparts, particularly as they sought to change the assumptions on which those relations had previously been based. By the end of his first year in office, however, Hayden enjoyed friendly relations with the ASEAN foreign ministers. Even when they agreed with Australia's position, however, the political constraints which applied to their own situation meant they were not always able to make their views public. This applied particularly to Indonesia and Malaysia, who were concerned about China's growing influence in Southeast Asia and saw Vietnam as a useful buffer.

\textsuperscript{75} Buszynski, " ASEAN: a changing regional role", pg 769.
\textsuperscript{76} Chandler, "Australia, ASEAN and Kampuchea", pg 10.
\textsuperscript{77} Buszynski, "ASEAN: a changing regional role", pg 772; Chanda, Brother Enemy, pg 383.
\textsuperscript{78} Anatolik, "ASEAN: the anatomy of a security entente", pg ii.
\textsuperscript{80} Harris, Stuart, 'Vietnam ten years on: Australian government perspectives and policies', \textit{AFAR} 56(7):582-589, July 1985, pg 589.
After 1983, Hayden was more circumspect in his approach to Indochina. He realised there would be "more merit in working with, not independently of the parties involved"\(^{81}\), and took care to ensure that Australia's differences with ASEAN were not aired publicly. He also had a much better appreciation of the fact that the Vietnamese were "prepared to pay a high price to safeguard what they perceived as vital security interests"\(^{82}\). Nguyen Co Thach's visit to Australia in 1984, and his indication that Vietnam was willing to discuss Cambodia as a separate issue, lent some credibility to Australia's involvement\(^{83}\). This was reinforced by the visits of Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, Kapitsa, and Prince Norodom Sihanouk later that year, as well as Hayden's own tour through Southeast Asia. While Australia's involvement was now low key, it was not without its difficulties. In an effort to get negotiations under way, Hayden proposed a meeting between ASEAN, Vietnam and Laos at the close of the 1984 ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference, offering Canberra as a possible venue. The idea was quickly rejected by the ASEAN states, who were unwilling to lend legitimacy to Vietnamese claims to represent Indochina\(^{84}\).

Hayden again came under fire, and found himself the centre of controversy, when Vietnamese forces made serious incursions into Thai territory during his visit to Vietnam in March 1985, where he sought to obtain certain clarifications about the position of Hanoi and Phnom Penh, "at the request of a number of ASEAN figures"\(^{85}\). Hayden had been briefed about the incursions before he left, but when he raised the issue with Nguyen Co Thach and Premier Pham Van Dong, both denied they had taken place, and Hayden apparently accepted the denials at face value\(^{86}\).

When he returned to Bangkok, the Thai Foreign Minister, Siddhi Savetsila, presented him with

\(^{81}\) Leng & Silwood, "Australia and the Kampuchean crisis", pg 104.


\(^{83}\) Leng & Silwood,"Australia and the Kampuchean crisis", pg 103.


\(^{86}\) O'Brien, The Making of Australia's Indochina Policies..., pg 16. According to David Marr, it is unclear how much Nyugen Co Thach and Pham Van Dong knew about the incursions at the time they were talking to Hayden. Personnal communication, 16 July 1992.
"persuasive evidence" he had been misleading by the Vietnamese, and Hayden admitted that "it would appear" the Vietnamese claims were "wrong". Hayden was aware that the Thais were being less than truthful, but could not say so publicly. The border incursions had taken place in the context of a major dry season offensive in which Vietnamese and PRK troops managed to destroy the whole infrastructure of the Thai border camps, the bases of Cambodia's resistance groups. It was the judgement of Australian intelligence that some Vietnamese troops did violate the ill-defined border, but there was no evidence to support Thai claims that 6,000 troops did so.

ASEAN and Chinese officials were also unhappy about Hayden's unofficial "impromptu" meeting with Hun Sen in Ho Chi Minh City. The Indonesians said it had "impaired Hayden's credibility" and the Chinese accused him of being used "as a cat's paw to achieve Vietnam's own criminal ends". Hayden maintained that the latest Vietnamese proposals represented a "considerable advance", and Kiernan reports that when the Indonesian Foreign Minister visited Vietnam, he came back with a similar view.

Hayden's visit was widely criticised in the Australian media, "who showed no sympathy for or understanding of his aims", and by the Liberal-National Party opposition. In *The Bulletin*,

88 He did not accept the Thai allegations, as Seaman has claimed. Seaman, "Australian foreign policy and the Hayden initiatives...", pg 66.
90 Furthermore, it later became known that a Thai Special Forces captain was killed on Cambodian soil at the very time the Thais were making their complaints to Hayden. Kiernan, Ben, 'Kampuchea: Hayden is vindicated', *Australian Society* 4(8):20-23, August 1985, pg 22.
91 This was the first meeting any negotiating party had had with a representative of the Heng Samrin regime, and in terms of Australian attitudes towards Cambodia, was "seminal", according to Chris Schacht. Interview, Canberra, 15 January 1992. One suspects the meeting brought home to Hayden the strength of the desire for independence in Hun Sen and the regime in Phnom Penh, thus refuting any suggestion that it was simply a "puppet" of Vietnam.
93 Kiernan, "Hayden is vindicated", pg 21.
John Edwards accused Hayden of "empty posturing" and claimed he was "freely deceived, freely impugned and freely mocked by ASEAN, Vietnam and China (and) disliked and distrusted in Washington". Hayden was badly damaged by these events and on his return to Australia faced an Opposition Motion of Censure. Defending his actions in Parliament, the Foreign Minister stressed the achievements of his visit, referring to four major points which had been established with the Vietnamese and were now on a classified file, and said his discussions with Nguyen Co Thach and Hun Sen were seen as valuable by some members of ASEAN. Hawke staunchly defended the Foreign Minister while Evans tried to counter the furore caused by ASEAN criticisms of Hayden's position and actions, pointing out that Mochtar held a similar view. He also put on record the fact that Singapore's Foreign Minister, Dhanabalan, had described the reaction in Australia as "nothing short of hysterical", the Thai's had said Hayden's clarifications were "helpful" and the Malaysians had "expressed gratitude". China sought to play down the problems created by Hayden's visit, and Communist Party General Secretary, Hu Yaobang referred to him as "an outstanding diplomat" when he visited Canberra in April that year.

The 1984-85 dry season offensive was a turning point in the conflict. The Vietnamese success in destroying the border camps, but their failure to eliminate the Khmer Rouge, who were able to regroup and reorganise on Thai soil, demonstrated that the war could only be settled by political means. Under a strategy devised by Commander in Chief, Le Duc Anh, Vietnam's objective was now to withdraw its troops from Cambodia as soon as possible, after consolidating

---

96 Hayden released some details of the clarifications he had received from the Vietnamese, specifically that: Vietnam did not completely exclude KR participation in a settlement process; the "elimination of Pol Pot and his clique" meant the exiling of Pol Pot and Ieng Sary and the disarming of their followers; Vietnam was prepared to allow a process of self-determination and UN supervised elections in Cambodia; and the Hun Sen government was prepared to make concessions if other members of the resistance would join with them to help eliminate Pol Pot. Kiernan, Ben, 'Kampuchea: Hayden is vindicated', pp 22-23.
98 Evans, Gareth, CPD, The Senate, 19 March 1985, pg 381.
99 Evans & Rowley, Red Brotherhood at War..., pg 218.
a friendly government in Phnom Penh. In Thailand, Sukhumbhand Paribatra's view that "no effort should be spared to reactivate meaningful dialogue with Vietnam as well as to identify and attempt new approaches," was gaining wider currency. These developments made the Hayden strategy more salient.

Although Hayden had lowered his profile, he did not relinquish the initiative altogether. In 1986, at his instigation, the Department of Foreign Affairs sponsored a conference on conflict resolution in Cambodia at Griffith University, which was attended by ASEAN academics.

At the annual ASEAN meeting the same year, Hayden suggested the "possibility of establishing some sort of tribunal to determine once and for all the culpability of the Pol Pot leadership." The proposal was blocked by the Indonesian Foreign Minister Mochtar, who was unwilling to let Australia take the initiative. Hayden also welcomed the positive features of the eight point proposal put forward by the CGDK, and said that "its merits had been put to the Vietnamese."

As Foreign Minister, Hayden personally handled Australia's Indochina policies and accepted responsibility when they floundered. Perhaps he should not have accepted all the blame. According to Thayer, Australia lacked an effective institutional base to support a role as facilitator. Similarly, Lockhart argued that Hayden's approach was weakened by the fact

---

100 Anh argued that battlefield successes would count for nothing if Cambodia could not stand on its own feet. Evans & Rowley, Ibid, pg 214.
102 The first and second of the International Conferences on Indochina were held in June 1986 and May 1988. Gareth Evans maintained this initiative and a third conference was held in August 1989.
104 Several months earlier Mochtar had expressed the view that the tribunal concept was a good idea.
105 Hayden, "Speech at the opening plenary session of the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference", Manila, 26 June, pg 572.
106 He noted that while the dedication of government officials was not in question, there was insufficient depth within the bureaucracy to support a continuing Australian role, for example, the intelligence organisations lacked staff with language capability and expertise is lost when experienced of Foreign Affairs staff are rotated to other postings. Thayer, Carlyle, 'Vietnam's foreign policy', *Current Affairs Bulletin* 62(9):21-30, February 1986, pg 30.
that his ideas "lacked the stamp of hard headed policy development and institutional support"\footnote{Lockhart, "Fear and dependence...", pg 28.}. He laid part of the blame for this on the "unchanging perceptions of Indochina in the Department of Foreign Affairs" and bureaucratic resistance to the development of "sophisticated and mature policies that could help alleviate the situation in Indochina". Some critics argued that instead of adopting a high diplomatic profile on the Cambodian issue, Australia should pursue more practical measures to improve the situation in Indochina. Mediansky, for example, expressed the view that: "Australia needs to forget any inflated notion of playing the peace maker", but should build up a bilateral relations with Vietnam and provide measures which fall short of official aid, such as limited credit facilities and humanitarian aid\footnote{Mediansky, 'Vietnam. Options which are open to Australia', pg 114.}. This is in effect what Hayden did. He was conscious of the constraints, and more aware of the costs of offending allies than his critics\footnote{The ability of other governments to hold up Australian trade and contracts is considerable. It costs Australia business opportunities overseas and results in a loss of jobs at home. Had Australia stepped too far out of line it is likely ASEAN would have frozen Canberra out of the existing comfortable relationship and refused to extend invitations to future ASEAN meetings. Leach, Jeff, interview, Canberra, 21 November 1991.}, as well as the dangers of losing public confidence at home.

\textit{Australian aid to Cambodia}

Despite the constraints, Hayden did much to broaden and deepen Australia's relations with Indochina. Aid played an important role in this and Hayden achieved notable success in this area by using NGO's. The Labor government was able to use NGO's in this way because their perceptions and interests converged. This was in part a result of the complex political circumstances under which they had become established in the Cambodian capital\footnote{From the outset, the international relief effort mounted in response to the Cambodian emergency had been complicated by the political pressures under which the organisations involved had to work. These are described in: Shawcross, William, \textit{The Quality of Mercy. Cambodia, Holocaust and Modern Conscience}, Simon & Schuster, New York, 1985.}. Briefly, the Vietnamese installed government refused to allow aid agencies to operate from Phnom Penh if they were also providing assistance to refugees on the border. Australian NGO's chose to concentrate their efforts inside the country, according to Jennifer Ashton, because they "saw
the needs for the much greater population inside Cambodia as having a higher priority in terms of sheer size, than those Khmer amassed at the Thai-Cambodian border. The land-bridge for aid to Cambodia from Thailand was viewed as an "unfortunate project which only served as a magnet to a population desperate for sustenance." This was also the position of the government. While Australia continued to provide financial assistance to the United Nations Border Relief Organisation because it was politically necessary, the government's financial commitment was gradually shifted away from border relief to programs inside Cambodia, and total aid funding to Indochina was expanded. In 1984/85 Australia provided $4 million through NGO's, UNHCR and UNICEF for Cambodian living inside Cambodia, which included funding to the Quaker Service of Australia for English language training for Cambodians. A total of $1.6 million was provided through UNBRO and ICRC for displaced Cambodians on the border, which included emergency relief funding following forced relocation (after the 1984/5 dry season offensive).

The government initially channelled aid to Cambodia through the Refugees and Disaster Coordination Section of AIDAB and subsequently through a coordinated AIDAB/NGO program. Funding from AIDAB broadened over time from "emergency" to "humanitarian" and then "development" aid. As Jennifer Ashton put it, "due to the lack of diplomatic relations with resultant large scale development aid from western countries, they (were) in fact providing a

112 Ashton, Ibid, pg 11.
113 The land bridge helped rehabilitate the Khmer Rouge forces. Vickery, Michael, Cambodia 1975-1982, George Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1984, pg 247. Both the government and NGO's were united in their objection to this development.
114 UNBRO.
115 The government considered UNBRO had lost credibility and its spending was dubious, but felt it was necessary to keep up Australia's "membership". Leach, Jeff, interview, Canberra, 21 November 1991.
117 By 1989 aid was funded mainly through the Indochina section of AIDAB. Ashton, Cambodia: Development Needs, pg 13.
bilateral program. This came about because Cambodia's needs were so great and NGO's were forced to get involved in infrastructure and large scale projects which were not normally their role. At the same time, the agencies were criticised for becoming involved in agricultural rehabilitation programs on the grounds that these programs helped revive the economy and assisted the PRK regime to consolidate control. In 1986 there was a change in policy after a heated debate about the restrictions on aid which became ridiculous when no one was able to define "humanitarian" in the Cambodian context. This was illustrated by Rollason who cited as an example the approval of funding for a fertiliser factory which was judged to be "humanitarian" because it was associated with food production, while a factory which produced chalk for use in schools was not. With Hayden's support, the NGO's campaigned to change the criteria for aid funding and end the restriction which limited approval to projects which qualified as "humanitarian" assistance. As Rollason put it, there was virtually nothing in Cambodia that could not be justified under this heading.

Although the NGO's had been highly critical of the government when aid was not resored, they supported Hayden's diplomatic efforts and publicly defended him when he was criticised. While Hayden had his differences with the agencies, who tended to see the moral issues in much simpler terms, he consulted regularly with ACFOA and they could usually reach an accommodation. The NGO's also had their supporters in AIDAB. The value of the agencies to the government was enhanced by the fact that their personnel in Phnom Penh developed close working relations with PRK ministers and cadres, and had a good understanding of their capacities and priorities. This was reinforced with the establishment of the Joint Australian Non-Government Organisation Office in 1986. These developments were resented by some DFAT officers who saw the NGO's as too one sidedly uncritical of the Vietnamese installed regime and

---

120 Charleton, Peter, interview, AIDAB, Canberra, 8 November 1991.
121 Evans & Rowley, Red Brotherhood at War, pg 159.
123 Rollason, ibid.
resented their influence in Canberra\textsuperscript{125}. This was reinforced by the fact that the NGO's also had their sympathisers in AIDAB\textsuperscript{126}.

AIDAB played a key role in government policy though its administration of the aid program and through its links with NGO's. Hayden readily agreed to AIDAB submissions for increased funding on Indochina\textsuperscript{127}, and for a while AIDAB took the policy agenda from the Department of Foreign Affairs\textsuperscript{128}. Because few AIDAB officers had experienced sustained exposure in Foreign Affairs, however, they sometimes displayed political naivety, making judgements on the basis of development to the exclusion of all other considerations.

In 1986 the Joint Australian Non-Government Organisation Office (JANGOO) was established in Phnom Penh to coordinate the activities of four of the Australian agencies\textsuperscript{129}. It subsequently became a lobbying point for Australian recognition of the PRK regime. There was some support for this within AIDAB from those who argued Australia should have a larger, and if possible, bilateral aid program in Cambodia, which meant recognition. According to Jennifer Ashton, who was administrator of JANGOO, there was pressure from the Phnom Penh government for it to perform a quasi-diplomatic role\textsuperscript{130}. In fact, PRK officials and ministers talked to her as if she did represent Australia. Ashton also performed the work normally

\textsuperscript{125} For example, Robert Merrillees, a member of DFAT's Cambodia task force, said in 1990 that the NGO's had not been building on the special relationship Australia had previously with Phnom Penh, built up by many years of carefully nurtured diplomatic relations. SDSC Seminar, R.S.Powell, ANU, 5 September 1990.

\textsuperscript{126} This gave them some influence, for example, over which projects were funded. Gunn and Lee overstated the influence NGO's had on policy outcomes when they claimed that because APHEDA gained the support of 85 Australian trade unions, it gave them an impact on policy formulation. Gunn, Geoffrey C. & Lee, Jefferson, \textit{Cambodia Watching Down Under}, Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, IAS Monographs No. 047, Bangkok, 1991, pg 167.

\textsuperscript{127} Leach, Jeff, interview, Canberra, 21 November 1991. Furthermore, even if NGO's had some influence on Australia's Indochina policy, Indochina was marginal in the context of Australia's broader foreign policy framework.

\textsuperscript{128} This reflected the predominance of aid in Australia's relations with Indochina. It was reinforced by the fact Hayden's policies did not have the support of key elements in the Department of Foreign Affairs at that time.

\textsuperscript{129} APHEDA, Overseas Service Bureau, Save the Children Fund Australia and the Australian Freedom from Hunger Campaign. Other agencies had independent representation (eg. Australian Catholic Relief, Quaker Service Australia) or worked with their international counterparts (eg. World Vision Australia, UNICEF Australia).

\textsuperscript{130} Ashton, \textit{Cambodia: Development Needs}, pg 12.
associated with an embassy and became a cypher for low level government-to-government contact. In January 1989 she was replaced by Lyndall McLean, a Foreign Affairs officer with the Australian Embassy in Hanoi, who was granted leave without pay. This transition to someone with formal training in foreign affairs represented an upgrading of Australia's relations with the PRK. By her own account, the position involved no formal reporting functions, but Lyndall McLean did make her views known on a broad range of issues to Australian officials who visited from Hanoi and Bangkok, as well as to DFAT officers in Canberra.

The Hawke government's position on Indochina represented a long term view of Australia's interests and future regional role. Although willing to disagree with friends, the government was not prepared to countenance serious damage to relations with important allies. It has been argued that Hayden's efforts to playing a mediating role were based on an exaggerated view of Australia's diplomatic influence, yet Hayden constantly reminded people not to expect too much from his efforts. Others believed Labor's Indochina policies were driven by domestic political considerations, and argued their main objective was to appease the Labor Party's left wing and its supporters. Although there is some truth in it, this is too cynical a view and ignores the background of the Vietnam war and Hayden's personal commitment to the issue. Gareth Evans faced greater pressure from the left in his Victorian Senate constituency, but steered a more mainstream course. This underscores the need to emphasise the interplay between various foreign policy actors and domestic determinants in explaining policy choices. While Australia's ability to conduct an independent foreign policy was clearly constrained, it was the government's perception of the constraints, the extent of its determination to overcome

---

132 Evidence that McLean made her views known to DFAT in writing comes from an article by Greg Sheridan, published in *The Australian*, which was based on leaked documents which included her correspondence.
134 Eg. Peacock, Andrew, interview, Canberra, 14 November 1991; Edwards, "How Bill Hayden is growing into Foreign Affairs", pg 94.
them, and its judgements as to the costs and benefits of various policy choices which determined policy outcomes. This had as much to so with the values and objectives of the foreign policy actors themselves, both individual and institutional, as it did with the realities of international power.

Australia's attempts to play a facilitating role in the Cambodian conflict, and the practical measures that were taken to upgrade relations with the countries of Indochina, have to be seen in the context of Labor's greater commitment to the region. While Leng and Silwood argued that as a result of the Hayden initiatives Australia was now more accepted as a regional player, they were not sanguine about the possibilities of Canberra being able to contribute to a solution.135 Similarly, O'Brien predicted that it was unlikely Australia would have a role to play in the search for a solution.136 Events have since proved them wrong. Hayden's achievement was to demonstrate that Australia was genuine in refusing to take sides and in having Australia accepted as a player with a legitimate interest in the Cambodian conflict. The lessons he learnt about how playing the game with others laid the groundwork for the active diplomatic role his successor came to play in the Cambodian "end game".

Chapter Three

The "Red Book" proposal

To understand Australia's involvement in the Cambodian peace plan it is necessary to go back to the 1989 Paris Conference on Cambodia. Convened on 30 July for one month, the conference brought together the four Cambodian factions, the six ASEAN countries, the P5 members of the UN Security Council, Vietnam, Laos, Australia, Canada, India, Zimbabwe and a representative of the UN Secretary General\(^1\). It adopted a blueprint for a comprehensive settlement and approved funding for a UN fact finding mission to visit Cambodia in August. There was also agreement on an international control mechanism to supervise the withdrawal of all Vietnamese troops, a cease-fire, the cessation of external support, the creation of a transitional administration and the holding of free elections\(^2\).

Although expectations had been high, the conference broke down over participation of the Khmer Rouge in an interim coalition government, the future composition of a Cambodian government and the role of international supervision. China had managed to break the deadlock in the negotiations by forcing initial agreement from the Khmer Rouge. After US Secretary of State James Baker and Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen left the conference, the Khmer Rouge began to disrupt the proceedings, demanding references to genocide be struck from the conference documents and blocking approval of an interim authority\(^3\). According to Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans, the conference failed for a number of reasons, but only one of them was crucial - the insistence by the resistance forces and their backers on the inclusion of

---


\(^2\) It also involved measures to guarantee the neutrality of Cambodia and non interference in its internal affairs, the repatriation of refugees and displaced persons, and provision for the reconstruction of Cambodia. Frost, ibid, pg 21.

the Khmer Rouge in an interim administration in Cambodia⁴. Evans believed that with effort the problems could be solved and tasked his department to come up with ideas.

The proposal which subsequently came out of DFAT was largely a product of his thinking although the idea had come from US Congressmen Stephen Solarz, and was developed in consultation with others. The 'Evans initiative' was put on record for the first time in Parliament on 24 November 1989, when the Foreign Minister stated that:

The idea which I have found most attractive, and which I believe deserves very close examination by all the participants at the Paris conference, is one that would involve building a transitional administration directly around the authority of the United Nations - some variation of the kind of UN administration which previously has been put in place in comparable circumstances, most recently Namibia⁵.

The idea became a fully fledged proposal with the presentation of a series of detailed working papers in Jakarta, which were published as the "Red Book"⁶. The working papers outlined a strategy for the achievement of a comprehensive settlement and were prepared at the request of Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas. The proposal sought to break the deadlock over power sharing which had derailed the Paris conference, and at the same time, addressed the concerns of Australians about the Khmer Rouge being in a position of even marginal, transitional authority, "which so may people...found abhorrent given their appalling record⁷". The story of the proposal's genesis illustrates the difficulty the government faced in trying to balance both objectives.

---

⁴ Evans, Gareth, CPD, Senate, 24 November 1989, pg 3299.
⁵ Evans, Gareth, CPD, Senate, 24 November 1989, pg 3300.
⁷ Evans, Gareth, CPD, Senate, 24 November 1989, pg 3300.
Background to the Red Book proposal: changes in the external political and strategic environment

The Paris conference was convened to take advantage of the conditions favourable to a settlement which existed by this time at the international and regional levels, and to a lesser extent the factional level. Those conditions were brought about by changes in the strategic calculations of the major powers which ended the decade long stalemate in Cambodia, beginning with the rise to power of Mikhail Gorbachev in the Soviet Union and the policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika*. Moscow's interest in improving relations with Beijing was behind Vietnam's decision in May 1988 to withdraw 50,000 troops from Cambodia. The economic collapse of the Soviet Union made progress on the "three obstacles" to improved relations with China more urgent, and led to Hanoi's announcement in April 1989 that all its troops would be out by October.

Beijing's interest in a *rapprochement* with Moscow was driven by China's modernisation requirements, an assessment that the overstretched Soviet Union was now a distant threat, and an improvement in relations between Washington and Moscow. Furthermore, as Leifer put it: "With the disengagement of the Soviet Union from the conflict, China's strategy of denial towards Vietnam "lost its critical global point of reference". China also moved to distance itself from the Khmer Rouge, recognising that they had failed militarily and were neither politically nor diplomatically viable. Thus Foreign Minister Qian Qichen said in January 1989 that China approved of neither the policies of the Khmer Rouge or their return to monopoly power in Phnom Penh.

---

12 Klintworth, *China's Indochina policy*, pg 11.
settlement, however, because they were "one of the important forces resisting Vietnamese aggression..."\textsuperscript{13}.

In Thailand, Prime Minister Chatichai, recognising that Vietnam's engagement had weakened it to the point of exhaustion, adopted a softer approach towards Hanoi. According to Buszynski, his desire to turn Indochina into a "marketplace" signalled a willingness to accept the PRK regime pending a complete withdrawal of Vietnamese troops\textsuperscript{14}. Chatichai's diplomacy opened up a political option while allowing Thailand to maintain its pressure on Vietnam\textsuperscript{15}. More broadly, the ASEAN initiatives and Vietnam's responses had effected a process of accommodation at the regional level\textsuperscript{16}.

As the competing interests of Vietnam and China lay at the root of the Cambodian conflict, it was here the prospects for a resolution would be determined. Gains made in the 1984-5 dry season offensive and a desire for better relations with China had reconciled Hanoi to a more limited role in Indochina, the withdrawal of its troops from Cambodia and Laos, and a defence limited to national borders\textsuperscript{17}. While these adjustments to Hanoi's security outlook acknowledged the reality of China's power and proximity in Southeast Asia\textsuperscript{18}, they did not substantially lessen the hostility between the two countries\textsuperscript{19}. This was not helped by the fact that the withdrawal...


\textsuperscript{14} Buszynski, Leszek, 'New aspirations and old constraints in Thailand's foreign policy', \textit{Asian Survey} 29(11):1057-1073, 1989, pg 1075. This had always been the Thai position. Even in 1980 Foreign Minister Sitthi Savetsila had remarked that the Thai government would be willing to accept the Heng Samrin regime in Phnom Penh if it was the outcome of a political settlement and did not have to be kept in power by foreign forces. As well, he argued Chatichai had calculated that "a Cambodia under Hun Sen could have greater potential for serving as a stable buffer between Vietnam and Thailand than one in which Prince Sihanouk exercised a dominant role". Leifer, Michael, \textit{Cambodian conflict - the final phase?}, Conflict Studies No. 221, The Centre for Security and Conflict Studies, London, 1989, pg 24.

\textsuperscript{15} Leifer, ibid, pg 24.

\textsuperscript{16} These have been outlined by Pilch. Pilch, Imogen, 'Prospects for the neutralisation of Kampuchea', \textit{Australia-Asia Papers} No. 43, CSAAR, Griffith University, Nathan, Qld, 1988, pp 34-58.

\textsuperscript{17} McGregor, "China, Vietnam and the Cambodian conflict", pg 273.

\textsuperscript{18} Klintworth, Gary, 'Vietnam mends its fences with China', \textit{The Canberra Times} 1 October 1990.

\textsuperscript{19} The hostility and tension between Vietnam and China had deep rooted historical causes and was not simply a product of the US-Soviet rivalry. However, Vietnam now accepted that China...
of Vietnamese troops ahead of a settlement had improved Hanoi's political position and served to focus international attention on the problem of the Khmer Rouge. China's insistence that any further improvement in relations with Vietnam could not precede a settlement of the Kampuchean issue, including the establishment of a four party coalition government in Phnom Penh headed by Prince Sihanouk, and Hun Sen's refusal to dismantle his government ahead of elections, remained stumbling blocks to a resolution.

Conditions favouring a reconciliation between the Cambodian factions themselves now existed, although as Chanda noted, they were "not sufficient to make it a reality". These included: war weariness and an acceptance of the need to avoid revenge to stop the cycle of violence in Cambodia; a recognition by the Hun Sen regime that as long as it could not establish total control in Cambodia, a compromise with political opponents was unavoidable; the failure of the Khmer Rouge to establish control over any significant territory or win popular support; and the weakening of their principle card, the occupation of the UN seat, gave them reason to seek an accommodation. The 1988 UN resolution calling for the "non-return to the universally condemned policies and practices of a recent past", which was passed by a record 122-19 vote, was a clear indication of the Khmer Rouge's "waning diplomatic fortunes".

The 1988 Jakarta Informal Meeting in Bogor had brought together the Cambodian factions and regional parties for the first time. Although no joint communique was signed, there was consensus on the basic principles of a comprehensive settlement. At the end of the meeting, was a "great country". Pham Duc Duong, Director of the Institute for Southeast Asian Studies, Hanoi, interview, 5 February, 1991.

20 Leifer, "The Cambodian conflict - the final phase?", pg 27.
22 For example, the PRK attitude towards the Khmer Rouge rank and file has been conciliatory, while Sihanouk insisted that they be included in any settlement, although they murdered many members of his family. Chanda. ibid, pg 51.
23 Chanda, ibid, pg 51.
24 Chanda, ibid, pg 53.
25 These were: the establishment of a quadripartite reconciliation government; a phased withdrawal of Vietnamese troops before an internationally supervised general election; and the guarantee of Cambodia's independence and neutrality. Chang Pao-Min, 'Kampuchean conflict: the diplomatic breakthrough', The Pacific Review, 1(4):429-437, 1988, pg 436.
Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas made reference to the "prevention of the recurrence of genocidal policies and practices of the Pol Pot regime". This reflected a realisation that the closer prospects for a settlement made it necessary to deal with the "gruesome fact of political life which the Khmer Rouge represented". These developments, together with Sihanouk's resignation as head of the resistance coalition in 1987, effectively made the ill-named CGDK defunct.

Resignation enabled Sihanouk to distance himself from China and the Khmer Rouge without causing Beijing to lose face. This gave him more room to manoeuvre, and by underscoring his value to China and ASEAN, increased his leverage. Sihanouk executed this "masterful act of diplomacy" only after all parties to the conflict expressly supported his nominal leadership of a quadripartite Cambodian government, and followed his historic encounter in 1987 with Hun Sen. Sihanouk was convinced that in the end the Khmer Rouge resistance would fail and that the West and China would turn to him. By initiating the complex process of negotiating a solution to the conflict, Sihanouk had broken the diplomatic deadlock and emerged to take centre stage. The majority view in the US and other western countries, as well as China and ASEAN, was that Sihanouk was the only person qualified to head a Cambodian government of national reconciliation. The Paris conference, according to Elizabeth Becker, had been arranged to give Sihanouk a platform for proving he could bridge the differences among the factions and prevent civil war.

---

26 Leifer, "Cambodian conflict - the final phase?", pg 17.
29 Chanda, "Sihanouk on centre stage", pg 114.
31 According to Singaporean analyst, Chang Pao-Min, many now regarded Sihanouk as "the only person qualified to lead a new Kampuchean government and to achieve reunification". Chang Pao-Min, "Kampuchean conflict: the diplomatic breakthrough", pg 429. This was the majority view of the US and other western countries as well as China and ASEAN.
32 Becker, "Solving the Cambodian crisis...", pg 12.
There were now at least four negotiating processes dealing with the Cambodian conflict: The
Jakarta Informal Meetings; the Paris conference committee set up by the Sihanouk, Son Sann
and Hun Sen factions, and open to KR participation; a Sino-Soviet working group; and the joint
Indonesia-Vietnam working group. Despite these positive developments, agreement between
the parties remained limited. As Leifer explained: "divisions of major political magnitude
between the Cambodian parties obstructed a political settlement". These were "sustained by
external parties (who) managed to reconcile their support for contending factions with limited
detente and rapprochement among themselves".

Australia's position and role

From 1988 Australia's policy towards Cambodia was more closely aligned with the position of
ASEAN and other allies. This was partly a result of the developments outlined previously
which brought the ASEAN position closer to Australia's. It was also brought about by a shift in
Australian policy in response to external developments. The first evidence of this came in
1988 when Australia resumed co-sponsorship of the annual ASEAN resolution on Cambodia in
the United Nations. The government justified this shift on the grounds that, for the first time,
the resolution dealt with the fact that Pol Pot must not return. Another indication was
provided by Australia's strident condemnation of Vietnam's invasion and occupation. While
Hayden had made a subdued reference to "the manner in which the Vietnamese entered and

33 Thayer, Carlyle, 'Obtaining and securing peace within Kampuchea: the next phase
(withdrawal/neutralisation)', in McMillen, Hugh (ed.), Conflict Resolution in Kampuchea.
Working Papers of the Third International Conference on Indochina, CSAAR, Griffith
University, Nathan, Qld, August 1988, pp 72-3.
34 Leifer, "Cambodian conflict - the final phase?", pg 24.
35 Thus Evans was able to say at the Paris conference in August 1989 that nearly all the
participating ministers 'articulated essentially the same package of elements' necessary for
achieving a comprehensive settlement. Evans, Gareth, Australia and Indochina, Beanland
36 According to Canberra's representative in the UN, Michael Costello, Australia regarded the
vote as a referendum on Pol Pot and "any solution which did not prevent a return to the policies
and practices of Pol Pot (was) no solution at all, but a potential disaster". Costello, Michael,
'Statement on Cambodia to the 43rd United Nations General Assembly', November 2, AFAR
59(11):504-505, November 1988, pg 504.
remain in Cambodia”, Costello emphasised legal rather than than moral principles in his speech to the General Assembly, stating that:

We cannot and do not accept any contention that Vietnam was justified in unilaterally intervening in Cambodia on the grounds of...ousting Pol Pot...this was not the way to solve the problem...If military intervention could be condoned on the pretext of improving the complexion of a neighbouring government, the established principles of international law would be eroded and eventually destroyed37.

Evans maintained this hard line in his speech at the 1989 Paris conference38. He cautioned that a lasting settlement would not be achieved unless the internal and external dimensions of the conflict were resolved simultaneously and emphasised that the Cambodian leaders themselves had to undertake a process of national reconciliation. Evans fell in behind the position of Australia's allies when he cited Prince Sihanouk as especially well suited to healing the divisions between Cambodians39.

This shift requires some explanation: It reflected, firstly, the new sense of urgency in efforts to resolve the Cambodian conflict because of the opportunity for progress which now existed, and secondly, a recognition Australia's dependence on the support and cooperation of the ASEAN countries for continued acceptance as a party to the negotiation process. The appointment of Ali Alatas as Indonesian Foreign Minister was also important in this context. According to Chris Schacht, he was much more amenable to an Australian role than his predecessor had been, while Indonesia's role as ASEAN interlocutor and host of the Jakarta Informal Meetings provided an opportunity to establish a useful partnership. Australia's line also has to be seen as part of the negotiating process itself. The Vietnamese withdrawal, by raising the spectre of the Khmer Rouge, had put Beijing in an awkward position. By taking a hard line against Hanoi

37 Costello, ibid, pg 504.
39 This was because of his inheritance, long involvement in Cambodian affairs and personal losses endured during the Pol Pot period which he shared with his fellow countrymen. Evans, "Statement to the Paris Conference on Cambodia", pg 346.
while maintaining support for a comprehensive settlement, China's cooperation in the settlement process was more likely, particularly as Beijing was experiencing a degree of international isolation in response the massacre of June 1989.

Differences in the thinking and approach of Hayden and Evans may also be part of the explanation for the shift in Australia's stance. The new emphasis on principles of international law, for example, perhaps reflected Evans' legal background. His interest in the Cambodian conflict was pragmatic and opportunist, rather than committed, as Hayden's had perhaps been, and his thinking fitted more easily into the mainstream views of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. While Evans owed much to Hayden for breaking the ground for him, he also owed a great deal to DFAT First Assistant Secretary Michael Costello, who had been Hayden's Principle Private Secretary. Costello not only provided the continuity in Australia's Indochina policies but did much to push the Cambodian issue and keep the interest going, and his shuttle diplomacy played a crucial role in securing support from all parties concerned for an enhanced UN role in a settlement. Costello's strong negotiating skills and innovative policy thinking were valuable assets in this difficult area. As his background with Hayden might indicate, Costello was more sympathetic to the Vietnamese cause than Australia's official position would suggest. This stood him in good stead in negotiations with the Indochinese countries and provided a useful counterpoint to Evans' more orthodox position.

With the announcement of the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia, events moved ahead of Australian policy. This development focused attention on the problem posed by the Khmer Rouge and added urgency to efforts to find a solution. Australian policy since 1983 had called for a comprehensive solution based on a quadripartite interim government in Cambodia. However, the government had not envisaged the possibility a Vietnamese withdrawal would occur ahead of a settlement. The unilateral withdrawal of Vietnam's troops created a vacuum which the Khmer Rouge moved quickly to exploit by stepping up their guerilla war in the

40 According to foreign affairs reporter David Jenkins, rivals in DFAT regard Costello as the most innovative policy thinker in the Department. Jenkins, David, 'Will Cambodia be the next step up for Canberra's shooting star?', The Sydney Morning Herald, 26 January 1990.
Cambodian countryside. Against this background, the government's support for Khmer Rouge participation in a four party interim government and its tacit support of the resistance coalition in the UN, as Evans observed, "raised more public opposition" than any other foreign policy issue in recent times\textsuperscript{41}.

Despite Evans' efforts to explain and justify the government's position\textsuperscript{42}, many remained skeptical that a comprehensive settlement would be a guarantee against a return to power of the Khmer Rouge. Nor were critics convinced by his arguments that "the prospects for a durable settlement are better with the Khmer Rouge participating" and there was a possibility of avoiding further bloodshed if they could be brought into the settlement process "accompanied by safeguards, reassurances and mechanisms to ensure against a repeat of the recent bloody past"\textsuperscript{43}. What form these safeguards would take and how effective they would be, remained unclear. The Foreign Minister's confidence was based on the assumption that "the emergence at the end of the settlement process of a Khmer Rouge-dominated government in Cambodia is most unlikely" and the fact that "such an outcome has been specifically ruled out by...China"\textsuperscript{44}. Evans' position also stemmed from the fact that he viewed the Cambodian problem firstly from the perspective of the international system. In contrast, the government's critics, such as the aid agencies based in Phnom Penh\textsuperscript{45}, saw the problem from a particularist perspective which gave emphasis to humanitarian concerns. This dichotomy persisted throughout the public debate in Australia on the Cambodian issue. That debate was dominated by concern about the Khmer Rouge and centred on three related issues: the question of an official Australian presence in Phnom Penh, the resumption of aid, and Cambodia's seat in the UN.


\textsuperscript{42} For example: Evans, Gareth, 'Indo-China and foreign policy', Beanland Lecture, Fitzroy Institute of Technology, Melbourne, 24 August, \textit{The Monthly Record} 60(8):401-408, August 1989, pg 407

\textsuperscript{43} Evans, Gareth, CPD, The Senate, 27 September 1989, pg 1413.

\textsuperscript{44} Evans, Gareth, CPD, Senate, 23 May 1989, pg 2524.

\textsuperscript{45} For example, the aid agencies issued a statement condemning western governments for failing to ensure against a return to power of the Khmer Rouge and arguing that the only alternative to such an unthinkable scenario was the continued rule of the Phnom Penh regime.
The issue of aid to Vietnam and the question of official Australian representation in Phnom Penh

Following the announcement that all Vietnamese troops would be withdrawn from Cambodia by September 1989, sections of the Labor Party, the NGO lobby and other groups began calling for the government to honour its promise to restore bilateral aid to Vietnam and to recognise the PRK regime. In Cambodia, aid agencies issued a statement condemning Western governments for failing to ensure against a return to power of the Khmer Rouge and arguing that the only alternative to such an unthinkable scenario was the continued rule of the Phnom Penh regime\(^46\). When pressed on these issues, however, the government backed down. In Parliament, Evans explained that:

> We would certainly sympathetically consider the resumption of a program of bilateral aid when Vietnamese troops were withdrawn. A number of questions would have to be considered in that context...for example, as to whether Australian resumption of bilateral aid might or might not compromise the achievement of an overall settlement\(^47\).

The question of whether a unilateral move by Australia would have compromised the achievement of a settlement is doubtful, but cannot be tested. Although such an action might have sent the wrong signal to Vietnam and Phnom Penh, the Hawke government must have been more concerned about the fact that such an action would have angered the United States and China and threatened Australia's role in the negotiating process. In other words, had Australia stepped out of line at that time, it would have been marginalised\(^48\). Furthermore, Evans could also point to the fact that Australia was already providing a significant amount of aid through NGO's and multilateral institutions.


\(^47\) Evans, Gareth, CPD, Senate, 6 April 1989, pg 1078.

\(^48\) In this context, it is worth noting that a number of aid agencies had also called on the government to assume a greater role in the peace process, for example: Quaker Service Australia, "Media release", North Hobart, 26 September 1989.
The government similarly backed down on the question of official Australian representation in Phnom Penh, which had also been made conditional on a Vietnamese troop withdrawal. According to Evans\textsuperscript{49}, the government considered recognition at this time would be premature. However, the government's position remained flexible. As the Foreign Minister put it:

it is too soon today to define with any precision what would be the appropriate timing and level at which we should restore such representation. That very much depends on the character of the internal settlement that is reached, when it is reached, how and in what circumstances. All of those matters will be kept under close review\textsuperscript{50}.

This position was opposed by sections of the Labor Party led by Senator Schacht\textsuperscript{51}, trade unions and community groups\textsuperscript{52}, academics\textsuperscript{53} and aid organisations\textsuperscript{54}. All argued that the alternative to Australian recognition and representation would be a return to power of the Khmer Rouge. Expatriate journalist John Pilger, who had earlier done much to publicise the atrocities committed under Pol Pot's rule in Australia, also weighed into the debate, pointing out that the Hun Sen regime "was regarded by most Cambodians as their only shield against the return of Pol Pot"\textsuperscript{55}. It is unclear how Australian recognition and the bilateral aid program which would have followed would forestall this, however, although it is possible that the French might have followed if Canberra had made such a move. The government also had to consider the reality that Cambodia's Southeast Asian neighbours would have strongly opposed acceptance of the PRK regime on a \textit{fait accompli} basis because of the way in which the Hun Sen regime came to power, and concern that such an action would set an undesirable precedent.

\textsuperscript{49} Evans, Gareth, CPD, Senate, 6 April 1989, pg 1077.
\textsuperscript{50} Evans, Gareth, CPD, Senate, 6 April 1989, pg 1077.
\textsuperscript{51} Schacht, Chris, CPD, Senate, 6 April 1989, pg 1077.
\textsuperscript{52} Trade Union and community groups supported ACTU called for the government to normalise relations with Cambodia. Medianet, News Release, 26 October 1989.
\textsuperscript{53} Gary Klintworth, for example, argued that the PRK regime possessed "all the criteria stipulated in international law regarding the effectiveness and recognisability of a government". Klintworth, Gary, \textit{Vietnam's Intervention In Cambodia in International Law}, AGPS, Canberra, 1989, pg 102; also Klintworth, 'The future of Cambodia', pg 19.
\textsuperscript{54} ACFOA not only called for Australia to recognise the Phnom Penh regime but suggested that the problem of recognition being construed as lending support of legitimacy to the regime could be overcome by applying the governments new policy of recognising states not governments. ACFOA, Press release, 24 November 1989.
\textsuperscript{55} Pilger, John, 'Stand on Cambodia farcical', \textit{The Canberra Times}, 16 November 1989.
Even without formal recognition, however, the dichotomy between official policy and practice allowed Australia to have it both ways. As journalist Gwen Robinson pointed out, even without formal recognition, Australia's relationship with Cambodia "in terms of both unofficial aid and trade cooperation", had gone further than that of any other western country\(^{56}\). Officials in Phnom Penh viewed the Australian aid office, as well as visits by Australian officials and academics, as a "bamboo bridge" which was the equivalent of *de facto* recognition by Canberra\(^{57}\). The apparent hardening of Australia's position towards Phnom Penh conflicted with this perception, prompting PRK officials to express disappointment at Australia's "two-track" policy\(^{58}\), as well as criticism of Australia's shift on the question of recognition and Canberra's support for the majority western line that the KR be included in a compromise power sharing agreement\(^{59}\). A similar criticism was made by Australian academic Nancy Viviani, who said at an ANU seminar: "Little did I realise that when we spoke about an international tribunal for Pol Pot, that we would find an Australian government supporting in 1989 a role for the Khmer Rouge". It should be noted, however, that from 1983 onwards the Hawke government was consistent in its support for quadripartite interim government in Cambodia which included the Khmer Rouge, but not the Pol Pot leadership, and that position had been accepted by critics of Evans position when it was articulated by Haydon. In other words, the implications of that policy had not been thought through until the announcement of a unilateral withdrawal of Vietnamese troops. It was this which now made the policy look wrong. Despite the altered circumstances, however, the Hawke government was clearly not prepared to move closer to Phnom Penh at the expense of Australia's relations with important trading partners and allies.

---

\(^{56}\) Robinson, Gwen, "Cambodia still a conundrum in Asian strategy".

\(^{57}\) Mr Chum Bun Rong, Director of the Press Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, SOC, interview, Phnom Penh, 19 March 1991.

\(^{58}\) Robinson, "Cambodia still a conundrum in Asian strategy".

Cambodia's seat in the United Nations General Assembly

The announcement of the Vietnamese troop withdrawal provoked renewed debate about Cambodia's UN seat because it removed the justification for Australia's tacit support of the Khmer Rouge in the General Assembly. In the lead up to the annual vote in the UNGA there were calls for Australia, then on the UN credentials committee, to press for Cambodia's seat to be declared vacant and refuse to withdraw its tacit support for the CGDK in the General Assembly. These had come from NGO's, Trade Union and community groups, the Australian Democrats and others. The government resisted this pressure. John Button made the government's position clear when he stated that:

Australia's assessment is that, if a challenge were to be mounted, it would not be successful in view of strong majority support for the CGDK among members of ASEAN, most Western countries and developing countries.

Evans reiterated this argument, pointing out that "the Cambodia conflict is not simply going to be resolved by a vote as to who is entitled to hold the Cambodian seat at the United Nations".

While the Hawke government had previously been strongly criticised for adopting a position which was out of step with ASEAN, the US and China, it was now under fire from a different quarter because this was no longer the case. Critics interpreted Australia's position as evidence of a lack of genuine concern about the potential wrecking role the Khmer Rouge might play in any settlement. That the Hawke government's stance was closely aligned with the position of the US and ASEAN only confirmed this view. Many believed the explanation for Australia's position, as a Canberra Times editorial put it, lay in the fact that: "Somewhere along the line the US and ASEAN managed to insinuate their views quite deeply into Australian foreign policy."
The reality was more complex than this, however. As Martin Debelle reported on the ABC's AM program, more than 70 countries, including Australia, used the 1989 Cambodia debate in the General Assembly to "support the coalition, and in a move to limit the authority of the Khmer Rouge because they could not easily be excluded, to publicly vilify the Pol Pot regime and demand that it never be allowed to return to power". In other words, while there was general agreement that the Pol Pot leadership should never again be allowed to hold power, the problem had to be approached cautiously so that the progress made so far was not jeopardised and China was kept on side. The complexities of the negotiating process and the sensitivities involved meant there was no direct route to achieving this objective. As Australia's Ambassador to the UN, Peter Wilenski, put it:

How to accommodate them, and at the same time restrain them, is at the heart of the dilemma. It is a matter of weighing the certainty of continued bloody conflict if the Khmer Rouge are left out of the settlement process, against the real possibility of avoiding further bloodshed if they are brought into it.

The subtle change in the position of Australia and other countries with regard to the UN vote was widely misunderstood. Wilenski's rationale, according to reporter Susan Aitken, "did not appear to satisfy significant numbers of Australians who have been writing directly to the Foreign Minister", while an editorial in the *Canberra Times* described the vote as 'immoral', pointing out that no-one would have suggested the Nazi's participate in debate on the reconstruction of Europe. Expatriate journalist, John Pilger, fuelled public reaction with the release of his film *Year Ten* while his public comments on the issue included assertions that "the Australian government was on the side of the most thorough mass murderers since Hitler.

---

64 Debelle, Martin and Thompson, Peter, AM transcript, MICA, Department of Parliamentary Library, Canberra. 16 November 1989. According to Australia's Ambassador to the UN, Peter Wilenski, "the Secretary-General...left unambiguous that 'the universally-condemned policies and practices of a recent past' (were) the policies and practices of the 1975 to 1978 period". Wilenski, Peter, 'Cambodia: Australian statement to the UNGA', News Release, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 15 November 1989, pp 3-4.

65 Wilenski, ibid, pp 3.

66 Aitken, "A quest for peace".

67 Editorial, *The Canberra Times*, 18 November 1989. The analogy is flawed - there was no equivalent of China to counter American power in post-war Europe, and despite the Nuremberg trials, many ex-Nazi's were absorbed into post-war society in Europe and elsewhere.
and Stalin* and "no western diplomat has worked harder to promote the Chinese and US lobby to return Prince Sihanouk on the shoulders of Pol Pot...than our own Minister for Foreign Affairs*. This misrepresentation of Australia's position angered Evans, who pointed out that while the government believed the Khmer Rouge could not be excluded from an interim government, it was long-standing policy that Pol Pot and the KR leadership must be left out. The government's past policy statements support the Foreign Minister's claim, although these did not deal with the practicalities of how this could be guaranteed.

**The domestic policy debate**

After the breakdown of the 1989 Paris conference, the quadripartite formula for a comprehensive settlement of the Cambodian conflict appeared increasingly unrealistic. In Australia, even conservatives who had once approved of the government's support for the formula now expressed skepticism. In *The Canberra Times*, for example, Malcolm Booker argued that the proposal was unsatisfactory because it offered no guarantee that internecine conflict between the factions would not be resumed, while *Sydney Morning Herald* correspondent Milton Cockburn wrote that it was "naive to believe that the two rival forces will be prepared to cooperate" or that the Khmer Rouge "would accept the results of fair elections". While criticism and pressure for change mounted at home, in Paris, American officials made it absolutely clear to Australian delegates that Washington would not find it acceptable if the Hawke government stepped out of line on the Cambodian issue. This limited Australia's policy options and its room to manoeuvre.

---

In Parliament, the policy debate on the issue was conducted largely within the government, rather than between the government and the opposition, and the Executive came under under great pressure from members of caucus to shift its stance on the issue. As Gordon Bilney, Chairman of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade put it, the concept of a Khmer Rouge role "caused disquiet...within the Labor party\textsuperscript{72}. Public concern and outrage was a major factor behind the caucus pressure\textsuperscript{73}. According to Senator Chris Schacht, who was leading the caucus push, "the notion that the Khmer Rouge should have a role in government (was) domestically unsustainable, morally unsustainable, and unsustainable in Cambodia\textsuperscript{74}. The issue was the subject of intense debate inside the caucus from August through to October, and it was argued by Schacht and other critics that if there was no positive development in the negotiations in the near future, Australia would have to move unilaterally and recognise the Hun Sen regime\textsuperscript{75}. The government's position became untenable within the party, with members of caucus threatening to openly break ranks on the issue\textsuperscript{76}, and increasingly impossible electorally. The government could not afford to alienate both the caucus and voters.

There was also disagreement between the government and the DFAT on the issue. According to reporter Susan Aitken, Senator Schacht, John Langmore and Gordon Bilney "locked horns" with foreign affairs over the visit by Kong Som Ol, Deputy Prime Minister of the SOC regime. The meeting was opposed by officers within the Department who believed it would jeopardise the inaugural APEC conference to be held the following week. Evans' attitude was that as he had met

\textsuperscript{72} Aitkin, Susan, "A quest for peace".
\textsuperscript{73} It was one of the few foreign affairs issues which provoked real public concern, to the extent people were ringing up and asking "is it true we support the Khmer Rouge being part of an interim government?". Schacht, Chris, interview, Canberra, 15 January 1992.
\textsuperscript{74} Quoted in: Aitkin, "A quest for peace". Schacht reiterated this when interviewed, stating that Cambodia was one of the few foreign affairs issues which provoked real public concern, to the extent people were ringing up and asking "is it true we support the Khmer Rouge being part of an interim government?". Schacht, Chris, interview, Canberra, 15 January 1992.
\textsuperscript{75} Schacht, ibid, 15 January 1992.
\textsuperscript{76} Motions calling for a change in policy were put to the federal Labor caucus and the ALP national executive. Eccleston, Roy, 'Canberra ditches Khmer Rouge plan', \textit{The Australian}, 25 November 1989.
with Khmer Rouge representatives, there was no reason why he should not meet a member of Hun Sen's government. In fact he realised that "there would be a tremendous blue in caucus if they did not meet". Evans had another motive for meeting with Kong Som Ol; to try him out on the idea suggested by United States Congressman, Stephen Solarz, for a UN interim administration in Cambodia prior to holding general elections.

The Cambodian issue caused further division when Richard Butler, Australia's Ambassador to Thailand, gave public support to the incremental approach advocated by the Thai Prime Minister, Chatichai's. Butler also described the ASEAN states call for a comprehensive solution a "sham" and "an excuse to avoid a settlement". These comments, which were made during an interview, compromised the government's position when they were published in the Bangkok Post and widely publicised in the Australian media, while Butler's implied criticism of ASEAN earned him a stern rebuke from Hawke. However, Evans' first attempt to break the impasse - his suggestion that the issue of power sharing be set aside while less sensitive matters were settled first - was very similar to the incremental approach advocated by Chatichai. Evans' proposal never got off the ground. According to reporter, Sarah Sargent, Hawke intervened and insisted that Australia back the hard line ASEAN stance of Singapore, Malaysia and Thai Foreign Minister, Siddhi Sivetsila, whose support would be crucial to the success of APEC.

77 Aitkin, "A quest for peace".
78 According to Schacht, in his meeting with Kong Som Ol, Evans "kicked everyone else out of the room" and tried the idea out on him. Schacht, Chris, interview, Canberra, 15 January 1992.
79 Instead of trying to solve all the issues at once, as a comprehensive settlement demanded, Chatichai had proposed that a step-by-step approach be adopted.
81 Grigson, ibid; Sargent, ibid.
82 Sargent, ibid.
83 The inaugural meeting of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation conference was to be held in early November. Sargent, ibid.
In Parliament the opposition made an effort to exploit the government's difficulties but failed to come to grips with the underlying causes of the conflict and were unable to suggest a viable policy alternative. The frequent shifts in the opposition's stance suggests their arguments were contrived largely in relation to domestic political considerations. It also explains their weakness. On November 15, before the annual vote on Cambodia in the UNGA, opposition leader, Andrew Peacock, had issued a statement calling for "renewed international diplomatic action directed at a comprehensive settlement"\(^{84}\). This about turn from the coalition's previous tough stand against a role for the Khmer Rouge in effect brought their policy into line with the government's position\(^{85}\). According to Senator Robert Hill, the coalition still opposed the Khmer Rouge taking power, but the recent statement "reflected the development in the debate about Cambodia"\(^{86}\). Consistent with this stance, the opposition did not seek to exploit public outrage at the possible inclusion of the Khmer Rouge in an interim Cambodian government but chose to focus instead on the apparent division within the government over the merits of an incremental approach versus a comprehensive settlement. Thus Peacock urged the Labor leadership to "resist the encouragement it has given to the possibility of a partial settlement"\(^{87}\). When the suggestion of an incremental approach was dropped, the opposition attack lost its relevance. The expectation of yet another shift in the opposition's policy was one of the factors pushing the government to shift its stance in the week leading up to Evans' speech of December 24. According to Gwen Robinson\(^{88}\) and Paul Grigson\(^{89}\), Peacock intended to go on the attack over the government's tacit support for the resistance coalition\(^{90}\).

\(^{84}\) Peacock, Andrew, Press Release, 15 November 1989.
\(^{85}\) Former foreign affairs spokesperson, John Spender, had released a statement earlier in the year specifically excluding them, arguing that the opposition had to show moral leadership. Eccleston, Roy, "Libs soften on Khmers", The Australian, 16 November 1989.
\(^{86}\) Eccleston, ibid.
\(^{89}\) Grigson, Paul,"Canberra's new Cambodia policy paves way to peace plan success", The Sydney Morning Herald, 4 January 1990.
\(^{90}\) When asked recently about this, Peacock was evasive, pointing instead to his investigation into the possibility of a establishing a tribunal for the trial of Pol Pot and his leadership while on a visit to New York in 1989 and which had had raised in Parliament on his return. Peacock, Andrew, interview, 14 November 1991.
A similar policy debate raged in the United States at this time. It was in this context that Congressman Stephen Solarz, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, and sponsor of the proposal that lethal aid to be given to the NCR, came up with an alternative. Solarz had become doubtful that such aid would be effective, and suggested instead that the US should seek a major role for the United Nations in ending the conflict\(^91\). Evans discussed the possibility of creating a form of UN transitional administration within the framework of a comprehensive solution with Solarz, before trying the idea out on Kong Som Ol, Deputy Prime Minister of the SOC, and ASEAN representatives\(^92\). These consultations were important because it was not just a shift in Australia's position that was being contemplated, but a proposal which required the backing of other parties. Other elements of the plan, such as a UN peace-keeping role and supervision of elections, had been the subject of discussion for some time. The Evans initiative was thus a timely and well put together package, rather than an original idea. The vigor with which it was pursued, both by the Evans and DFAT staffer Michael Costello, was crucial in getting the proposal tabled for discussion at the Jakarta meeting in February and having it adopted by the P5, and accepted by other parties, as a framework for negotiation.

The Evans initiative provoked considerable public and media interest. The Australian press gave the idea wide coverage, with external and domestic factors variously emphasised in the story of its genesis. In *The Australian*, Allan Boyd\(^93\) claimed the proposal had come from Hun Sen, and had been secretly worked out between envoys from Canberra and Phnom Penh over previous months. This view fails to recognise that no international initiative could be seriously considered without prior consultation. Other accounts put more emphasis on domestic political factors; either the mounting public criticism of Australia's support for an

\(^91\) Booker, "A sustained campaign of disinformation". A more convincing explanation for Solarz' "doubts" was strong public opposition in the US to government funding for the NCR, following reports that it was assisting the Khmer Rouge. In 1990, Solarz was successful in obtaining funds for the NCR from the US foreign aid allocation, arguing that this was the best way to bring the peace talks to fruition. Madison, Christopher, 'Cambodia divisions', *National Journal*, 5 April 1991, pp 1051-2.

\(^92\) Evans, Gareth, CPD, The Senate, 24 November 1989, pg 3299.

interim government which included the Khmer Rouge\textsuperscript{94}, or the political events leading to Evans November 24th statement\textsuperscript{95}.

Paul Grigson gave an account of these events in the \textit{Sydney Morning Herald}. Before November 23, according to Grigson, "no serious consideration" had been given to changing the government's policy, and only the previous week senior officials were assuring reporters and diplomats that "no change was imminent". During the week of the 24th, ACFOA, the ALP backbench led by Senator Schacht and trade union groups lobbied the Foreign Minister. Evans had considered the alternatives, but was cautious about ASEAN. During a meeting on the 23rd, "it became clear that Evans had decided the policy was politically unsupportable", especially with a Federal election looming. It was then "a matter of putting the pieces together in a way that would assuage the sensitivities of the myriad of countries, and ego's involved", until in the end, the Solarz plan was adopted. ASEAN ambassadors were then briefed and the announcement of a change made in question time.

From this account, Grigson\textsuperscript{96} argued that the "policy change flowed from domestic pressure rather than international concern about the failure to solve the Cambodian problem". Although it explains how the change came about as well as its timing, Grigson ignores the fact that Australia's policy towards Cambodia had to be framed within the context of the attitudes of the international community, particularly ASEAN and China, as well as the United States. Furthermore, he ignored the crucial role played by the Paris Conference which, to a large extent, defined the boundaries of Australia's policy on the issue. Cockburn's\textsuperscript{97} description of the shift as "a bid to break the international deadlock" which would "also assuage growing domestic concern", is more accurate because it takes the external context into account. While the policy shift flowed from domestic pressure, it did not go far enough for those who were pushing for recognition of the SOC regime and action on Cambodia's seat in the UNGA. The Evans

\textsuperscript{94} For example, Eccleston, Roy, "Canberra ditches Khmer Rouge plan".
\textsuperscript{95} For example, Grigson, Paul, \textit{The Sydney Morning Herald}, 4 January 1990.
initiative was a compromise which sought to balance domestic demands for a policy shift against the need to avoid a radical change which would cost Australia credibility with allies and a continuing role in the Cambodian peace process.
Chapter Four

The foreign policy debate and the Cambodian end game

International responses to the Red Book proposal

At a Paris meeting in January 1990, the P5 reached unprecedented agreement on the Australian proposal for an enhanced UN role in an interim administration in Cambodia. According to Congressman, Stephen Solarz, "the advantage of the proposal lay in the fact that the factions would continue to exist as political parties and it would require capitulation by no one". It was not surprising Solarz was supportive; he was the principle author of the idea. As Rosenfeld observed:

Solarz broke through the wearling stalemate in American thinking about Cambodia...to move beyond an either-or choice among directly competing Cambodian factions into a broader framework in which outside forces would try to control and muffle the competition...he was also in a position to promote it to an able and ready government, Australia, which made it the basis of the current striving for a UN solution.

The P5 decision emphasised that the transition to self-determination should not be dominated by any one of the Cambodian factions and betrayed exasperation with the failure of the Cambodian factions to agree amongst themselves at the 1989 Paris Conference. While China's agreement was significant, Beijing gave no indication it was prepared to put pressure on the

---

1 As Far Eastern Economic Review correspondents, Field and Hierbert observed, "the plan fits the expressed views of US Secretary of State, James Baker and British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher". Field, Michael & Hiebert, Murray, 'Regime of last resort', FEER, 25 January 1990, pg 8.
3 Rosenfeld, Stephen, S., "Cambodia: putting a country in "trust"", The Washington Post, 8 June 1990, pg 25. According to Rosenfeld, American agreement to the UN plan at the P5 meeting in Paris amounted to a "major policy reversal", although the administration had said little about it. The reasons for this were threefold: Embarrassment that it had changed course; the idea itself was "provisional, airy and awash in uncertainty"; and because the situation on the ground in Cambodia "was unusually murky".
Khmer Rouge, whose nominal leader Khieu Samphan had tacitly rejected the proposal in discussions with Costello.

The Australian proposal and P5 agreement breathed new life into the "moribund" Cambodian negotiations. At the Jakarta Informal Meeting which was held from 26-28 February, the faction leaders showed more flexibility than in the past, and all accepted the principle that the UN should organise and conduct elections. The meeting failed, however, because the Cambodian factions, particularly the Hun Sen regime and the Khmer Rouge, could not agree on the authority and composition of the membership of a Supreme National Council, in which all four factions were to be represented, and the extent of authority to be delegated to the UN during an interim period. There was also disagreement over the insistence by Vietnam and the SOC on the inclusion of the term "genocide" in the conference documents, and the Khmer Rouge's objection to this on the grounds it would legitimise the Vietnamese invasion. The failure was not surprising in view of the deep hostility and mistrust between the Cambodian factions.

There were several other reasons why the "Red Book" proposal did not have more influence at Jakarta. According to a senior Australian diplomat based in Bangkok, the time pressures involved, and the fact that it had not been thoroughly read by the participants beforehand, was one of them. French resistance to the Australian initiative was another. The French Foreign Minister Dumas delayed the start of the talks by a day by his late arrival and only stayed twelve hours, which angered Australian officials at Jakarta. France also opposed the factions discussing the Australian proposal, claiming that it was premature, too detailed, and would compromise the Jakarta outcome. That the French wanted the initiative discussed in Paris after delegates had time to absorb the detail was interpreted by the Australian press and

---

4 Field & Hierbert, "Regime of last resort", pg 25.
8 Waters, Stephen, Australian Embassy, Bangkok, interview, 10 April 1991.
officials as chauvinism\textsuperscript{10}. According to Elizabeth Becker, however, it had been established at the January P5 meeting that the ultimate settlement would be held under the auspices of the Paris conference\textsuperscript{11}. There was also some suggestion that Australia, by sending a fact finding mission to Cambodia, was usurping the role of the UN by taking a lead in implementing the plan\textsuperscript{12}, although the UN had thus far shown little interest in becoming involved in Cambodia\textsuperscript{13}. In Jakarta, Evans was not only careful to counter suggestions Australia was taking matters out of UN hands, but the Secretary General had expressed gratitude for Australia's efforts at a time when his own hands had been tied by the Security Council\textsuperscript{14}.

There were also problems with the plan itself. The central criticism was that it did not solve the problem of power sharing, but displaced it\textsuperscript{15}. As Solarz admitted:

In effect, the disagreement over power-sharing that derailed the 1989 Paris conference has been transposed into the UN frame of reference....because the concept of UN supervision of the interim administration is designed to circumvent the stalemate over power-sharing, negotiations will run aground unless the four factions and their partners can reach a compromise on this central issue\textsuperscript{16}.

The plan envisaged, however, that by separating Cambodia's sovereignty from administrative functions, the UN would be able to concentrate on the task of organising and conducting free elections. Thus one of the main functions of the proposed SNC was that it would provide a focal point for the struggle between the factions. As Senator Chris Schacht put it: "No one cared what (the factions) actually decided to do after they agreed on seating the SNC...It was just a device...it was really about having all the angst disappear into this useless thing, while the real

\textsuperscript{14} Booker, Malcolm, *The Canberra Times*, 6 March 1990.
\textsuperscript{15} For example, *The Economist*, 20 January 1990, pg 27; Field, Michael & Hierbert, Murray, "Regime of last resort", pg 8.
\textsuperscript{16} Solarz, "Cambodia and the international community", pg 109.
job was outside\textsuperscript{17}. The plan had a better chance than previously rejected proposals, according to Solarz, because "it would give something to everyone and would require capitulation by no one".

Despite the failure of the Jakarta meeting, all parties, including France and ASEAN, agreed that the plan was the only way to go and accepted, in principle, the establishment of an SNC. Evans had played an important role in achieving that consensus, and in the process had cast aside Australia's role as a resource unit to become a key negotiator. This achievement owed much to the cooperation and support of Indonesia's Foreign Minister, Ali Alatas\textsuperscript{18}. In the lead up to the Jakarta meeting, Indonesia had "seized upon the new Australian proposal as a means of reviving the peace process", which it managed on behalf of the ASEAN countries\textsuperscript{19} and Australia and Indonesia had jointly briefed the regional parties and P5 on the working papers. According to western and Asian officials at Jakarta, one of the strengths of Australia's diplomacy was the extent to which officials were prepared to consult with other players, particularly ASEAN\textsuperscript{20}. According to \textit{Financial Review} reporter, Bronwyn Young, some of them contrasted this unfavourably with Hayden's earlier attempts, leading her to conclude that this time Australia was regarded as a country with the right credentials. This is somewhat unfair to Hayden as he played an important role in establishing those credentials.

\textit{Domestic responses to the Australian proposal and the Jakarta Informal Meeting}

When Evans went to Jakarta in February 1990 he was breaking "a maxim of Australian politics that there are no votes in overseas trips during an election campaign"\textsuperscript{21}. Although the

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{17} Schacht, Chris, interview, Canberra, 15 January 1992.
\textsuperscript{18} Australia's relations with Indonesia improved after a meeting between Gareth Evans and Ali Alatas in March 1989. According to the Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Richard Woolcott, the timing of improved bilateral relations helped Australia gain acceptance for its proposal. Vatikiotis, Michael, 'Tying a new knot', \textit{FEER}, 22 February 1990, pg 26.
\textsuperscript{19} Vatikiotis, ibid, pg 26.
\textsuperscript{21} Metherell, Mark, "Flight path to Cambodian peace", \textit{The Age}, 21 February 1990.
\end{flushright}
issue was considered to be of limited public interest to the broader Australian electorate, some ALP strategists felt that the success of Evans proposal could woo back a small but significant block of issue-oriented voters disenchanted with Labor's policies on the environment and other issues. For a Government on the verge of an election, the Cambodian venture was a well timed win-win initiative: If it failed, the government would have at least killed off the electoral bogey of "supporting" the Khmer Rouge; while success would have been a foreign affairs coup "handy for a government with uncertain domestic fortunes". Canberra's diplomatic efforts and the P5 agreement "boosted the international stocks of Evans and Australia", while media coverage of these events at home improved the governments standing amongst voters.

Domestic responses to Evans' "possible alternate approach" were largely positive, but skeptical. ACFOA described the initiative as a "welcome step" but expressed regret that it had not been taken before the UN debate. The Editors of The Australian and The Age questioned whether the UN had the capacity to administer the war ravaged country, but argued the plan was not without merit, while The Canberra Times called it a "moral victory" even if an "impractical one". Critics were primarily concerned about the Khmer Rouge and the fact the plan offered no guarantee that the conflict would end. Cambodia specialist and historian, Ben Kiernan, argued that it was flawed because the Khmer Rouge had a stranglehold on Cambodia's UN seat and it provided no protection against military offensives by their guerillas. For Kiernan, the Australian government's response should have been to exclude the Khmer Rouge altogether and extend recognition to the Hun Sen regime. Others, such as Malcolm Booker, expressed similar concerns, but agreed with Evans' identification of China as the key to the

---

29 Kiernan, Ben, "Time is right for Evans to dump the Khmer Rouge", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 January 1990.
30 Kiernan, ibid.
conflict, and accepted the Foreign Minister's argument that the Khmer Rouge could only be contained if they were locked into a settlement and China ceased to supply them with arms31.

Despite his exasperation with the intransigence of the Cambodian factions at the close of the Jakarta meeting32, Evans moved to take advantage of the momentum generated by agreement between the P5, by stepping up his peace efforts. As well as sending envoys to Beijing, Washington, Paris and London, he established a trust fund for a UN-backed task force to begin preliminary plans and studies in Cambodia33, thus demonstrating Australia's commitment to a UN peace keeping effort. Australia's substantial investment in the peace process was also a factor ensuring continued involvement. Despite the initial optimism and agreement amongst the P5, the plan did not resolve some of the key issues which had dominated the policy debate.

The domestic policy debate: The UN seat issue

When the Evans initiative was first put on record in Parliament, the Foreign Minister claimed the proposal would solve the problem of who would represent Cambodia in the UNGA in the lead up to free elections, stating that:

It would be difficult, if not impossible, for the UN to play the role envisaged if Cambodia's seat remained occupied...by one contesting group, the CGDK...But, as became very clear in the corridors of the Paris conference, there is very little, if any, dissent from the view that any international control mechanism to supervise the transition to peace in Cambodia should be under the authority of the UN, and that a logical corollary of this is that the Cambodian seat in the UN should be declared vacant, or at least occupied by whoever constitutes the transition administration....If the UN were to be the interim authority, it follows that the Cambodian seat would have to be declared vacant34.

32 Evans reportedly threw his hands up in exasperation at the end of the meeting and said that he had "reached the limits of his masochism" on the issue, which had taken him away from an election at home. Murdoch, Lindsay,"Pol Pot's man admits: I've not studied Evans peace plan", The Age, 2 March 1990.
33 Robinson, Gwen, "Evans steps up efforts on Cambodia after peace talks are inconclusive", The Canberra Times, 2 March 1990.
34 Emphasis added. Evans, Gareth, CPD, Senate, 24 November 1989, pg 3300.
This addressed the concerns of NGO's and other critics of the government's tacit support for the CGDK through the annual UN vote on Cambodia's seat in the General Assembly. In the lead up to the Jakarta meeting, however, Sihanouk, had made it clear that the resistance coalition would vacate the seat only if the Phnom Penh government was dismantled, a demand which Hun Sen rejected\textsuperscript{35}.

At Jakarta there was no suggestion that Cambodia's UN seat be declared vacant. Instead, the working papers in the "Red Book" referred to the formation of a Supreme National Council which would embody Cambodia's sovereignty, and devolve governmental authority to the UN\textsuperscript{36}. The documents explained that there were problems associated with leaving the seat vacant: Firstly, it would create uncertainty about the legality of, and authority for, the UN role; and secondly, since the UN cannot even exercise trusteeship over Cambodia under Article 78 of its Charter, the difficulties involved in the UN exercising full sovereignty over a member state would be even greater\textsuperscript{37}.

This suggests that the concept of an SNC was formulated in response to difficulties associated with leaving the seat vacant. According to Chris Schacht, however, the idea of a SNC "or something like it" which would formally hold Cambodia's sovereignty, had been envisaged from the outset, at least since Evans' discussions with Kong Som Ol\textsuperscript{38}. While this suggests Evans may have misled the Parliament on this point, the Foreign Minister's caution that these were "ideas that I shall be further exploring with my counterparts"\textsuperscript{39}, and the flurry of diplomatic activity which followed his November statement, suggests that the idea for seating the proposed SNC in Cambodia's UN seat was a compromise worked out in negotiations with other parties\textsuperscript{40}.

\textsuperscript{35} \textit{The Canberra Times}, 20 December 1989.
\textsuperscript{37} Evans, ibid, pg 12.
\textsuperscript{38} Schacht, Chris, interview, Canberra, 15 January 1992.
\textsuperscript{39} Evans, Gareth, CPD, Senate, 24 November 1989, pg 3300.
\textsuperscript{40} The fact that there are precedents for declaring a UNGA seat vacant, for example, South Africa's, suggests that the idea was scotched because of resistance from other parties consulted.
Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Robert Hill was critical of this formula and argued that "nothing (had) fundamentally changed" and the suggestion faced "all the difficulties of the quadripartite solution"\(^{41}\). This argument ignored the main point of the proposed SNC - that it would not be a government - thus representation on the Council would not give the KR a role in running the country. Furthermore, the formation of the SNC required the factions to negotiate and reach agreement, a critical first step in bringing the parties together. However, the delay in reaching cross-factional agreement on the composition of the SNC, and the fact the factions did so only in response to pressure by their external backers, demonstrated that habits of dialogue and compromise would be difficult to foster.

During 1991, the intensification of the conflict on the ground and the stalling of the peace process saw the government came under renewed pressure to mount a challenge to the seating of the CGDK in the UN. By mid-year, the Labor government was facing an internal vote on the issue, while aid agencies were pushing to have the seat declared vacant on the grounds that it would undermine support for the Khmer Rouge\(^{42}\). Evans cautioned against such a move, and argued that failure risked giving them renewed legitimacy\(^{43}\), although he also conceded that it might become an attractive option if the factions failed to agree on the composition of the SNC\(^{44}\). This new flexibility in Australia's stance suggests the government perhaps anticipated the shift in US policy. As Amer pointed out, the fact that "many third world countries vote in accordance with the US stand regarding DK credentials has been particularly important, if not crucial, in determining the outcome of the struggle for international recognition between the two Cambodian sides"\(^{45}\). Baker's announcement that the US would withdraw its support for the

\(^{43}\) Metherell, Mark, *The Age*, 18 July 1990. Because of the influence of ASEAN and the Third World countries in the UNGA, it was the government's assessment that an Australian move to unseat the CGDK would fail. Thus the UN, China, ASEAN and the Third World would have had the votes to defeat an Australian motion along those lines. Schacht, Chris, interview, Canberra, 15 January 1991.
CGDK in the United Nations effectively resolved the UN seat issue\textsuperscript{46}, although when the factions failed to agree on how they would be seated in the SNC, thus delaying its establishment, the government came under renewed pressure to move to have the seat declared vacant\textsuperscript{47}.

\textit{The issue of Australian representation in Phnom Penh}

The question of an official Australian presence in Phnom Penh was not resolved as easily. Those who believed that acceptance of the Australian proposal would pave the way for recognition were disappointed\textsuperscript{48}. In view of the government's earlier decision to tie representation to the achievement of a comprehensive settlement and the stake Australia now had in the peace process, their optimism was ill-founded. Many were not prepared to wait indefinitely for the plan to work.

By mid-year the government had come under renewed pressure from sections of the Labor party, led by Senator Chris Schacht\textsuperscript{49}, DFAT, as well as aid organisations\textsuperscript{50}, for the normalisation of relations if no settlement had been reached by the end of the year. While Schacht had earlier supported Evans' proposal, he now argued that if an agreement was not reached soon, Australia should cut its losses and recognise the Hun Sen regime\textsuperscript{51}. He did not,

\textsuperscript{46} Secretary of State James Baker announced that the United States would open dialogue with Vietnam, withdraw all support for the Cambodian opposition groups including the Khmer Rouge as holders of the UN seat and would send humanitarian aid to Phnom Penh. AM, ABC Radio National, 19 July 1990. The hostile reaction of ASEAN to the US withdrawal of support for the CGDK in the UNGA points to another reason Evans would have been reluctant for Australia to initiate action to have the seat declared vacant. While ASEAN had to live with the American decision, a hostile reaction towards Australia had it made such a move would have been costly in terms of Canberra's good relations and cooperation with the countries of the region, and limited any further Australian role in the Cambodian peace process.

\textsuperscript{47} Sheridan, Greg, "Evans warns of risks in UN push on Cambodia's seat", The Australian, 7 September 1990.

\textsuperscript{48} According to Gwen Robinson, one of the reasons for the support the Australian plan received was the belief, based on comments by senior diplomats, that Cambodian and Vietnamese agreement would provide Australia with justification for establishing diplomatic representation in Phnom Penh. Robinson, Gwen, The Canberra Times, 16 December 1989.

\textsuperscript{49} Schacht, Chris. Interview, Canberra , 15 January 1992.

\textsuperscript{50} Nicols, John, Cambodia: and still they hope, Development Dossier No. 25, ACFOA, July 1990, pg 7; ACFOA, Press Release, 16 July 1990.

\textsuperscript{51} Schacht, Chris, interview, Canberra, 15 January 1992.
therefore, envisage that Australia would undermine the UN plan by such a move because it would only be made after it became clear the plan was not going to work. How this was to be judged, however, remained unclear. Those in the Hun Sen government and others who believed the threat of a resurgent Khmer Rouge would push the west into recognition of the SOC were mistaken. Instead, Solarz’s argument that “recognition of the Hun Sen government would greatly if not entirely eliminate his incentive to make the kind of concessions that (would) be necessary for a negotiated settlement”, prevailed. There was also some suggestion at this time, that Costello had used the threat of an “increasing tendency in Australia and the Western world...towards the de jure recognition of the Hun Sen regime,” to put pressure on Sihanouk.

There is some evidence that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and perhaps Evans himself, disagreed with Hawke on this issue. DFAT had twice put submissions to the government endorsing the establishment of an official administrative or liaison office in Phnom Penh. According to Lindsay Murdoch, the first was refused when it did not get Hawke’s backing, while the second was still under consideration in November. From the timing of these submissions, it seems clear they were in part, a response to the upgrading of France’s diplomatic relations in Phnom Penh with the establishment of an Alliance Francaise centre. Further evidence comes from the “impassioned plea” by Lyndall McLean, administrator of the JANGO Office in Phnom Penh, for Australia to change its policy and grant full diplomatic relations to the Hun Sen regime. Her views were publicised by Greg Sheridan in The Australian, in an article based on documents leaked from DFAT. McLean was not only pessimistic about the prospects for a settlement, but argued that:

---

52 Gary Klintworth, for example, argued that “paradoxically, Pol Pot is Hun Sen’s most potent weapon” and “if Hun Sen invites a few more journalists to witness the fall of a few more outlying towns to the Khmer Rouge...he might yet win the war”. Klintworth, Gary, “Shock waves from US shift on Cambodia”, The Canberra Times, 27 July 1990.

53 The quote comes from a telegram tabled in Parliament by Senator Teague, which he claimed was from Prince Sihanouk to his son Prince Ranariddh which reported Costello’s comments during discussions in Pyonyang. Teague, Baden, CPD, The Senate, 13 December 1990, pg 5652. The comments were never verified, and taken out of context, were probably misleading.

54 Murdoch, Lindsay, The Age, 16 November 1990.

55 According to diplomatic sources in Cambodia, at least 10 French personnel at the Alliance Francais were Foreign Service officers. Robinson, Gwen, The Canberra Times, 8 July 1990.

After all Australia's efforts it would be a great shame if someone else (France?) beat us to the finish line. I say this not only on the basis of Australia-France competition, but more because I consider that if France were the first to recognise Cambodia it would have an adverse effects on a whole realm of our Cambodia policy both domestically and internationally57.

The problem the government faced was deciding the timing and direction of any policy shift if the settlement process stalled indefinitely58. The danger that domestic pressures might force a shift anyway, was another factor pushing the government to adopt a more flexible position. It was November 1990 before Evans signalled the possibility of a change in policy when he said Australia was preparing to look at establishing something on the ground in Phnom Penh, but would stop short of full recognition, which would anger the backers of the resistance factions59. The objectives of Evans statement were twofold: to offset domestic pressure for full recognition and pave the way for an upgrading of Australian representation in the Cambodian capital, whatever the outcome of the current negotiations. It also reflected uncertainty about the duration of the Gulf War, with which the P5 were preoccupied at that time, and concern that even after that conflict was resolved, events in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union would push Cambodia into the background.

In reality, the government's choices were circumscribed in two ways: firstly, the position Australia had taken after the Vietnamese withdrawal and the role Canberra had played in providing a settlement framework excluded the option of recognising the Hun Sen regime; and secondly, Cambodia could not be considered in isolation from Australia's relations with ASEAN and the Hawke government's overall foreign policy framework. While Australia's relations with ASEAN, the US and China were regarded as more critical to the national interest than closer relations with Indochina, the government was unwilling to take unilateral action which would jeopardise them. If Evans was unwilling to take action that would undermine Australia's

57 Quoted in Sheridan, ibid.
58 Senator Chris Schacht argued in mid-1990 that the government could only wait another 6 months for a settlement before it would have to choose between the Khmer Rouge and the Hun Sen regime. Schacht, Chris, interview, Canberra, 15 January 1992.
59 Murdoch, Lindsay, *The Age*, 16 November 1990.
relations with ASEAN and the effort he had put into cooperation on the Cambodian issue, the United States was not similarly constrained.

The United States policy shift

While the Evans initiative was the ice-breaker which had paved the way for the P5 agreement in January 1990, the shift in Washington's policy in July made progress possible at the regional and factional levels. Growing pressure from members of Congress who not only feared a Khmer Rouge victory, but wondered why America needed to involve itself in a war of limited strategic importance, and concern that lethal US assistance to the non-communist resistance was assisting the Khmer Rouge, forced the Bush administration to rethink its policy on Cambodia. According to Evans, the review of US policy did not signal a "sea change", but an adjustment to recent developments such as Washington's commitment to the P5 process, which was "unequivocal". The P5 had already moved to hand part of their diplomatic mission over to Japan, which had both "deep pockets" and a "desire to spread its diplomatic wings".60 A meeting between Hun Sen and Sihanouk in Tokyo, whilst stage managed,61 signalled a determination by the major powers to press the factions towards agreement.

On July 13, James Baker met with Bush and secured approval to withdraw American support for the Khmer Rouge, admit the Vietnamese withdrawal and open a dialogue with Hanoi.62 The change in policy was announced on July 18. As Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Richard Solomon explained, the revisions were "designed to encourage flexibility on the part of the key participants in this conflict, and to maintain strong support at home for our efforts".63 Although the shift angered ASEAN,64 they now agreed to press the

60 Rosenfeld, "Cambodia: Putting a country in trust".
61 The meeting was also to be showcase for Japan's venture into world diplomacy. Sargent, Sarah, The Financial Review, 4 June 1990.
62 Becker, Solving the Kampuchean crisis..., pg 14.
63 Solomon, Richard, Backgrounder, USIS, 24 July 1990.
64 Lee Kuan Yew, for example, described the US decision as a "dangerous precedent" and would only encourage the Khmer Rouge to gain more on the battlefield. Lague, David, The Financial
factions to form an SNC\textsuperscript{65}. The decision brought the US position more into line with Australia’s, and paved the way for the August agreement by the P5 on a peace framework which conceded six seats in the SNC to the Hun Sen regime, and six seats to the resistance coalition\textsuperscript{66}.

The dialogue opened up between China and Vietnam at this time was also a crucial development, because of their role as backers of the Phnom Penh government and Khmer Rouge respectively. In June 1990 Xu Dunxin visited Hanoi for talks with Nguyen Co Thach, the most senior meeting between the two countries since 1979. According to \textit{The Economist}, it is almost certain that China told Vietnam it would stop arming the Khmer Rouge and accept the UN plan, while Vietnam agreed to stop insisting the Hun Sen administration run the country in the lead up to elections\textsuperscript{67}. Beijing’s move anticipated the shift in American policy, which would have effectively left it isolated. In the wake of the dramatic collapse of communist regimes in Europe, there was some concern in the west that the rapprochement between Vietnam and China would result in a “Red Solution” being imposed on Cambodia\textsuperscript{68}. This revival of Cold War xenophobia ignored the history of relations between Vietnam and China, and the persistence of tensions between them. It was also rejected by Hor Nam Hong, Foreign Minister of the SOC\textsuperscript{69}.

The China-Vietnam dialogue was important in bringing about the August P5 agreement and securing assurances from senior Chinese official that once the SNC was formed, aid the the Khmer Rouge would be cut off\textsuperscript{70}. This paved the way for the historic agreement between the Cambodian factions in Jakarta the following month\textsuperscript{71}. Although the factions released a joint statement declaring that they would accept a UN administration prior to elections, this had been
achieved only by arm twisting from their backers, and fighting on the ground continued. The slow rate of subsequent progress and the intricacies of the negotiations themselves, gave justifiable cause for skepticism about the prospects for achieving a settlement. This was one of the factors which gave impetus to renewed calls for recognition of the Hun Sen regime.

Another factor which had helped secure the August agreement was the announcement by the Warsaw Pact countries that from the 1st of January, 1991, aid would be replaced by commercial hard currency transactions and Cambodia's 250 million ruble loan from the Soviet Union would fall due72. In a report prepared for the western aid agencies in Phnom Penh, Raoul Jennar, previously foreign affairs adviser to the Belgian Senate, outlined the economic consequences for the country, concluding that: "one must question whether the country can survive longer than six or eighteen months"73. While the Cambodian government was forced to lay off 56,000 employees and sell gold reserves to meet civilian and military needs, the resistance groups continued to receive food, shelter and medical aid. Jennar also argued that because the west had failed to respond to the efforts of the PRK regime to liberalise, "the reformers are today on the sidelines" following the resurgence of party hardliners led by Chea Sim74. Increasing public dissatisfaction with the corruption-ridden economy and spiralling inflation was the main source of the power struggle between Chea Sim, hardline President of the PRK National Assembly, and Hun Sen75. Beijing and the Khmer Rouge, sensing Phnom Penh's predicament, stepped up their military pressure in an effort to destroy Hun Sen's credibility76.

---

73 Jennar, Raoul, 'Cambodia: The hardest part remains to be done', Consultants report to the NGO forum on Cambodia, Jodiogne-Souveraine, Belgium, November 1990.
74 Jennar, ibid, pg 11.
75 According to van der Kroef, the purge of liberals from the Kampuchean Peoples Revolutionary Party, including the arrest of Khieu Kanarith, editor of the Kumpuchea weekly, weakened the position of reformers and forced Hun Sen into an uneasy alliance with Politburo hardliners Chea Sim and Heng Samrin. van der Kroef, Justus, "Cambodia in 1990...".
76 Klintworth, Gary, 'A matter of "if" or "when" ', Australian Society, August 1990, pg 24.

This is an exaggeration - Kanarith was simply removed from his editorial post.
The agenda of debate

Australia was not a party principle in the events outlined above; however, Australia's involvement in the peace process ensured that the Cambodian conflict and Labor's policy responses received media attention and were subjects of considerable public interest. An examination of the public debate on the Cambodian issue illustrates how different facets of the problem were used by various foreign policy actors to support their stance and demonstrates the extent to which external events were subsumed by domestic political considerations.

The refugees issue became an immediate problem for the Labor government when the first Cambodian boat people landed in Broome in late 1989. Against a background of renewed fighting in Cambodia, concern about the plight of civilians and displaced persons in the country and problems associated with the military control of civilian camps in Thailand, Australian officials were concerned about the prospects of a Cambodian exodus. They were also disturbed by reports that the Cambodians were helped on their way to Australia when they stopped over in Indonesia and Singapore. The government was faced with two problems: stemming the outflow of refugees before the problem worsened, and deciding whether to grant refugee status to those who had already arrived by boat. If the arrivals were granted refugee status, the government believed others would try to follow, and if not, they would have to be repatriated, although the Hun Sen government had made it clear they would only take them back if they returned voluntarily. Australia's role in the peace process complicated the decision the government faced in determining its response. The government not only had to act in the national interest vis à vis the refugee problem, but could not afford to jeopardise the role it had come to play in the Cambodian negotiations by taking a stand which conflicted with Australia's position on the issue.

78 Sargent, Sarah, The Canberra Times, 17 May 1990. The international agreement signed by Jakarta which gave temporary refuge to Indochinese boat people, applied only to Vietnamese. Murdoch, Lindsay, "Canberra, Jakarta refugee deadlock", The Age, 6 June 1990.
The refugee issue was linked to the settlement process to support various lines of argument in the public debate. ACFOA used the issue to press for a major policy change which addressed the root causes of the problem. Thus Russell Rollason argued that Cambodians were not fleeing from persecution, but feared the return of the Khmer Rouge, and said that the repatriation of the boat people must not go ahead until the government restored bilateral aid \(^{80}\). Others focused on flaws within the SOC. Greg Sheridan argued in *The Australian*, for example, that the resurgence of hardliners in the SOC would make it "almost inconceivable that the government could forcibly repatriate the Cambodian boat people" \(^{81}\). Evans adopted a neutral stance and used the issue to press home his argument that the refugee problem would only be solved when the killing ended and economic conditions improved, which would only occur after the achievement of a comprehensive settlement \(^{82}\).

Australia's good relationship with ASEAN at that time, especially the cooperation Evans received from Alatas, paid off in negotiations to prevent the problem worsening. ASEAN supported Australia in opposing US objections to the forced repatriation of Indochinese refugees, an issue which Evans took up with Baker on their behalf, while Alatas secured for Evans a communique from ASEAN which added Cambodians to the international agreement covering Vietnamese refugees \(^{83}\). Australia's good relationship with the SOC was also helpful. The government was able to exert some influence on Phnom Penh through the JANGO office, which resulted in a crack down on the refugee racket operating out of Kompong Som \(^{84}\), while the Joint Australian Non-Government Organisation Office conducted a campaign through press announcements designed to discourage Cambodians from fleeing by boat \(^{85}\). The status of the Cambodian boat people who arrived in Australia three years ago, however, has still not been determined \(^{86}\). This matter became, and remains at the time of writing, a domestic political

\(^{80}\) ACFOA, Press Release, 7 June 1990.
\(^{81}\) Sheridan, Greg, "Beween the devil and the blood red sea", *The Australian*, 4 July 1990.
\(^{83}\) Murdoch, Lindsay, *The Age*, 26 July 1990.
\(^{84}\) *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 August 1990.
\(^{85}\) *The Australian*, 16 July 1990.
\(^{86}\) The government's treatment of the Cambodian boat people ensured the question of their status became an issue. Their isolation and detention was contrasted unfavourably with Hawke's unilateral decision to allow all Chinese students to stay in Australia following the
issue. However, the line of argument has been drawn between those Australians sympathetic to
the plight of the Cambodian refugees and the the major political parties, who are in agreement
that the Cambodians should not be allowed to stay. This reflected the government’s new hard
line on immigration in response to high unemployment and concern about the economic burden
imposed on the community by non-skilled and non-English speaking migrants.

The re-emergence of the problem of the Khmer Rouge led to renewed discussion on the
possibility of a genocide tribunal for the trial of Pol Pot and his leadership. It was assumed
that such an action would discredit the Khmer Rouge internationally and effectively exclude the
DK leadership from any part in a new Cambodian government. After the Evans’ initiative was
tabled, the issue became subsumed in domestic political maneuvering. In a move described as
"a bid to regain the moral high ground"^87, Andrew Peacock responded to strong public
antipathy towards the Khmer Rouge by pressing for a trial of the Pol Pot leadership in the
International Court of Justice^88. Others demanding the government initiate international legal
action included Ben Kiernan^89, and the Secretary of the Australian Cambodian Support
Committee, Phillip Hazelton^90. Evans indicated Australia would not be pursuing the matter,
explaining that:

It is the present judgement of the government that based on detailed consideration in
1986 and subsequently by our own international lawyers, that, contrary to Mr
Peacock’s assertions, there are formidable procedural and jurisdictional obstacles
standing in the way of the initiation of such an action by Australia...^91

Beijing massacre. Their movement from one detention centre to another, without warning and
at the dead of night, and the fact they were not treated sympathetically in relation to the
circumstances in their country of origin, also attracted criticism. The rejection of those
applications which were recently assessed sparked a public outcry from sympathisers, while
the Cambodian’s protested by going on a hunger strike. The Immigration Department responded
with a promise that their applications would be reviewed.

^89 Kiernan, "Time is ripe for Evans to dump the Khmer Rouge".
^91 Evans, Gareth, CPD, Senate, 28 November 1989, pg 3431.
According to Andrew Peacock, Evans' advice on the issue had come from the "ASEAN mafia" in DFAT, and the explanation he gave to Parliament was "rubbish". Without going as far as Peacock, it is hard to believe there was no way around the main difficulty Evans cited. Specifically, he claimed that as action in the ICJ can only be taken against a legitimate government, the Khmer Rouge would first have to be granted recognition. The Foreign Minister did not refer to the more salient difficulty of whether an action initiated by the Hawke government would effect Australia's relations with its Asian neighbours. Had the Hawke government pursued the idea of a genocide tribunal, it could have been accused of passing moral judgement on the internal actions of a sovereign government, something that would have been strongly resisted by the ASEAN states as well as China. This point is particularly salient when considering how such a case would be proved and what sort of evidence might be used to support it. As Michael Vickery warned, careless statistics and sloppy scholarship on the genocide question could easily backfire. He argued instead that "it would be better to drop the loaded and legalistic term 'genocide' and concentrate on mass murder and war crimes which were easier to prove".

Another reason why the government did not pursue the proposal was timing. The pursuit of the tribunal concept before a settlement was achieved, but while negotiations were still in train, risked derailing the peace process. While there was a high probability that such an action would fail, thus giving the Khmer Rouge renewed legitimacy, its success would have violated an important condition of China's cooperation, as well as Sihanouk's - that they be included in a settlement. Furthermore, in view of the prominent role Australia had played in promoting a settlement in which all four factions would take part, Evans would have damaged Australia's credibility had he supported the proposal at that time. However, he did express support for the idea in principle when he acknowledged that "properly documented findings of

---

92 Peacock, Andrew, interview, Canberra, 14 November 1991.
93 Evans, Gareth, CPD, Senate, 28 November, 1989, pg 3431.
95 That his major speech on the Cambodian settlement of 6 December 1990 included no reference to the question of a trial of Pol Pot and his associates suggests Evans hoped the issue would simply disappear. Evans, Gareth, CPD, Senate, 6 December 1990, pp 5164-5175
guilt would have a major impact on international public opinion" and would help in defining "the identity of those who should under no circumstances be allowed to play a part in the future of Cambodia". As well as justifying its own policy stance to critics, because of the role Australia had played in formulating and promoting it, the Hawke government also had to defend the UN plan. In a major speech to Parliament on 6 December, 1990, Evans addressed the main concerns which had been raised over the past year. These mainly concerned the problem posed by the Khmer Rouge and delays in the implementation of the plan. Evans approach was underpinned by a conviction that the problem had to be addressed first at the level of the international system. Thus he acknowledged the plan would not solve all the problems, but emphasised that it would sidestep the issue of power sharing issue as well as constrain the role of the Khmer Rouge. This contrasted with the approach of many of the government's critics, which began with an assessment of the needs of the Cambodian people.

The first issue Evans addressed was the question why Australia had sought to engage the Khmer Rouge in the peace process at all, instead of taking the position that their past atrocities and actions disqualifed them, and related to this, the question of why Australia had not simply recognised the SOC, at least in the lead up to elections. The government justified its position by reiterating that: "China has consistently maintained that it would give a commitment to cease military support to the Khmer Rouge...only in the context of a comprehensive settlement".

While China's cooperation was important in achieving agreement on a settlement framework and the cessation of Chinese support would be necessary to bring the fighting to an end, the Khmer Rouge's control of lucrative gem mining area in western Cambodia and access to teak forests, as well as large reserves of cash and arms, meant they were no longer solely reliant on

---

96 Evans, Gareth, CPD, Senate, 28 November 1989, pp 3430-3431.
97 Evans, Gareth, CPD, The Senate, 6 December 1990, pg 5169.
98 Evans, Gareth, CPD, Senate, 6 December 1990, pg 5171.
Beijing\textsuperscript{99}. Evans acknowledged that the Chinese could not deliver the Khmer Rouge, but argued that without Chinese support they would be marginalised.

The second criticism, widely publicised by John Pilger\textsuperscript{100} and taken up by Shadow Foreign Minister, Robert Hill\textsuperscript{101}, was that delays in the implementation of the peace plan were being militarily and politically exploited by the Khmer Rouge. As Evans pointed out, the criticisms assumed that there was a quicker way to achieve a peace, and the KR were making significant gains, with a real prospect of regaining control\textsuperscript{102}. The Foreign Minister asserted that both were without foundation, although he did concede that the KR were "making steady long-term progress with the same sort of guerilla strategy which brought it to power in 1975"\textsuperscript{103}. While Evans' analogy with the Khmer Rouge takeover of 1975 assumes Cambodians would allow a repeat of the recent bloody past, his comment acknowledged that they enjoyed some support amongst the rural peasant population for much the same reasons as they did in the 1970's. As the only way to test the extent of that support is through free elections, the argument supports the logic of the UN plan. If Evans stance appeared optimistic in respect of the Khmer Rouge, Pilger's suggestion that the problem could be solved if Evans were to make a "clear statement...calling on China to cut its links with Pol Pot (which would) reinforce the isolation of Asia's Nazi's", was nothing short of utopian. As Milton Cockburn remarked, "this must come into the 'we warn the Tsar' category of ultimate futility"\textsuperscript{104}. Furthermore, exclusion of the Khmer Rouge before a settlement was achieved could well have backfired. As Robert Merrilees pointed out, the upsurge in KR military activity during 1990 was linked to fears, which probably could be justified, that they were being squeezed out diplomatically\textsuperscript{105}.

\textsuperscript{101} Hill, Robert, "Cambodia - comprehensive peace of Khmer Rouge victory?", Address to the Melbourne branch of the Liberal Party, 31 October 1990, pp 3, 15.
\textsuperscript{102} Evans, CPD, Senate, 6 December 1990, pg 5171.
\textsuperscript{103} Evans, CPD, Senate, 6 December 1990, pg 5171.
\textsuperscript{105} Merrilees was a member of the Cambodian task force in DFAT and had served in Cambodia before 1975. Merrilees, Robert, Seminar, SDSC, ANU, Canberra, 5 September 1990.
The third criticism was that the KR would be able to take advantage of the transitional arrangements to facilitate their return to power. Evans countered this by reminding his audience that the SNC would not exercise executive authority\textsuperscript{106}, a distinction which had become lost in much of the debate. He also pointed out that two KR nominees in a body of twelve or fourteen should "not of itself cause concern, and is in fact readily accepted by the SOC regime". However, the Phnom Penh government had little choice other than to accept the arrangement. The SOC's real position was made clear by Hun Sen's refusal to dismantle his government after the formation of the SNC because this would advantage the opposition factions\textsuperscript{107}.

Evans had no solution to the fourth criticism of the plan, that the KR would not in any event accept the outcome of a process which did not leave them in control. However, he pointed out that the international undertaking by China to end its support for the Khmer Rouge, and the recognition and aid which would follow once a legitimate government was established in Phnom Penh, would help the Cambodian government withstand any challenge from them\textsuperscript{108}. Evans did concede however, that the government was prepared to change course and recognise the SOC if it became clear that a comprehensive achievement was not possible, but drew on the lessons of past western intervention in Indochina when he cautioned that: "It would be a very large assumption that any future Australian government, or any future government in the west...would be willing to contemplate the dispatch of military forces to help the SOC fight the Khmer Rouge"\textsuperscript{109}. This policy option therefore had limitations in terms of helping ordinary Cambodians and ending the civil war.

\textsuperscript{106} Evans, CPD, Senate, 6 December 1990, pg 5172.
\textsuperscript{107} According to Eat Ly Heng, Councillor in the Cambodian Embassy, Hanoi, the dissolution of the SOC administration and its military forces was acceptable, but only after the formation of a new Cambodian government. Eat Ly Heng, interview, Hanoi, 7 March 1991. This argument was reiterated by Foreign Ministry officials in Phnom Penh.
\textsuperscript{108} Evans, CPD, Senate, 6 December 1990, pg 5172.
\textsuperscript{109} Evans, CPD, Senate, 6 December 1990, pg 5175.
The Cambodian Peace agreements signed in Paris on 23 October 1991 formally ended the Third Indochina War. As well as relief, there was uncertainty caused by delays in setting up UNTAC, as well as sporadic outbreaks of fighting. After the shooting of Lt.Col. Russell Stuart, an Australian involved in the military component of the operation, the L-NP Opposition questioned whether the role of Australian forces in Cambodia would in fact be to separate warring parties, rather than to supervise a peace\(^{110}\). While this concern was legitimate, the opposition also tried capitalise on the issue by expressing strong criticism of the UN plan and the "ad hoc" way it was being put into place\(^{111}\). According to Robert Hill, the "flaw in the whole process" was that it depended on the Khmer Rouge being turned into democrats\(^{112}\).

Defending the government's position, Evans explained that there was no alternative to the process of solving problems as they arose because it was not possible to anticipate every contingency in such a difficult operation. It therefore had to be a "step by step exercise", and while Evans had "no optimism" about the Khmer Rouge, he pointed out that while they still had the capacity to create mischief, there was a possibility they could be contained within the settlement framework\(^{113}\). The critical point, from the perspective of Australian foreign policy, was that:

If we have been wrong in our assessment that the Khmer Rouge was capable of being contained in this way...then we have not been alone in that misjudgement. It has been an error also perpetrated, adopted and endorsed by...the Permanent Five...the Security Council...the UN General Assembly...and certainly all the key neighbouring Asian nations, from Vietnam and Thailand to the other ASEAN's, to Japan. Every one of those countries has come to expect over the course of the last few years that this kind of settlement strategy, the one on which we are now embarked, was the only game in town\(^{114}\).

\(^{110}\) Hill, Robert, Interview with Mathew Abraham on 2CN, Canberra, 27 March 1992, pg 3.
\(^{111}\) Hill, Robert, 7.30 Report, 30 March 1992, MICAH transcript, Parliamentary Library, Canberra, pg 3.
\(^{112}\) Hill, ibid, pg 3.
\(^{113}\) Evans, Gareth, Current Senate Hansard, 1 April 1992, pg 1518(2).
\(^{114}\) Evans, Gareth, Current Senate Hansard, 1 April 1992, pg 1518(2).
The position of other countries, and a perception that it would not be in Australia's interests to adopt a policy which ran counter to the overwhelming consensus of international opinion, was thus a major determinant of Australian policy on the Cambodian issue. As Evans could not express optimism, he played down the potential problem which the Khmer Rouge represented when he observed that: "what is really behind this kind of fighting...is essentially tactical manoeuvres intended more than anything else as political statements to the Cambodian people rather than as demonstrations of intent to resile from, to walk away from, the process115".

In choosing to focus their attack on the military threat posed by the Khmer Rouge, the opposition were playing to popular but ill-informed fears. According to Stephen Heder, the conclusion reached by all systematic observers of the Khmer Rouge in 1990 was that they posed a much greater political threat116, and reports of their military strength were often greatly exaggerated117. Pol Pot's movement now used not only coercion and compulsion, but persuasion and inducements in order to win political support. All the available evidence indicated that Pol Pot still retained almost complete control of the organisation, and so Heder concluded that the KR "remain a highly dangerous tool in the hands of some of Cambodia's and the worlds most dangerous political men"118. Unlike Heder, Hill often appeared unsure of who he was talking about when he refered to the Khmer Rouge119. His position only made sense

115 Evans, ibid, 1 April, 1992, pg 1518(2).
117 Pilger's description of the KR army as "one of the most effective in Asia" clearly falls into this category. Pilger, John,"Stand on Cambodia farcical", The Canberra Times, 16 November 1989. Journalist Gwen Robinson was amongst those who tried to draw attention to the fact that media claims of military victories by the KR over the Phnom Penh government were frequently misleading or contradictory. She illustrated this by citing a report of 24 government positions seized along Route 69, then pointed out that Route 69 was barely a goat track, while "government positions" were small bamboo huts sheltering two or three soldiers. According to Robinson, these exaggerated reports were coming from western diplomatic and intelligence sources. Robinson, Gwen, The Canberra Times, 11 October 1989.
118 Heder, Reflections On Cambodian Political History....", pp 18-19.
119 For example, Hill referred to an article in The Economist which said that Son Sann, now a KR representative on the SNC, had been Defence Minister in the DK government and had played a role in internal security, including imprisoning, torture etc. Hill, Robert, CPD, Senate, 6 December 1990, pg 5179. Hill meant Son Sen - Son Sann is the leader of one of the NCR factions. The Economist correctly referred to Son Sen. More importantly, however, according to Heder, Son Sen (who is a KR representative on the SNC), is a surviving dissident who is wrongly depicted as a Pol Pot loyalist. He was slated for purge in late 1978 but then retained
when viewed as a political effort to tap the groundswell of concern and moral outrage amongst voters opposed to the inclusion of the KR in a settlement. While that concern was justified, it was premised on a judgement by Australians of the Khmer Rouge which is defined by Pol Pot and the image of Cambodia's "killing fields". That image underpinned much of the criticism levelled at the government and its policy of supporting the Khmer Rouge's inclusion in a settlement, even though it is inaccurate. This issue will be discussed further in the last chapter because it offers insight into the difficulty of making judgements about external conflicts and the way selective or misleading information about them is used politically.

Because the opposition saw itself as an alternate government and chose Labor's position on Cambodia as a central focus for their attack on the government's foreign policy stance, it is worth looking at their line of argument more closely. After the Evans initiative was tabled, the opposition dropped its support for a comprehensive solution to the conflict and moved to exploit domestic concern about the Khmer Rouge by adopting a moral stance on the question of whether they should be included in either the negotiation process or a settlement. While Peacock's antipathy towards the Khmer Rouge was consistent with arguments he had advanced earlier, when as Foreign Minister he had pushed for the de-recognition of Pol Pot, the same could not be said of the Robert Hill. To reiterate briefly, in 1989 Hill supported the government in pushing for a comprehensive settlement. He reinforced this when he cautioned the government against the temptation offered by the possibility of a partial settlement. In July 1990, when it appeared that the negotiation process had stalled indefinitely, he argued that the search for a comprehensive settlement would have to be abandoned120. After the Cambodian factions failed to reach agreement in Jakarta he expressed support for the Phnom Penh regime and hinted that a Liberal government would extend recognition to Hun Sen if the peace process stalled indefinitely121. From around this time on, he sought to exploit the increased military activity of the Khmer Rouge and used this to pursue a "moral" line of argument to discredit the

---

120 His timing on this occasion was unfortunate. Hill said this when he was in Phnom Penh shortly before the the US policy on Indochina was announced.

121 Hill, Robert, "Cambodia - comprehensive peace or Khmer Rouge victory?", pp 9-10.
government. Thus Hill referred to "the reality of the horror that is a daily event in Cambodia", citing a Khmer Rouge attack on a civilian train to press home the point that their message "was still one of terror". In April 1991 the Opposition put forward its preferred option for a settlement, referring to the possibility of the Hun Sen regime "perhaps joining with the two non-communist Khmer factions in some peaceful solution". This view assumed that China would accept such a fait accompli, and that the SOC would be prepared to cut a deal with Sihanouk and Son Sann. Yet Hun Sen believed that to accommodate the NCR would be a costly mistake because they were unable to control the Khmer Rouge, while the history of the negotiation process demonstrates that Sihanouk did not have the power to do a deal without the approval of Khieu Samphan.

Hill was unable to provide a coherent or viable policy alternative to the government's stance. The reasons for this are not hard to find. Firstly, Hill did not address the underlying causes of the conflict or come to grips with the realities of power which determined the outcome at various stages of the negotiation process, and the relationship between that process and the conflict on the ground. In December 1990, for example, he argued that the government should have concentrated less on the diplomatic side of the conflict and more on the military, claiming that "there was an alternative of greater influence towards a ceasefire that had largely been avoided". As the ceasefire agreed to at Tokyo demonstrated, however, in the absence of a genuine political settlement such agreements are meaningless.

Secondly, Hill sought to discredit the government through selective criticism which ignored the overall logic of the government's Cambodia policy and the framework in which it was situated. The effect of this was to produce an inconsistent if not erratic line which damaged his...
credibility. For example, reference has already been made to his caution that the government should avoid the temptation of a partial solution or incremental approach. Yet in July 1991 he claimed that there might have been agreement on the formation of the SNC much earlier if a "step-by-step" approach had been adopted and argued that the sequence of events advanced by Australia and laid down in the P5 plan may have hindered progress. He cited the agreement reached between the factions at Pattaya on their own initiative "without public input from external players" to support this assertion127. Both these claims are doubtful. Firstly, without the guarantee of reciprocal concessions which a comprehensive settlement would provide, the factions as well as their backers would have strongly resisted a step-by-step approach; and secondly, there would have been no agreement at Pattaya without arm twisting from the backers of the Cambodian factions. The fact that it was not "public" is irrelevant. According to Nayan Chanda, the breakthrough at Pattaya also owed much to the proximity of Pol Pot, who provided guidance during the talks and was willing to make concessions, a tactical shift designed to placate China128. Previously, Khmer Rouge negotiators had showed inflexibility because they lacked the authority to make decisions. The suggestion that the factions would be better able to reach agreement if left to themselves demonstrates profound ignorance of the history of relations and the depth of bitterness between them. The renewal of fighting after the 1989 Paris conference demonstrated that even if a settlement were achieved, this would remain a stumbling bloc to achieving a genuine peace. Recent events have borne this out.

More recent and strident criticisms that the Khmer Rouge were included in the peace settlement at all and the implication that the government now accepted them as legitimate contenders for power, are also misleading. The Hawke government has not only been consistent in opposing the return to power of the Khmer Rouge leadership, but as Evans often had to point out, since the SNC did not constitute a government, KR representation on that body did not

imply or confer legitimacy. While Labor opposed the participation of Pol Pot and his leadership in a future Cambodian government, Australia had to ensure its position on this issue did not conflict with the government's support for the principle of self determination. Precisely because it would give Cambodians themselves the choice, the UN plan reconciled both aims. Thus one of its main objectives of the plan was to marginalise, and limit the influence of, the Khmer Rouge. While this approach was more subtle than that called for by the opposition, the UN plan was the only one which might achieve this and also secure broad international approval. Claims that Evans ignored the problem of the Khmer Rouge, or was actively assisting their return, were simply wrong.

From the above discussion, the opposition's attack on Labor's Cambodia policy can be criticised for being both narrow and misleading. The moral tone of the L-NP line was clearly adopted for domestic political reasons. While the Opposition has obvious disadvantages in foreign policy in terms of the resources available compared to those of the government, they are advantaged by not having to provide voters with detailed policy alternatives; nor do they have to ensure that different aspects of Australia's foreign policy are compatible. In other words, they are able to treat the contiguous squares of the foreign policy "chequerboard" separately, which governments are unable to do\textsuperscript{129}. Yet as the Cambodian debate demonstrates, the opposition can go too far in taking advantage of the latitude this gives them, and it is not surprising that Robert Hill is often criticised outside the government for simply opposing everything the government does\textsuperscript{130}. While political leaders must secure domestic support for their foreign policies, the relevance and efficacy of those policies is tested not at home but in the international system. The opposition is only one of the various groups which can pressure the government over foreign policy. In reality, however, there is little of substance between the position of the government and opposition, and both see the issues and Australia's interests in

\textsuperscript{129} For example, in a discussion with Hill he expressed considerable sympathy for the Hun Sen government and indicated that the opposition supported closer relations between Australia and the SOC; he also said that the Liberal Party would have given more attention to Australia's relations with ASEAN - although clearly this latter objective would have been compromised by the former. Hill, interview, Canberra, 21 November 1991.

similar ways, which other domestic lobby groups do not. In relation to Cambodia, both parties supported the objective of marginalising the Khmer Rouge.

The Western agenda of "rollback"

More importantly, both major parties supported the broader agenda of "rolling back" communism in Indochina\textsuperscript{131}. It was this logic which underpinned the UN plan. This was the reason why ASEAN hardliners concerned about the weakness of the NCR and, anxious to prevent a compromise between Sihanouk and Hun Sen, and with the backing of the US, pushed for a quadripartite solution. For China, elections would provide a face-saving way of abandoning the Khmer Rouge because they would be seen to have failed on their own\textsuperscript{132}. It was in this context that Sihanouk was promoted for his alleged ability to bring Cambodians together. After the Prince's performance at the 1989 Paris Conference, however, it became clear to many, if it had not been before, that his day had passed\textsuperscript{133}. Sihanouk's past record of corrupt and ineffective leadership\textsuperscript{134}, as well as his distaste for democracy\textsuperscript{135}, also made him ill-suited for his role as figurehead in a "reconciliation" government in Cambodia.

Together with the resurrection of Sihanouk, there was a renewed campaign to discredit the Phnom Penh regime. It is clear that whatever its objective merits, the SOC was not going to achieve its goal of international legitimacy. According to Robert Merrilees, the problem was that its acceptance was based too narrowly on the prevention of Pol Pot's return\textsuperscript{136}. This view, from someone with a practical knowledge of Cambodia, is much less sympathetic than

\textsuperscript{131} Australian aid was a part of that agenda.
\textsuperscript{132} Evans & Rowley, \textit{Red Brotherhood at War...}, pg 293.
\textsuperscript{133} Becker, Elizabeth, cited in Evans & Rowley, ibid, 1990, pg 294.
\textsuperscript{135} As Evans and Rowley point out, Sihanouk admired the French system for the power it bestows on its Head of State, not its Parliament. Evans & Rowley, \textit{Red Brotherhood at War...}, pg 281. According to Australian diplomat based in Bangkok, contrary to popular belief, the refugee camps run by the Sihanoukists are the most authoritarian. Waters, interview, Bangkok, 10 April 1991.
\textsuperscript{136} Merrilees was a member of the DFAT task force on Cambodia. Merrilees, seminar.
Costello's. Much of the criticism of the Phnom Penh regime, however, was overtly political and aimed at discrediting Hun Sen's government. Thus Amnesty International produced a highly critical report of human rights abuses within the PRK but did not investigate the situation on the border; US Congressman Solarz could assert, without providing evidence, that because the PRK leaders were ex-Khmer Rouge they were tainted by a "sordid past" and journalists such as Milton Cockburn, to use Lockhart's evocative phrase, "flopped" into the "unreality of a Vietnamese genocide" in their uncritical acceptance of a case constructed against the Vietnamese. As Chomsky and Herman have argued, "the west generally assigned all the tribulations and suffering of Indochina to the evils of communism, without, however, suggesting some different and more humane way to deal with problems of the sort the west has never had to face."

According to Evans, "the settlement has been about creating the structures, the institutions and the processes to give us the best possible chance...even with the at best grudging cooperation of one of the key international players." While Australia supported the western agenda of rolling back communism, the government was more pragmatic in its policy prescriptions than its membership of the western alliance would imply. This reflected its regional foreign policy orientation and an awareness of the limits of Australian influence in a region which did not share western standards and values. Australian governments have preferred more subtle ways of introducing alternate ideas and models, and more recently, promoting Australia's trade

137 Solarz, "Cambodia and the international community", pg 114. Solarz's lack of understanding of the conflict between the Khmer was demonstrated by the fact he blamed the excesses of the Pol Pot period on a "metastasis" of the Chinese cultural revolution. According to Vickery, admirers of the Chinese cultural revolution were amongst the first major figures liquidated by Pol Pot. Vickery, Cambodia: 1975-1982, George, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1984, pg 271.
138 Prior to the Evans initiative, Cockburn wrote that it was not possible to see the moral issues in black and white terms and claimed the Phnom Penh government had collaborated with the Vietnamese in slaughtering rebellious hill tribes, in order to shore up support for the quadripartite formula. Cockburn, Milton, The Sydney Morning Herald, 14 November 1989.
139 Chomsky, Noam & Herman, Edward, After the cataclysm: Post-War Indochina and the Reconstruction of Imperial Ideology, 1979, pg ix.
140 Evans, Gareth, Current Senate Hansard, 1 April 1992, pg 1518(2).
interests at the same time. While aid was always a part of this\textsuperscript{141}, Australia’s high profile involvement in UNAMIC and UNTAC are also part of this agenda. As one Defence Force official put it: “The opportunity exists...for the ADF to establish a foothold in Cambodia for Australian communications, transport and engineering companies to follow up the military effort with large scale commercial projects”\textsuperscript{142}.

While there was no other way to achieve a settlement in Cambodia than by first disengaging great power interests from the conflict and thus accepting the conditions this entailed, as Gary Klintworth has pointed out, the problem is that “great power interests don’t exactly match the interests of the Cambodian people”\textsuperscript{143}. Furthermore, he also observed that UNTAC was established by a UN Security Council dominated by the United States and China; both countries which have their own reasons for opposing Vietnamese interests in Cambodia. Yet the Cambodian factions have themselves shown more interests in the pursuit of power than peace\textsuperscript{144}. It is questionable whether a liberal-democratic system imposed on Cambodia by outside powers, which will require the factions to cooperate in a coalition government after elections are held, will actually work. The continued support and commitment of the international community will be required to ensure that it does.

\textsuperscript{141} Western aid has always been linked to the objective of rolling back communism in the Third World. Cox, Robert, “Middlepowermanship, Japan and the future world order”, \textit{International Journal} 44(4):823-862, Autumn 1989, pg 830.

\textsuperscript{142} Ostroumoff, A.P., “A possible Australian contribution to a United Nations peacekeeping force in Cambodia”, ADFA, Canberra, August 1990, pg 16.

\textsuperscript{143} Klintworth, Gary, “Cambodia agreement has fatal flaws”, \textit{The Canberra Times}, 15 February 1991.

\textsuperscript{144} There are individual exceptions to this, including perhaps Hun Sen himself.
Conclusion

Middle powermanship, morality and regionalism in Australian foreign policy

Australia's Indochina policies were part of the Hawke government's regional agenda. As Evans put it, they constituted "one set of squares in the chequer-board of Australian regional foreign policy...a chequer-board in which the squares are not only contiguous but linked". Evans set out that agenda, in part, in his 1989 statement on Australia's regional security. The "new-look foreign policy" articulated in that statement, as David Jenkins observed, was not "all that different from the old-look foreign policy of Bill Hayden". Yet its timing, at the end of the Cold War and in the context of questions about the future US presence in the region, according to Fry, meant that it could be viewed as a "significant statement about the future direction of Australia's regional security doctrine". In it, Evans acknowledged the changes which had taken place in the international environment. His clear articulation of Australia's interests and priorities against this background, represented an effort to bring order and certitude to the government's regional security policy. The statement can also be viewed as a product of the restructuring of Australia's relations with the region that was begun by Hayden in a much less favourable political climate. The ending of the Cold War lent credibility to Australia's declared impartial stance in relation to the Cambodian conflict, ironically, at a time when that stance became more aligned.

Within this broader foreign policy framework, the Hawke government's Cambodia policy became an exemplar of Australia's "comprehensive engagement" with the region. While the government cited concern about regional security and the problem of Indochinese refugees to

justify Australia's interest in the Cambodian conflict and subsequent efforts to promote a resolution, the aims of its policy were much broader. Hawke drew an explicit link between the Cambodian conflict and an Australian role in the region when he said that Australia’s efforts “to establish common ground in the search for a negotiated settlement” were “what you might expect of a country with a rightful role to play in the Asia-Pacific region”\(^5\). Evans' 1989 statement on Australia's regional security further developed this theme, although his support for a framework of regional security cooperation which involved the Indochinese states as well as ASEAN\(^6\) was a response to more recent developments.

In pursuing an activist foreign policy the Hawke government envisaged Australia's role as that of a “middle power”. This acknowledged that Australia needed partners to support its foreign policy objectives, recognised the limits to Australia’s influence and reflected optimism that skilful diplomacy and coalition building could compensate for, or mitigate, these constraints. For the Hawke government, "middlepowermanship" was one of the ways that Australia could "participate and help shape global strategic, political and economic circumstances in a way that secures the position of smaller and middle powers generally and advances our own particular national interests"\(^7\).

As there is no generally accepted definition of the term "middle power", its use is problematic. For this reasons, it has been described by practioners as "unhelpful"\(^8\). Theorists have been less reluctant to reject it out of hand. Indyck has argued that although Australia's capabilities have grown, its status remained ambiguous because of an unchanging attitude towards the

---

8 This opinion was expressed by David Sadlier, previously Australia’s Ambassador in Beijing and currently Director of ASIO. Sadlier, David, "Aspects of Australia’s place in and outlook on the world", Address to the Senior Officers Strategic Studies Course, HMAS Penguin, *AFAR*, 58(8):428-437, August 1987.
central balance. He inferred from this that Australia was an "incomplete" middle power\(^9\). In his discussion of Japan and the future world order Cox linked "middlepowermanship" to the development of international organisation. He identified middle powers as those states which were committed to building, rather than imposing, a more orderly world system, and concluded that the term was "a role in search of an actor"\(^{10}\). Yet the role Australia played in the Cambodian peace process demonstrates that it has some validity, however qualified. More recently, a useful elucidation of the concept has been provided by Cooper et al.\(^{11}\). Using Australia and Canada as examples, they argued that a definition of "middle power" which focuses on state activity and behaviour, rather than system, is useful in explaining the foreign policies of those states\(^{12}\). This "behavioural" approach pays more attention to style than actions, but recognises the salience of state interests\(^{13}\). Middle powers, thus defined, tend to pursue multilateral approaches to foreign policy problems, embrace compromise positions in disputes and incorporate notions of good international citizenship into their diplomacy. This is an apt description of the role Australia played in the Cambodian peace process. As Evans and Grant explained it, "in the case of Cambodia our coalition building meant working...with Indonesia, all give permanent members of the Security Council, Vietnam and the four Cambodian factions"\(^{14}\).

The ability of middle powers to pursue their foreign policies independently of others is by definition, limited. The most important constraint on the Hawke government's policies towards Cambodia was Australia's alliance relationship with the United States. That relationship tied Australia to American interests in Indochina and left Canberra with little room to manoeuvre,

\(^9\) Indyck, Martin, "The central balance in relation to closer events: its effects on Australia's middle power aspirations", in Bell, Coral (ed), Academic Studies in International Politics, Canberra Studies in World Affairs No.6, Department of International Relations, ANU, Canberra, 1986, pg 144. The capabilities Indyck referred to relied on Australia's position as a major resource supplier. It can be inferred from this that with the collapse of the 1980's resources boom, Australia's capabilities have declined.


\(^{12}\) Cooper et al, ibid, 1992, pg 28.

\(^{13}\) Cooper et al, ibid, 1992, pp 28, 32.

\(^{14}\) Evans, Gareth & Grant, Bruce, Australia's Foreign Relations in the World of the 1990's, Melbourne University Press, Victoria, 1991, pg 323.
despite substantial differences in the way both countries perceived the conflict as well as their respective interests in the region. Those differences were not just structural, but moral and historical in origin. Washington's policies were rooted in America's bitter defeat in the Vietnam War, while many in the Hawke Labor leadership were sympathetic to Vietnam and had vigorously opposed the US involvement in Indochina. This illustrates the point made by Nossal, that middle powers are severely constrained by the high cost of defecting from an alliance by adopting an independent position on a single issue\textsuperscript{15}. This is the "darker side" of coalition building associated with multilateralism\textsuperscript{16}. The Hawke government's backdown on the resumption of aid and reluctance to move too far ahead of Washington in its policies towards Indochina, only make sense when viewed from this perspective.

Alliance constraints can also be viewed as inconsistent with middle power support for the development of international organisation and more pluralist forms of leadership. That support, according to Nossal, is underpinned by a belief that activities which are directed towards the interests of the international community should not be the preserve of the great powers alone\textsuperscript{17}. While acknowledging the importance and merit of Australia's contribution to the Cambodian peace process, it also has to be noted that the Hawke government's role was, in effect, that of brokering the interests of the numerous actors concerned to line up support for the UN plan \textit{on behalf of the dominant power}\textsuperscript{18}. This, together with the complexity of the conflict and the structural constraints it imposed, compromised the search for a genuine middle ground. The weaker powers had little choice in the end but to agree to the formula pressed upon


\textsuperscript{16} This term was coined by Kim Nossal to describe the obligation Australia and Canada were under to join the US-led coalition in the Gulf War and highlights the fact that middle powers are also required to be followers. Nossal, Kim Richard, "Coalition buildings darker side: Australia and Canada and the Gulf conflict", Paper presented to the annual meeting of the Australasian Political Studies Association, Nathan, Qld, 17-19 July 1991, pp 8-9.

\textsuperscript{17} Nossal, Kim Richard, "Middle power diplomacy in the changing Asia-Pacific order: Australia and Canada compared", Paper delivered to the Workshop on the Post-Cold War international Order, Department of International Relations, ANU, Canberra 23-24 July 1992, pg 9.

\textsuperscript{18} In other words, the United States. According to Oran Young, brokering of this kind is one of the leadership characteristics of middle powers. Quoted in Cooper et al., ibid, 1992, pg 319.
them by the more powerful. Cooper et. al. fail to recognise the extent to which Canberra deferred to Washington's interests when they claim that the role Australia played in developing and promoting the "Red Book" proposal demonstrated a willingness to move out ahead of great power opinion19.

Australia's middle power style in brokering agreement on the UN plan provides an example of "discrete instrumental internationalism"20. In playing this role, Canberra had to secure the support of all parties to the conflict and try to find a middle ground between widely opposing points of view. It was critical, therefore, that the Hawke government be seen to adopt a rational and impartial approach to the conflict, rather than a moral or self-interested one. This raises the important question of where morality fits into the foreign policy middle powers. The Hawke government's policies towards Cambodia are particularly salient in this context because public debate on the issue was dominated by concern about the role of the Khmer Rouge. While that concern was justified, it was premised on a judgement of the Khmer Rouge which was essentially moral in character, based on the popular image of Pol Pot and the Cambodian "killing fields". This had important political implications which justify the discussion which follows.

The media played an important role in creating the images which informed Australian public opinion. However, media treatment of the Cambodian conflict has been problematic21. While

19 Cooper et al., ibid, 1992, pg 276. The great powers reached consensus on a settlement in Cambodia at the August 1989 Paris conference. The meeting failed because the warring factions could not do likewise.
20 Cooper et al., ibid, 1992, pg 13. This description can be explained firstly, with reference to the limited objectives of the Red Book proposal, and secondly, its technical detail in outlining the role the UN could play in civil administration, organising and conducting elections, and monitoring procedures for a ceasefire and troop withdrawal. Nossal, "Middle power diplomacy in the changing Asia-Pacific order...", pg 18.
21 This was the subject of the Gunn & Lee's recent publication, Cambodia Watching Down Under, which is both highly subjective and inconsistent in its treatment, perhaps because of the difficulty of the task they attempted, although the political aegis under which they published suggests otherwise. For example, the preface, written by the Director of the Institute of Asian Studies at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, states that: Many foreign observers find it opportunistic to fish in this troubled water (the Cambodian conflict)...many of them are unable even to distinguish fact from fiction nor can they dissociate human rights from external aggression...out of sincere ignorance or ulterior motives, they have effectively complicated the conflict, deceived the people, diverted the real issues, and consequently
it is not possible to address the issue here in detail, a few points are salient. Popular notions of the Kampuchean revolution and the years of Pol Pot rule were strongly influenced by the work of authors such as Ponchaud\textsuperscript{22} and Paul and Barron\textsuperscript{23}, who based their accounts of life in Democratic Kampuchea on information provided by refugees who fled to Thailand before the Vietnamese invasion. They emphasised the extreme nature of the Kampuchean revolution, as evidenced by the evacuation of Cambodia's cities and towns, and the tragic human cost of the radical experiment begun in 1975. This version of events, which Vickery labelled the Standard Total View (STV)\textsuperscript{24}, became widely and uncritically accepted in the West. Writers who were not consistent with the STV, such as Noam Chomsky\textsuperscript{25}, were discredited or marginalised by the mainstream press, even though their skepticism of Washington's early claims about the nature of the Khmer Rouge regime was more than warranted, given the US administration's recent appalling record in Cambodia\textsuperscript{26}. Yet even if one accepts that the refugee accounts which underpinned the STV are true, as Michael Vickery pointed out:

In general, they presented the experience of the middle and upper strata of the towns as the members of those strata perceived it, suddenly and unpleasantly jolted from their usual existence and transplanted to the rigors of rice-field, forest and dam site. It was a case which was particularly easy to draw up since the refugees...were overwhelmingly urban\textsuperscript{27}.

While the condemnation of Democratic Kampuchea because of the number of people who were executed and died unnecessarily of hunger or disease was valid, as Vickery has documented, it was made too soon and for the wrong reasons\textsuperscript{28}. After the Khmer Rouge were overthrown, an


\textsuperscript{25} Chomsky, Noam & Herman, Edward S., \textit{After the Cataclysm: Postwar Indochina and the Reconstruction of Imperial Ideology}, South End Press, Boston, 1979.


\textsuperscript{27} Vickery, ibid, 1984, pg 46.

\textsuperscript{28} Vickery, ibid, 1984, pg 184.
aggressive US propaganda campaign intended to show the consequences of opposition to American
efforts in Indochina, and a propaganda campaign by the Soviet Union and Vietnam to justify the
Vietnamese intervention, combined to ensure widespread, but largely uncritical, acceptance of
the STV.29 Vickery has pointed out, for example, that the strictures against the DK regime
were rarely put in comparative perspective, nor were conditions in which the country was left
in April 1975 taken into account.30 The evacuation of the Phnom Penh's population, which had
swollen with the influx of refugees fleeing the war, was never presented as a rational solution
to the very real difficulty of feeding them because it did not appear this way to urban residents
who had never known the hardships of rural life. It was these residents whose stories formed
the basis of the accounts which informed the STV. In the Thai border region, aid workers who
were trying to provide food and medicine to stave off famine and disease amongst Khmer
refugees found that conditions amongst Thai villagers were just as bad.

To explain why the Khmer Rouge still enjoys some support in the countryside despite their past
record, and indeed, how they attracted support in the 1970's, Vickery points to the deeply
divided nature of Cambodian society. He refers not only to the gulf between the urban and rural
population, but the more "profound division" between "town plus town-related rice and garden
peasantry and those rural groups who, through distance, poverty, ingrained hostility, or a
conscious preference for autarky, remained on the outside of Cambodian society which
everybody knew and which Phnom Penh considered the only Cambodian society of any
importance". Even before 1975, it was not uncommon for the suppressed resentment of the
"old" people to explode into violence, and it was from their ranks that the Khmer Rouge were
recruited and received support. Vickery also points out that the more objectionable policies of
the Khmer Rouge during the period 1975-9 were perpetrated largely on those sectors of the
population to which journalist, scholars and foreign observers had access, namely educated
urban dwellers. Nate Thayer made a similar point when he argued that:

29 Thayer, Nate, Cambodia: Misperceptions and peace, The Washington Quarterly, Spring
30 Vickery, ibid, 1984, pg 49.
...while the tales of horror...are accurate, they do not translate into an objective national reality. They provide a disproportionate and methodologically unacceptable base from which to draw conclusions on how Khmer Rouge rule is perceived by Cambodians.31

The implications in terms of how events were perceived by outsiders, particularly Westerners, are clear enough. While the STV was replaced in the early 1980's with what Vickery called the New Standard Consensus, as the US, China and ASEAN shifted the focus away from the excesses of the DK regime onto Vietnam's aggression and occupation in order to shore up support for the Cambodian resistance forces, in Australia and other western countries, the public still viewed the events of 1975-79 in terms of the STV. This was reinforced in films such as The Killing Fields and the television documentaries of John Pilger.32 It was not surprising then, that Australians reacted with concern and moral outrage to the suggestion that the Khmer Rouge would have to be included in a settlement. Although they differ in their interpretations, the work of scholars who have sought to explain the Kampuchean revolution, and put it into an appropriate historical and cultural context, such as Nayan Chanda33, Ben Kiernan34, Michael Vickery35, David Chandler36, Grant Evans and Kelvin Rowley37 and Elizabeth Becker38, has rarely informed the public debate on this complex issue. The work of these authors supports Vickery's central thesis: that there was considerable regional as well as temporal variation in Cambodia under DK rule, with the worst excesses and largest number of

31 Thayer, Nate, ibid, 1991, pg 185. Vickery reached the same conclusion on the basis of detailed, critical questioning and cross examination, of refugees in the Thai border camps. The problems of using oral evidence in scholarly enquiry have been the subject of lengthy study and consideration by anthropologists; Vickery is one of the few who have demonstrated rigor in the interpretation and use of oral evidence in this context, and an awareness of the problems involved.
32 While Pilger deserves credit for raising difficult issues and his refusal to bow to the official line is praiseworthy, his line on Cambodia, for example, in his film, The Betrayal, sounds word for word like PRK propaganda. That is not to say that the PRK stance is factually wrong or without merit, but to point out that Pilger does treat all governments with the same degree of skepticism.
35 Vickery, ibid, 1984.
killings occurring from 1977, and related to large scale purges carried out by the Pol Pot faction of the Khmer Rouge. While this contradicts the STV in its detail, it does not excuse or ignore the actions of the DK leadership.

A further difficulty with the debate on the Cambodian issue, as Vickery argued, is that many of the questions fundamental to understanding the nature of the Kampuchean revolution and central to judgements about the actions of the DK regime are simply not asked. These include questions about appropriate social and political objectives and the legitimacy of various means which might be used to achieve them. The example of the evacuation of Phnom Penh, cited above, is a case in point. Not only do the media and popular literature fail to deal with these issues, but perceptions of events in Cambodia have commonly been filtered through the distorting lens of a broader political agenda. This is evident, for example, in the American characterisation of the PRK regime as "Stalinist" and resistance to the characterisation of DK as "peasant populist". The stock phrases used by journalist when referring to the years 1975-79 reflect an uncritical acceptance of this version of the past as truth39.

While Australians insist, rightly, that these events must disqualify Pol Pot and his leadership from ever again exercising power in Cambodia, many have little understanding of how the Khmer Rouge came to power in the first place. This historical myopia means they will ignore the current appeal, however, limited, of the Khmer Rouge's fanatical anti-Vietnamese brand of nationalism, as well as their reputation for being both hard working and free from corruption. According to a senior UN official at Aranyaprathet: "We have the least problems in the Khmer Rouge camps. A lot less corruption, their leaders are hard working and dedicated. Nobody

39 Consider, for example, the following statements: "Under Pol Pot as many as a million died...many were tortured and executed, many more perished from curable diseases because medical treatment was outlawed, or from malnutrition". Sargent, Sarah, The Financial Review, 13 January 1990; and "for nearly four nightmarish years...the Khmer Rouge shocked the world by systematically liquidating Cambodia's educated elite...". The Bulletin, 28 February 1990, pg 58. As Vickery pointed out, however, there were less than 500 doctors in Cambodia before 1975 and only wealthy urban residents had access to western standards of medical care. The accounts of refugees indicated that medical treatment was available in hospitals under DK rule, but that western medicines were scarce. He also noted that the arrival or many former bourgeoisie at the Thai border, who could not all have been overlooked had there been a general policy to eliminate them, points to a serious inconsistency in the STV. Vickery, ibid, 1984, pp 49, 53, 165-171.
wants to hear it but it happens to be true"40. As Nate Thayer pointed out, most of the Khmer Rouge forces today were recruited after 1979, have little ideological training, and see their role as little more complicated than ridding their country of the Vietnamese41. He conceded that this was confusing because it contradicted popular perceptions of the KR as the "worst mass murderers in modern history".

The above discussion, far from having little relevance to the domestic political debate, illustrates an important point: that the debate on the Cambodian issue was distorted by domestic political considerations, ignorance, misconceptions and an uncritical acceptance of media accounts. These problems were not helped by a political culture which discourages serious debate and criticism on foreign policy issues. Richardson made a similar point, in the context of Australia's involvement in the Gulf War, when he observed that there was a "striking lack of discussion of competing ethical claims in the public debate beyond deploying them in defence of preferred policy stances"42. The moral arguments used in the domestic political debate look rather different when viewed from a perspective critical of the STV. The opposition line after 1989, which was based firstly on moral considerations, is unsustainable in this context. In contrast, the strength of the government's line has been its realism. This is not to imply an absence of morality. Rather, the success of the Hawke government's efforts in brokering a settlement in Cambodia evidences a less ambitious but more pragmatic morality. Less ambitious because it is not antithetical to state interests; and more pragmatic because of the increased likelihood of success which results. This falls within the rubric of Australia's interest in being what Evans calls a "good international citizen"43.

This case study in Australian foreign policy highlights another problem with domestic debate on foreign policy issues. While decision makers are acutely aware of the limits of Australia's influence, the public are not. Thus Parliamentary debates and media reports are sources of

40 Quoted in Thayer, Nate, "Cambodia: Misperceptions and Peace", pg 184.
41 Thayer, Nate, ibid, Spring 1991, pg 184.
43 Evans, Gareth, "Australia's foreign policy: responding to change", pg 592.
pressure which governments cannot afford to ignore. When foreign policy issues are debated, then much of the criticism of the government is underpinned by the assumption that governments should act, regardless of whether effective action by Australia is possible and of the difficulties or costs involved. Yet governments themselves reinforce this perception by explaining and justifying their policies as rational solutions to problems in foreign policy. While this effectively limits serious dissent on foreign policy issues, especially from the opposition, which identifies itself more closely with the government's policies than with the causes promoted by interest groups concerned with foreign policy issues, it promotes high expectations of what Australia can achieve in international affairs. Missing from the policy debate was any serious discussion of what Australia's interests were in Indochina and the means by which they should be pursued. Yet many of the criticisms levelled at the Hawke government's position on Cambodia implicitly questioned accepted orthodoxy on precisely these matters.

It would be misleading to focus only on the constraints on Australia's foreign policy. The Hawke government's Indochina policies provide a good demonstration of the "range of middle power manoeuvre". Under Hayden, Australia was able to deliver aid to Indochina without flouting the US embargo, and establish a good bilateral relationship with the government in Phnom Penh despite it. Hayden pushed Australia's Indochina policies much further than the US would have liked, and did so at the expense of Australia's relations with ASEAN44, but when necessary retreated rather than risk a serious rift with the United States by openly breaking ranks. When Evans was brokering support for the "Red Book" proposal, which had the approval of Washington, the range of middle power manoeuvre was determined by the conflicting interests of the various parties to the Cambodian conflict, not by the policies of the United States. This raises the question of the role played by individual leaders in the foreign policy process, as well as broader considerations of agent structure relationships.

44 As Evans put it, Labor's Indochina policy could not be pursued separately from relations with ASEAN. This did not mean the ASEAN countries had "some sort of veto" over Australia's policies, but explained why Australia had sought to "maintain a close and constructive relationship with them". Evans, Gareth, "Indo-China and foreign policy", Beanland Lecture, Fitroy Institute of Technology, Melbourne, 24, August 1989, The Monthly Record, 60(8):401-408, August 1989, pg 19.
The analysis of the Hawke government's foreign policy towards Cambodia provided in the preceding chapters offers an interesting insight into role of leaders. During the period Hayden was foreign minister, the Cambodian conflict was locked in a condition of stalemate. Political polarisation over the issue at the regional and international level meant that Australia had little room to manoeuvre in the formulation of its policies towards Indochina. Ironically, this inflexibility in the international environment gave Hayden more leeway than his successor enjoyed because it made Australia's actions largely irrelevant. While Indochina was important to Hayden personally, others viewed the region as insignificant in policy terms, except when Australia's relations with ASEAN were affected. When Evans was foreign minister the regional and international environment was much more flexible and there was some momentum in negotiations to resolve the Cambodian issue. Ironically, this meant Evans was more constrained than Hayden had been. Canberra's high profile diplomatic stance as well as the existence of pressures for more accommodating stance towards Indochina in other countries, increased the pressure Australia was under not to step out of line. Furthermore, precisely because the international environment was more fluid, Evans believed Australia had more to gain by aligning itself closely with allies.

One of the Hawke government's main achievements was the regionalisation of Australian foreign policy. Ironically, and somewhat inconsistently, according to Leaver, the government legitimised its foreign policies on a range of thorny issues with reference to the stability they lent to the central balance. Yet the Cambodian conflict, because of its structure, effectively brought these elements together. As Evans put it:

Cambodia might be a regional issue but it is also one which touches the interests of many outside the region including the superpowers, China and France. It has been a major element in US policy towards Southeast Asia.

---

Rather than lending legitimacy to the government's position and muting debate on the issue\textsuperscript{47}, however, the recourse to these arguments in the context of Indochina virtually ensured that Labor's policies would become a matter of heated domestic debate. The Cambodian conflict thus exposed the contradiction between a foreign policy based on the "contracted realm of practise" and the "expanded realm of justification\textsuperscript{48}". The contradiction was papered over during Hayden's term as Foreign Minister. Against the later background of momentum towards a settlement of the conflict it proved impossible, in practice, to reconcile regionalism and an independent stance on Indochina with Labor's support for the American alliance. The consequence of viewing Australia's relations with the region largely in terms of western policies for strategic stability, according to Pritchett, is that we have become insulated from the societies of Asia\textsuperscript{49}. While Australia seeks to become more closely integrated into Asia, its cultural and political identification, multiculturalism notwithstanding, is distinctly western. This does not pose a serious obstacle to a regional foreign policy, nor does Australia's alliance relationship with the United States, although as Pritchett observed, there is no reason why our attitude towards it cannot change\textsuperscript{50}. An opportunity now exists for the government to both build on its achievement in brokering a peace in Cambodia and make a more concerted effort to achieve a genuine regionalisation of Australian foreign policy. While wider involvement would bring frictions\textsuperscript{51}, there is no shorter route to improving both Australia's understanding and opportunities for influence.

\textsuperscript{47} According to Leaver, it was for these reasons that arguments about the central balance were used in the first place.
\textsuperscript{48} Leaver, ibid, 1991, pg 38.
\textsuperscript{50} Pritchett, ibid, pg 22.
\textsuperscript{51} As Pritchett acknowledged, ibid, pg 26.
Interviews conducted in Indochina

Professor Pham Duc Duong,

Janet Gardener,

Mr Luu Doan Huynh,
Institute of International Relations, Hanoi. 5 March 1991.

Mr Eat Ly Heng,

Mr Chum Bun Rong,
Director, Press Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Phnom Penh. 19 & 26 March 1991.

Mr Chhong Toeun,
Director, Asia-Australia Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Phnom Penh, 28 March 1991.

Mr Bun Sambo,

Onesta Carpene,

Mr Ek Som Ol,

Rector Pitch Chomnan,
Phnom Penh University, 30 March 1991.

Lyndall McLean,

Steve Waters, 1st Secretary, Australian Embassy, Bangkok, 10 April 1991.

Interviews conducted in Canberra


Peter Charleton, AIDAB (now Australian Aid Officer in Phnom Penh), 8 November 1991.


Russell Rollason, Director, Australian Council for Overseas Aid, 19 November 1991.

Jeff Leach, previously in AIDAB, 21 November 1991.


BIBLIOGRAPHY

Key to abbreviations:

AIJA - Australian Institute of International Affairs
AFAR - Australian Foreign Affairs Record
CPD - Commonwealth Parliamentary Documents (Hansard)
CSAAR - Centre for the Study of Australia-Asia Relations
FEER - Far Eastern Economic Review
SDSC - Strategic and Defence Studies Centre

ACFOA, Press Release, 7 June 1990.


Evans, Gareth, AM, ABC Radio National, MICA transcript, Department of the Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 16 November 1989.


Evans, Gareth & Grant, Bruce, Australia's Foreign Relations in the World of the 1990's, Melbourne University Press, Victoria, 1991.


Indyck, Martin, "The central balance in relation to closer events: its effects on Austria's middle power aspirations", in Bell, Coral (ed), Academic Studies and International Politics, Papers of a conference held at the ANU, June 1981, Canberra Studies in World Affairs No. 6, pp 133-147, ANU, Canberra, 1986.


Jenkins, David, "Will Cambodia be the next step up for Canberra's shooting star?", The Sydney Morning Herald, 26 January 1990.

Jennar, Raoul, "Cambodia: The hardest part remains to be done", Consultants report to the NGO forum on Cambodia, Jodogne-Souveraine, Belgium, November 1990.


Kiernan, Ben, "Time is ripe for Evans to dump the Khmer Rouge", The Sydney Morning Herald, 12 January 1990.


Klintworth, Gary, Vietnam's Intervention In Cambodia in International Law, AGPS, Canberra, 1989.


Klintworth, Gary, "A matter of 'if' or 'when'", Australian Society, August 1990.

Klintworth, Gary, "Vietnam mends its fences with China", Canberra Times 1 October 1990.


Merrillees, Robert, Seminar, SDSC, ANU, Canberra, 5 September 1990.

Murdoch, Lindsay, "Pol Pot's man admits: I've not studies Evans peace plan", *The Age*, 2 March 1990.
Murdoch, Lindsay, "Canberra, Jakarta refugee deadlock", *The Age*, 6 June 1990.
Murdoch, Lindsay, *The Age*, 26 July 1990.
Murdoch, Lindsay, *The Age*, 16 November 1990.
Ostroumoff, A.P., "A possible Australian contribution to a UN peacekeeping force in Cambodia", ADFA, Canberra, August 1990.
Pilch, Imogen, "Prospects for the neutralisation of Kampuchea", *Australia-Asia Papers* No. 43, CSAAR, Griffith University, Nathan, Qld, 1988.


Pringle, James, "Cambodian 'red' solution feared", *The Australian*, 3 November 1990.


Robinson, Gwen, "Evans steps up efforts on Cambodia after peace talks are inconclusive", *The Canberra Times*, 2 March 1990.


Ross, Estelle, *Australia, the Indochina problem and the derecognition of the Pol Pot regime*, Australia-Asia Papers, No 28, Centre for the Study of Australian-Asian Relations, Griffith University, Nathan, Qld, 1984.


Sheridan, Greg, "Confidential call to back Hun Sen", The Australian, 6 July 1990.
Sheridan, Greg, "Evans warns of risks in UN push on Cambodia seat", The Australian, 7 September 1990.


West, Stewart, News Release, 18 August, *AFAR* 54(8):455, August 1983


Media sources consulted

ABC AM, Radio National transcripts
The Sydney Morning Herald
The Canberra Times
The Age, Melbourne
The Australian
The Bulletin
The Economist
Far Eastern Economic Review