

## The ANZUS alliance

### Introduction

- 2.1 The *Security Treaty between Australia, New Zealand and the United States of America* (the ANZUS Treaty) has remained Australia's most important strategic alliance since it came into force on 29 April 1952. The Treaty has operated for more than 50 years and the alliance it created appears to remain relevant in a strategic environment increasingly challenged by terrorism and non-state actors. It is a result of the direct challenge by terrorists that the Treaty was first invoked following the 11 September 2001 attacks on the US.
- 2.2 In the 2005 Australia - United States Ministerial Consultations both sides stressed the ongoing relevance of the alliance. The joint communiqué stated:

Both sides emphatically affirmed the enduring significance and relevance of the alliance and its firm basis in shared values, interests and sacrifice. They welcomed the strengthening of the alliance in recent years, noting closer cooperation in intelligence matters, improvements in joint training and interoperability of their military forces, as well as the emergence of new areas of cooperative endeavour such as missile defence research. They committed to identifying further ways to increase allied interoperability and defence cooperation to aid coalition military operations.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *2005 Australia United States Ministerial Consultations Communiqué*, [http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/us/ausmin/ausmin05\\_joint\\_communique.html](http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/us/ausmin/ausmin05_joint_communique.html), accessed 21 Nov 05.

- 2.3 The evidence to the inquiry is overwhelmingly in favour of the alliance and the security that it provides for Australia. The evidence to the Committee is supported by research sponsored by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) that states:
- ...an overwhelming majority of voters and major party candidates see the ANZUS alliance as important to Australia, the only question being whether they see it as 'very' or 'fairly' important.<sup>2</sup>
- 2.4 In evidence to the inquiry there was some discussion about whether there was a need to enhance the Treaty to more broadly reflect contemporary strategic needs. While there was little support for re-negotiating the Treaty, some groups suggested that Australia should be more cautious in how it manages the alliance. In particular, these groups suggested that Australia needed to ensure that it was seen as being independent in developing foreign and strategic policy and was not overly constrained or influenced by US policy. In addition evidence indicates that significantly more can be done to increase knowledge and debate about the alliance.
- 2.5 This chapter will provide an overview of the ANZUS Treaty, and examine some of the concerns raised about Australia's independence, the lack of public knowledge about the alliance and suggested strategies for managing the alliance into the future.

## History

- 2.6 The ANZUS Treaty was drafted in the shadow of the cold war and the increasing instability arising from the consolidation of communist power on the mainland of China, and overt communist aggression in Korea.
- 2.7 The *North Atlantic Treaty* that established the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) was signed on 4 April 1949, and was the type of arrangement that both Australia and New Zealand wished to create for the Pacific. At the same time, Australia and New Zealand were concerned that NATO implied that British and American attention would be focused on the European theatre at the neglect of the Pacific. The US was initially reluctant to commit to a specific treaty covering the Pacific region. This position, however, was reversed following the victory of communist forces on mainland China in 1949, and the attack on the Republic of Korea in June 1950. Through this period, communism was seen as more of a threat than a militarily resurgent Japan.

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2 Professor Ian McAllister, ASPI Strategy Paper, *Representative Views: Mass and Elite Opinion on Australian Security*, p 22

- 2.8 By the end of 1950, both Australia and New Zealand concluded that a regional defence pact would help to increase security in the region. New Zealand favoured a Pacific pact which would make an attack on one signatory an attack on all as a corollary of a peace treaty which would permit limited Japanese rearmament. This view was accepted by the US.
- 2.9 On 19 April 1951 President Truman announced that Australia and New Zealand had proposed an arrangement between them and the United States 'which would make clear that in the event of an armed attack upon any one of them in the Pacific each of the three would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes; and which would establish consultation to strengthen security on the basis of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid.'<sup>3</sup>
- 2.10 On 12 July 1951 the final text of the Treaty was agreed upon, followed by formal signing on 1 September 1951. The Treaty entered into force on 29 April 1952.

## Mutual assistance

- 2.11 A copy of the Treaty can be found at Appendix B. The Committee as part of its previous inquiry into the ANZUS Alliance examined in detail the guarantees of mutual assistance under the Pact contained in Articles II, III, IV and V.<sup>4</sup> One of the key issues examined by the then Committee was the operation and effect of Article IV which is reproduced below:

### Article IV

Each Party recognises that an armed attack in the Pacific Area on any of the Parties would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes.

Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall be immediately reported to the Security Council of the United Nations. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security.

- 2.12 Article IV does not commit the US to the use of military force were Australia subject to armed attack. A possible response by the US could include assisting Australia with the supply of military equipment or

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3 cited in Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, *Australian-United States' Relations, The ANZUS Alliance*, Canberra, 1982, p. 4.

4 Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, *Australian-United States' Relations, The ANZUS Alliance*, Canberra, 1982, pp. 5-16.

diplomatic pressure or by the application of economic sanctions or a combination of all these means.

- 2.13 The then Committee in assessing the impact of Article IV was not unduly concerned about the degree of flexibility contained in the Treaty. The point was made that the deterrence effect was and remains significant. The then Committee concluded that 'the deterrence factor would increase to the extent that any aggressor would have to consider that the more effective an intended act of aggression against Australia, the more likely would become United States involvement in Australia's defence.'<sup>5</sup> A similar point was made by ASPI in evidence to the current inquiry:

What is important about Article IV is not that we can assume that the United States would send their armed forces to defend Australia, it is that any potential attacker would have to think very carefully about whether they wouldn't.<sup>6</sup>

- 2.14 Similarly, Dr Robyn Lim commented that the main benefit of the 'alliance has always been that anyone contemplating an attack on us, or on our vital interests anywhere in the world, would have to calculate the likely response of the United States.'<sup>7</sup>

## Relevance, benefits and costs

- 2.15 Evidence to the inquiry was overwhelming in its support for the value and relevance of the alliance, and the contribution that it makes to Australia's national security. It was suggested that the alliance remains as relevant if not more relevant than when it was first conceived to offset the insecurities that arose following World War II. Defence stated:

...the invocation of it on September 11 is testimony to the fact that it is relevant. In its first few years, of course, it was not called upon at all—it just existed. I think it is becoming more relevant as time goes on and is more relevant to us now as issues like the global war on terror and proliferation security and the range of things in which we cooperate with the United States on a global basis actually grow.<sup>8</sup>

- 2.16 In addition to the overall security benefits and deterrence effect arising from the alliance, there are also a range of immediate military benefits

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5 Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, *Australian-United States' Relations, The ANZUS Alliance*, Canberra, 1982, p. 12.

6 Mr Peter Jennings, ASPI, *Submission 11*, p. 8.

7 Dr Robyn Lim, *Submission 13*, p. 2.

8 Mr Shane Carmody, Deputy Secretary, Department of Defence, 26 March 2004, *Transcript*, p. 3.

including access to intelligence and defence equipment sourced from the US. In addition, both the US and Australia engage in a range of effective and valuable training exercises. The US Ambassador to Australia stated:

The alliance we have today is far different than the alliance we first contemplated in 1951. No-one could have foreseen then that we would share the kind of intelligence that we do today. Together we each have a window to the world that would not exist if we were apart. Our militaries exercise, plan and deploy together around the world. Each of us is able to enhance our security by leveraging our individual assets with the assets of our ally for the mutual benefit of us both. We know more, talk more, consult more and trade more because we know each other more as a result of this alliance.<sup>9</sup>

- 2.17 The question was raised during hearings whether the ANZUS Treaty could be re-written with the objective of making it more relevant to the current strategic environment. There was no support for this proposal. Most groups believed that the Treaty was adequate and there would be few advantages from opening up a lengthy negotiation process. Professor William Tow and Dr Russell Trood commented that the 'treaty's current language and context provides the sufficient flexibility to allow it to remain viable in its current form.'<sup>10</sup> Defence stated:

I also make the point that sometimes when you seek to change or alter things that have longstanding significance, unless they are fundamentally ineffective, you run the risk of coming out with a less substantial outcome. I do believe it works well for us. It has stood us in good stead and continues to work well.<sup>11</sup>

- 2.18 In contrast to the positive appraisals of the alliance, some groups did raise reservations. The Medical Association for Prevention of War, Australia (MAPW) suggested that by hosting facilities on Australian soil 'that relate to preparing for or fighting a nuclear war...Australia's involvement adds to the threat of nuclear war.'<sup>12</sup> MAPW in relation to the impact of the ANZUS Treaty stated:

...the ANZUS Treaty must truly serve the security needs of Australians, rather than simply the needs of the most powerful party to the Treaty.

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9 HE Mr Tom Schieffer, US Ambassador to Australia, 21 June 2004, *Transcript*, p. 3.

10 Professor William Tow and Dr Russell Trood, Griffith University, 2 April 2004, *Transcript*, p. 48.

11 Mr Shane Carmody, Deputy Secretary, Department of Defence, 26 March 2004, *Transcript*, p. 4.

12 Medical Association for Prevention of War, Australia, *Submission 16*, p. 6.

Further, it must not undermine global security. Unless it fulfils these conditions, which are no more than the very reasons for Australia's participation in the Treaty, it has failed us and should be abandoned.<sup>13</sup>

- 2.19 The United Nations Association of Australia Incorporated (UNAA) suggested that the ANZUS Treaty was no longer relevant. First, the UNAA was critical of the US policy of pre-emption and that this undermines 'the role of the United Nations and the international protocols that Australia has helped to develop over many years.'<sup>14</sup> Second, the UNAA suggested that Australia should set its own directions, but feedback from UN sources suggest that 'Australia is increasingly seen as following rather than leading such international debates.'<sup>15</sup> In view of these issues, the UNAA concluded that 'ANZUS has become more of a hindrance than a help.' The UNAA stated:

There has been some public debate about ANZUS, but there is apparently no inclination by the Government to renegotiate it in a way that brings it up to date. According to Daniel Fitton a researcher at Georgetown University, USA (*The Canberra Times*, 12 April 2004) ANZUS is outdated for several reasons - it no longer includes New Zealand, it makes no mention of terrorism, and it is very imprecise about the obligations of the treaty partners. Australia should take the opportunity to make its formal security commitments relevant for today.<sup>16</sup>

## Alliance entrapment

- 2.20 Overall, the majority of evidence supported the broad objectives of the alliance and its part in underpinning Australia's national security. However, many of these groups that held this position did warn against Australia being subject to 'alliance entrapment', and asserted that it was necessary for Australia to carefully manage the alliance and ensure that Australia's independence is not compromised.
- 2.21 Professor William Tow suggested that there were benefits arising from the alliance but there was the need to consider the case of 'alliance entrapment.' Professor Tow stated:

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13 Medical Association for Prevention of War, Australia, *Submission 16*, p. 6.

14 United Nations Association of Australia Inc, *Submission 18*, p. 2.

15 United Nations Association of Australia Inc, *Submission 18*, p. 2.

16 United Nations Association of Australia Inc, *Submission 18*, p. 3.

...do the perceived gains from the alliance still outweigh the potential costs that may be incurred by affiliating with it? The answer is probably yes, although the Committee may want to consider the notion of alliance entrapment. This is a classical concept of alliance politics in which one ally becomes involved in a particular situation that perhaps, left on its own, it would not wish to become involved in. In particular, there may be some implications from the US pre-emption doctrine of the Bush administration in September 2002. On the other hand, I tend to agree with Coral Bell in her latest book where she indicated that the US pre-emption doctrine may now be dying a quiet death, in which case the notion of an alliance engagement problem is probably less than it might otherwise be.<sup>17</sup>

2.22 During hearings, the capacity of the alliance to withstand diverging interests and indeed Australia's ability to promote its interests was examined. The Australia Defence Association (ADA) commented that the alliance should not be 'a blank cheque from the Americans to us, and it is not a blank cheque from us to the Americans.'<sup>18</sup>

2.23 Some groups suggested that Australia's closeness to the US restricted Australia's ability to articulate its own interests. Future Directions International (FDI) commented 'we may be too close at present, which can limit our ability to manoeuvre in accordance with our own national interests when they do not coincide with the US.'<sup>19</sup> FDI concluded that 'we need to maintain a careful balance while being a close ally and 'confidant' with the US.'<sup>20</sup> Professor William Tow agreed with the point made by FDI. He stated:

There can at times be—more in terms of appearance than actual substance—the image of acquiescence or perhaps of Australia being too obsequious in certain situations. That is probably as much about how Australia is perceived by outside parties as the extent to which that is perceived by your ally. Clearly with the so-called deputy sheriff image in Australia's alliance policy with the United States, which selected Asian leaders have cultivated over the past six or seven years, it has been somewhat problematic for Australia to exercise maximum diplomatic leverage in the region. I am not saying it is a decisive element, but perhaps Australia should have been a bit more conscious of the image—or of the

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17 Professor William Tow, Griffith University, 2 April 2004, *Transcript*, p. 48.

18 Mr Neil James, Australia Defence Association, 2 April 2004, *Transcript*, p. 25.

19 Future Directions International, *Submission 3*, p. 1.

20 Future Directions International, *Submission 3*, p. 1.

danger of the image being created – from the outset in terms of the so-called resuscitation of the alliance, which was very much on this government's mind after it was elected in 1996.<sup>21</sup>

- 2.24 The US Ambassador addressed the issue of alliance partners having diverging interests. He suggested that the alliance could tolerate different conclusions between the partners. He commented that 'we have often come to a different conclusion in the past on why we are here or on why we are doing this or that, but more often than not we have come to agreement – and that is on a bipartisan basis.'<sup>22</sup>
- 2.25 The Returned and Services League of Australia Limited (RSL) in addressing this matter commented that it 'believes most strongly that it is mandatory that Australia maintain absolute independence in any matter or action within the alliance and that the US Government and its planning and executive bodies, civil or military, are clearly aware of this independence in thought, word and deed.'<sup>23</sup>
- 2.26 The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) believed Australia was unable to exercise sufficient independence. The WILPF stated:
- The Howard Government's present deference to the US has led Australia into a position whereby Australia is apparently unable to exercise the requisite degree of independence of thought in order to serve Australia's national interests where they may not coincide with the interests of the US.<sup>24</sup>
- 2.27 ASPI commented that 'it is inevitable that America's global dominance is a major factor shaping how Australia defines its own strategic interests and equally inevitable that Australia's overall impact on US is small.'<sup>25</sup> In this type of relationship, ASPI suggested that it is vital 'that we should do what we can to maximise our national access and influence in key decision-making forums in Washington.'<sup>26</sup> ASPI suggested that in addition to existing Australian-US Ministerial Consultations (AUSMIN) and strategic dialogues between officials, 'there would be value in looking at new ways of engaging the US policy community.'<sup>27</sup>

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21 Professor William Tow, Griffith University, 2 April 2004, *Transcript*, p. 49.

22 HE Mr Tom Schieffer, US Ambassador to Australia, 21 June 2004, *Transcript*, p. 6.

23 Returned and Services League of Australia Ltd, *Submission 1*, p. i.

24 Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, *Submission 17*, p. 2.

25 Mr Peter Jennings, ASPI, *Submission 11*, p. 3.

26 Mr Peter Jennings, ASPI, *Submission 11*, p. 3.

27 Mr Peter Jennings, ASPI, *Submission 11*, p. 3.



## Managing the alliance

2.28 In view of the previous concerns that there was a perception that Australia is often acquiescent in its alliance with the US, a number of proposals were made to ensure that Australia exercised sufficient independence. Dr Ron Huisken, for example, proposed the following alliance management rules:

- in approaching alliance management—and particularly, of course, the big milestones in the alliance that come up, as they did in the case of Iraq—the first of these commonsense rules of thumb is to approach every major decision, especially those involving potential joint military operations, as if the alliance did not exist and, in fact, pose the question of whether we should enter into an alliance over the issue in question;
- the second rule is: do not aspire to be a loyal ally, but have the courage to affirm on each occasion that we are allies because we agree and that we do not agree because we are allies; and
- the third rule is: do not give any weight to the view that we should suppress our interests and instincts in order to accumulate favours or put the US in our debt and thereby make their assistance to us more probable in some future hour of need.<sup>28</sup>

2.29 Dr Huisken concluded that in recent alliance examples, ‘I do believe that to varying degrees we stepped away from those rules of thumb in the most recent circumstances.’<sup>29</sup>

2.30 Professor William Tow, when updating the Inquiry on the issue of potential for alliance entrapment at its final public hearing, indicated that some events had occurred that shifted the Government’s alliance centric position, when he stated:

But with the obvious interests that Australia continues to have in the region and those interests continuing to strengthen and grow, particularly with the China connection in terms of the trade issues, the Howard government seems to be shifting away from a distinctly American-centric strategic posture to one designed more to balance the alliance with regional political strategic interests and priorities.<sup>30</sup>

2.31 As examples, Professor Tow quoted two events that indicated a re-affirmation of Australia’s strategic independence. The first of these was ‘Foreign Minister Downer’s observation in Beijing in August 2004 about Australia being extremely careful in involving itself in any future Taiwan

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28 Dr Ron Huisken, Australian National University, 21 June 2004, *Transcript*, p. 18.

29 Dr Ron Huisken, Australian National University, 21 June 2004, *Transcript*, p. 18.

30 Prof William Tow, Australian National University, 9 September 2005, *Transcript*, p. 3

contingency,'<sup>31</sup> The second and perhaps most significant development for Australia's foreign and security policy was the decision by Australia to sign the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South East Asia. While these two events may have caused some concern in the US both sides would recognise that 'occasionally we have to express our independence from the US in order to be a good ally.'<sup>32</sup>

- 2.32 Professor Tow suggested that Australia's ability to manage the issue of alliance entrapment had become more sophisticated when he stated that:

I do not see alliance entrapment being a central concern of the relationship at this juncture. I think Mr Howard is being quite selective in terms of where he feels there are specific niches that Australia can continue to operate in the international counter-terrorism effort. Dispatching the troops to Afghanistan is part of that, because of the elections coming up on 18 September and also because the SAS have certain talents and capabilities that I suspect exceed those of their American counterparts.....So I think niche capabilities and niche opportunities are how you understand the Australian strategy to avoid alliance entrapment. Australia is in control in that sense. But it is in control in a way that is perceived as useful to the Americans. That is the important distinction.<sup>33</sup>

- 2.33 Defence argue that sufficient steps are taken to ensure Australia continues to demonstrate its independence when they state:

One of the ways in which we demonstrate our independence is by maintaining the ability to conduct military operations independently of the US. The Regional Assistance Mission in the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) is a good example of this independence of action.<sup>34</sup>

- 2.34 Finally Defence described interoperability and acquisition policies as demonstrating the balance between being dominated by the much larger US military and exercising independence. These issues will be explored more completely in later chapters but Defence would summarise their policy as balancing the need for interoperability with their responsibility to procure the best capability with the best possible value for money. The Tiger helicopter and the air to air refuelers are examples of very large defence procurement decisions that did not follow US decisions.

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31 Prof William Tow, Australian National University, 9 September 2005, *Transcript*, p. 2

32 Prof William Tow, Australian National University, 9 September 2005, *Transcript*, p. 7

33 Prof William Tow, Australian National University, 9 September 2005, *Transcript*, p. 2-11

34 Mr Shane Carmody, Department of Defence, *Submission 20*, p. 2

- 2.35 The US perspective of the alliance is equally important to the understanding of its relevance and future direction. The Committee delegation to the US was briefed that while understandably much discussion of the relationship in Australia concentrates on its value to this country, the alliance is also regarded as very important to the US. Australia is regarded in Washington as a key US ally in East Asia, to the extent that our alliance is used to benchmark the US alliance with other allies such as Japan.
- 2.36 It was also made clear to the delegation however, that the relationship was not static. The alliance was described as having a hard or pragmatic edge, leading to the question "What will Australia offer next?" Naturally the US, like Australia, will seek to understand where the benefit is for them in each transaction between the two nations. However it appears clearly understood at the Executive Level of the Administration that Australia more than carries its weight in the Pacific, thus freeing American resources to be used in locations they are harder pressed.
- 2.37 The US Department of Defence staffs were particularly positive about the Defence relationship between Australia and the US. They described it as being based on shared values underpinned by a considerable history of common sacrifice. Australia was considered to be part of a very small group of countries with whom the US shares such a position. The officials also made it clear that the relationship with Australia was not taken for granted and the range and depth of the dialogue between the two countries is considered remarkable.
- 2.38 An example of the extent to which Australian opinion is trusted by the US Department of Defence is the degree to which Australian military officers are embedded in key US Defence Headquarters. The delegation was briefed on the types of sensitive tasks being undertaken by these officers and acknowledges the benefit to both organisations of this input.
- 2.39 The level of understanding about the ANZUS alliance on the other side of the Pacific however is not uniform. While Administration and Defence officials who work regularly with the ADF had clear and positive views of the importance of the alliance, the Committee was not reassured that this knowledge and support extends to the US Legislature.
- 2.40 Though it is difficult to draw conclusions about the US Congress as a whole from a brief series of delegation appointments in the US, it appears that members of Congress have a level of affection and trust for Australia. However, it is possible to extrapolate from meetings with Congressional leaders that the Defence relationship between the two countries is not uniformly well understood within the US Legislature. Further work at this level is necessary if Australia is to attempt to overcome legislative

restrictions to technology transfer, intelligence access and to remove legislative restrictions on US military interaction with Indonesia.

2.41 Australia's Department of Defence agrees. They state:

Australia enjoys excellent access to the US administration and the US is careful to seek our views on regional issues – not only out of politeness, but because they value our expertise. Given the importance of the US Congress in shaping US policy positions of the administration, we must maximise opportunities to put our views to the legislature. Visits to Australia by members of Congress, and by their staff, are such opportunities. We also maximise the opportunities presented by senior Defence visits to reinforce our position on regional relationships, sovereignty, interoperability and capability development.<sup>35</sup>

## Public knowledge of the value of the US alliance

2.42 While most groups in evidence to the inquiry noted the value and relevance of the US alliance, there was a view that more could be done to increase public knowledge of the value of the alliance. The RSL stated:

I thought it was obvious that the Australian public, from the way the media presents their attitudes – if that is what they do – is not aware of what ANZUS is all about, especially the youngsters today. Whoever is running the government, the Australian parliament should let its people know why ANZUS, for example, is important. And I do not think we do. I do not think we make any effort at all. We just let the press run with it and let the media say what it wants.<sup>36</sup>

The RSL proposed that the 'Australian Government should consider publishing a lucid, convincing and easily available booklet or pamphlet on Australian Defence policy.' The RSL further stated that this 'accessible document should clearly describe the importance and value of the Australian-US defence alliance, in order to assist the Australian people to understand the complex yet nationally important issues involved.'<sup>37</sup> Similarly, the ADA supported 'the need to better publicise to the

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35 Department of Defence, Submission 20, p. 2.

36 Brigadier John Essex Clark (Retd), Returned and Services League of Australia Ltd, 26 March 2004, *Transcript*, p. 44.

37 Returned and Services League of Australia Ltd, *Submission 1*, p. 9.

Australian public the need for our alliance with the United States and the mutual benefits and advantages involved.’<sup>38</sup>

2.43 Opinion polling on the value of the US alliance has demonstrated positive results. ASPI reported that in the last three Australian Election Surveys ‘support for the proposition that the ANZUS alliance is ‘fairly’ or ‘very’ important to protect Australia’s security has run close to 90%.’<sup>39</sup> ASPI, however, warned that while public support for the alliance is strong, public sentiment can change quickly as occurred in New Zealand during the 1980s and 1990s.

2.44 ASPI also suggested that where public opinion is based on sentiment rather than ‘extensive knowledge’, there remains a case to bolster public information. ASPI stated:

There is a strong case to argue that the Government and Parliament should do more to bolster an informed public understanding of the alliance. Over the long term a greater emphasis on learning about the US and on promoting more interaction between our peoples will help to sustain a national consensus in favour of the alliance.<sup>40</sup>

2.45 ASPI, as part of its submission, examined the state of American studies in Australian universities and concluded that ‘the findings are disturbing because they show the very limited range of American studies available in Australian universities.’<sup>41</sup> Of 42 tertiary institutions examined, only five offered undergraduate programs majoring in American studies. ASPI reported that the Australia and New Zealand American Studies Association maintains a register of Australian postgraduate students currently studying US related topics. At March 2004 there were only 31 students on the register. ASPI stated:

No one would argue with the need for Australians to study Asia. But given America’s global economic and strategic importance, the lack of opportunities for young people to study the US is a huge national deficiency. Our lack of detailed knowledge about the US suggests that Australia is missing opportunities to strengthen and extend our current relationship.<sup>42</sup>

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38 Australia Defence Association, *Submission 5*, p. 10.

39 Mr Peter Jennings, ASPI, *Submission 11*, p. 4.

40 Mr Peter Jennings, ASPI, *Submission 11*, p. 11.

41 Mr Peter Jennings, ASPI, *Submission 11*, p. 6.

42 Mr Peter Jennings, ASPI, *Submission 11*, p. 6.

The government could help to reverse this situation with a number of initiatives designed to increase Australian knowledge and understanding of America.<sup>43</sup>

- 2.46 ASPI proposed the following measures to increase knowledge of Australia-US relations:
- funding a number of **Percy Spender Scholarships**;
  - supporting the development of a **Cooperative Research Centre on the United States**; and
  - the Government should consider providing funding for an **Australian-US Young Leaders Dialogue**.<sup>44</sup>

## **New Zealand and the ANZUS alliance**

- 2.47 New Zealand's role in the ANZUS alliance has been affected by its policy of restricting visits to its ports by nuclear powered ships, and ships carrying nuclear weapons. This policy has been in force since 1984 and has strained New Zealand's relationship with the US, in practical terms reducing the level of defence cooperation between the two countries. In relation to defence exercises, for example, Australia exercises with both countries separately but there are limited tri-nation activities.
- 2.48 During the Committee delegation to the US, discussion with US Department of Defence officials included the status of the third partner of the ANZUS Alliance. The US response was straight forward. They indicated that Australia and New Zealand are viewed quite separately by the US, not together as the formal ANZUS alliance suggests. The New Zealand contributions to operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan have been very well received by the US leadership but they report that tensions over New Zealand's restriction of access to nuclear powered US Navy ships must be resolved before the alliance could return to its original state.
- 2.49 While this is solely a matter for these two countries, the question needs to be raised regarding the impact this matter is having on the effectiveness of the ANZUS alliance and the ability of the countries to operate effectively together.
- 2.50 The Australian Department of Defence 'values highly New Zealand's involvement in regional operations, in which our interaction at a tactical level is coordinated and complimentary'<sup>45</sup>. Despite limited interaction

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43 Mr Peter Jennings, ASPI, *Submission 11*, p. 6.

44 Mr Peter Jennings, ASPI, *Submission 11*, p. 7.

45 Mr Shane Carmody, Department of Defence, *Submission 20*, p. 4.

with the US, Australian and New Zealand Defence force personnel operate together seamlessly in Timor Leste, Solomon Islands and numerous regional activities and training events. This ANZAC ability to operate together reflects shared values that pre-date either country's relationship with the US.

2.51 However, current New Zealand levels of Defence spending mean that the NZDF will continue to struggle to achieve interoperability with either Australia or the US. The RSL commented that 'as far as maritime forces were concerned, the New Zealand forces had suffered as a result of not having that access to operations with the major part of the alliance.'<sup>46</sup> Similarly, FDI commented that 'the New Zealand-US problems have placed an additional burden on Australia to work with New Zealand to keep reasonable levels of interoperability and to keep them operationally in the fold.'<sup>47</sup>

2.52 Rather than seeing New Zealand's stance over nuclear ships and weapons as a negative, some evidence to the inquiry regards New Zealand's stance as a positive for the region and the alliance. The Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia) state:

'The perception that New Zealand left the Treaty, simply because it exerted its independence in relation to the United States, has much to say about the subservient roles expected of two parties to the Treaty...Nevertheless, to 'welcome' New Zealand 'back' into the alliance, if that means to pay full respect to the security needs and independence of each of the three parties to the Treaty, would indeed be beneficial. In particular, New Zealand governments have been proactive on the need for nuclear weapons elimination, a goal which the Australian Government claims to share, and far greater cooperation to this end would be advantageous and in keeping with the spirit of the ANZUS Treaty.'<sup>48</sup>

2.53 Which ever view is taken regarding the importance of New Zealand's role in the ANZUS, the desired end state appears to be the same. Evidence to the inquiry strongly supports the re-engagement of New Zealand in the ANZUS alliance.

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46 Rear Admiral Ken Doolan, RSL, 26 March 2004, *Transcript*, p. 32.

47 Mr Lee Cordner, Future Directions International, 2 April 2004, *Transcript*, p. 2.

48 Dr Susan Wareham, Medical Association for Prevention of War, *Submission 22*, p. 4.

## Conclusion

- 2.54 The invoking of the ANZUS Treaty in the immediate aftermath of the September 2001 attacks on the US has heightened awareness of the alliance between Australia and the US. The event sparked renewed interest in strategic discussion about the merits of the relationship, which is arguably closer now than at any time in its history. Debate about Australia's relationship with the US has coincided with growing unease in some parts of Australia and elsewhere in the world about unipolarity and the need for reform of multi-lateral institutions, most notably the United Nations.
- 2.55 The apprehension over America's status as the sole world 'super power' has become more heated since the 2003 invasion of Iraq. However despite divisions over Australia's role alongside the US as part of a small coalition of nations, public support for the alliance remains strong. The Australian public appear to understand that broad shared values underpin the relationship between the two countries that predate any of the recent coalition activities. While empirical evidence of the attitude of the American population toward Australia is not available, a body of anecdotal evidence suggests that the American public share a similar empathy with Australia. This level of US empathy is probably only shared with one other country, the United Kingdom.
- 2.56 The intensified debate over Australia's security partnership with the US has brought to the fore two fears that have been features of Australia's strategic policy debate since Federation. The debate 'generates fears of both abandonment and entrapment: abandonment because allies might not be there when needed; entrapment because the price of the alliance might be an abdication of the smaller partner's interests in favour of the larger partner's.'<sup>49</sup>
- 2.57 Australian public support for the US alliance may well stem from the fear of abandonment. This was arguably the case in WWII after the fall of Singapore when the British priority of effort shifted from Asia Pacific to North Africa and Europe, leaving Australia feeling isolated. This fear arguably continued during the Cold War in the face of the threat from Communist expansion. Most recently this apprehension may be traceable to the rising fear of trans-national Jihad making progress in South East Asia. On the other hand some evidence to the inquiry from prominent groups in the community show a fear that the alliance appears to compel Australia to act in a particular fashion, such as join the coalition to invade Iraq, whether or not such an action is in Australia's best interest.
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49 ASPI, *Alliance Unleashed: Australia and the US in a new strategic age*, p. 6



- 2.58 The Committee has concluded that the risk of alliance entrapment, when in a relationship with the sole world super power, is real. After significant disagreement in the lead up to the 2003 war in Iraq, recent evidence to the inquiry suggests that Australia has evolved a more balanced position in relation to its relationship with the US and other regional powers in recent months. Australia is now taking a leading role in selecting niche contributions that are in Australia's immediate interest.
- 2.59 The inquiry has also discussed the current status of New Zealand in the ANZUS Alliance. Tensions remain over the New Zealand ban on US nuclear ship visits, limiting contact and exchange of information between the US and New Zealand. New Zealand continues to make meaningful military contributions to the reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan however, despite these contributions New Zealand's access to technology and intelligence from the US is reduced. Australia continues to value New Zealand as a partner in important regional activities such as Timor Leste and Solomon Islands.
- 2.60 In summary the Committee agrees that the ANZUS Alliance remains a key pillar of Australia's national security policy. Evidence to the inquiry is not in favour of amending the wording of the alliance to make it more contemporary however the Committee is aware that the alliance is being challenged by a transformational international security situation. Modern alliances must be able to operate in a world with globalised media, satellite communications, international travel and commerce, and the internet which threat forces may use to coordinate diffuse movements.
- 2.61 The future of the ANZUS Alliance therefore is as a framework under which modernisation and policy adjustments can occur between Australia and the US (and preferably New Zealand) in the face of a rapidly evolving strategic reality. Arguably the text of the treaty, attached as Appendix 2 to this report, becomes less important as years pass. Instead the treaty will continue as a formal declaration of trust between countries that share values and ideals.

### **Recommendation 1**

**The Committee recommends that the ANZUS Alliance be maintained in its current form and that the treaty be viewed not just as a specific set of requirements, rather as a statement of shared values capable of being acted upon in the face of evolving contemporary threats.**

