The ANZUS Treaty during the Cold War

A Reinterpretation of U.S. Diplomacy in the Southwest Pacific

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The Australia, New Zealand, United States (ANZUS) Security Treaty has lasted for six-and-a-half decades. The formal defense pact, which was signed on 1 September 1951 and came into force on 29 April 1952, binds together Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. The ANZUS Treaty stipulates that an armed attack on any of the signatories endangers the peace and safety of them all. Each national government consequently pledges to develop and maintain individual and collective capabilities to resist attack. Although the course of events leading to the treaty remains uncontested, its origin continues to generate considerable interest among historians, who have diverged widely in their interpretations of the aims of the participants and the nature of the negotiations.


2. The treaty states: “The Parties will consult together whenever in the opinion of any of them the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened in the Pacific.” For the full text of the ANZUS Treaty, see http://australianpolitics.com/topics/foreign-policy/anzus-treaty-text. The ANZUS Treaty is just one example within a broader framework of alliance-building by the United States during the early stages of the Cold War. The United States first built alliances in its own hemisphere with the creation of the Rio Pact in 1947. The formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949 marked the most far-reaching step yet, linking the United States with Europe and Canada.

Many scholars, as well as most of the individuals involved in drafting the agreement, stress the importance of Australian diplomacy. U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson asserted that the United States agreed to form ANZUS because Australia required such a security pact in order to support U.S. plans for a lenient Japanese peace treaty.\(^4\) One of Acheson’s main biographers, Robert Beisner, broadly agrees with this assessment. The pact, Beisner explains, was one of the “grudgingly paid tolls on the turnpike to the San Francisco peace conference.”\(^5\) These interpretations stress the skill of Australian officials in managing to convince a reluctant superpower to commit to a tripartite security pact.\(^6\) Other scholars have challenged this depiction, emphasizing that the United States was hardly a reluctant convert to Australasian security. A rising Communist threat throughout Asia, evidenced by the onset of the Korean War, encouraged the United States to pursue several military pacts within the Pacific region, including ANZUS.\(^7\)

Much of the disagreement stems from historians’ focus on decision-making within only one country. Looking to one, rather than all, of the major actors involved in the negotiations distorts analysis of diplomacy in the region. The origins of the ANZUS Treaty can be understood only through a multinational approach. In addition, existing accounts of events, wherever positioned within the historiography, tend to rely on narrowly focused explanations for the motivations of the key participants. The ambitions of America, Australia, and New Zealand in the Pacific region were far more complex than many historians have suggested. Drawing together source material from both

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sides of the Pacific and the Atlantic, this article offers four major contributions to the historiography.

First, the treaty originated through a compromise between the United States, Australia, and New Zealand. Growing Cold War concerns drove the U.S. commitment to international cooperation. Although the antipodean powers obtained a security pact, the United States managed to secure a non-punitive Japanese peace treaty in exchange, thereby harnessing Japan’s economic and industrial potential for the containment of Communism. This quid pro quo helped to overcome initial resistance in Washington to the idea of creating any such formal agreement. The ANZUS Treaty was limited in scope, however, thus thwarting Australian and New Zealand ambitions for a more comprehensive security alliance. The agreement also ensured that the antipodean powers remained militarily committed to the Middle East and Mediterranean, thereby complementing the U.S. government’s wider Cold War strategy.

Second, existing accounts concerning the origins of the U.S. commitment to southwestern Pacific security largely overlook the economic rationale underlying decision-making. U.S. officials sought regional cooperation to ensure the swift revival of Japan, which played an increasingly important role in opposing Communism in Asia following the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950. Providing security commitments to Australia and New Zealand would help to lessen antipodean fears about the risks of increased economic cooperation with Japan. Furthermore, closer U.S.-antipodean relations would place the United States in a stronger position from which to discuss discriminatory trading policies in the region (known as Imperial Preference) that could inhibit economic revival and mitigate longer-term stability. What this indicates is not that the U.S. goal was simply to establish a profitable economic empire, but that economic and military factors were interdependent.

Third, the historiography has downplayed the importance of the Anglo-American dynamic of the ANZUS Treaty. Because U.S. alliance-building occurred throughout the region, the transatlantic relationship suffered. Existing

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8. Economic factors as motivation for U.S. policy toward the creation of ANZUS receive limited attention in the following: David Lowe, _Menzies and the “Great World Struggle”: Australia’s Cold War, 1948–1954_ (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 1999); Beisner, Acheson; Ritchie Ovendale, _The English Speaking Alliance: Britain, The United States, the Dominions and the Cold War, 1945–51_ (London: Allen & Unwin, 1985); Peter Lowe, _Containing the Cold War in East Asia: British policies towards Japan, China and Korean 1948–53_ (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1997); and Lee, _Outposts of Empire._

accounts of Anglo-American relations routinely downplay or ignore U.S. attempts to ensure British exclusion from the ANZUS Treaty. The Eisenhower administration’s eventual recourse to vigorous diplomacy among the treaty members ultimately ensured that ANZUS did not expand beyond a tripartite agreement. These insights cast much-needed light on the weakening of British influence in the region. Such events also complement the “declinist” literature of the post-1945 period, revealing the rejection of British security provision and the erosion of traditional economic relations in the Pacific.

Fourth, the historiography continues to simplify how ideas about race and imperialism influenced the decision-making process. Bigotry, as well as concerns about prejudice, has influenced U.S. actions on the global stage. Yet the idea of race was more than just a motivation for, or deterrent to, certain foreign policy choices in the Pacific. U.S. policymakers sometimes used ideas about race as a tool for the advancement of their own goals. Drawing attention to the divisions between Anglo-Saxon and Asian peoples legitimized ANZUS on a tripartite basis. U.S. claims that British membership would create an image of a “White Man’s Club” throughout the Pacific, and thus damage relations with the “non-white” powers in the region, offered a rationale for the exclusion of Britain, avoided problematic calls for the creation of a broader alliance


system in Asia, and obscured more important and self-interested motivations. Public claims about the importance of racial concerns, albeit exaggerated or sometimes disingenuous, thus helped to sustain the ANZUS Treaty on a tripartite basis as U.S. officials preferred. In addition, some Australian and New Zealand policymakers sought to avoid extending membership of ANZUS to Asian powers for reasons that were in part motivated by racial considerations.

Taken together, these four contributions make a broader point about the geographical compartmentalization of U.S. foreign policy. Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom enjoyed different experiences of U.S. diplomacy in the Pacific. The antipodean governments managed to obtain their long-sought-after security pact. But Britain, the most important U.S. ally in Europe, saw its interests routinely marginalized. Yet economic and military cooperation with the United Kingdom continued in other parts of the world. The “special relationship” evidently did not always apply on a global basis. Washington often viewed it as relevant only in a regional sense. British weakness, alongside the growing reliance of Australia and New Zealand on U.S. power, allowed successive U.S. administrations to pursue diplomacy in the Southwest Pacific largely as they saw fit.

The article is divided into four sections. The first section contextualizes the ANZUS Treaty, comparing U.S., Australian, New Zealand, and British postwar ambitions. Despite many similarities, the four countries sought different military and economic objectives in the Pacific region. Diplomacy was thus more discordant than generally assumed. The second section explains the emergence of the ANZUS Treaty. As the Cold War intensified, Washington sought to create a lenient Japanese peace treaty that would end the occupation of Japan and harness its economic and industrial potential in the containment of Communism. The antipodean governments argued instead that a punitive peace treaty was required to prevent a resurgence of Japanese militarism. After considerable deliberation, the ANZUS Treaty emerged as the preferred solution to this diplomatic impasse.

The third section looks at the negotiations surrounding the treaty. Once the U.S., Australian, and New Zealand delegations convened in Canberra in


February 1951, discussions about the nature of a Japanese peace settlement and a security pact began in earnest. The resulting agreement benefited all of the participants. Yet, no individual country obtained all of its objectives.

The fourth section explains how the United States managed to maintain a tripartite agreement in the face of sustained opposition from Britain and, to a lesser extent, Australia and New Zealand. The United States continually legitimized British exclusion from ANZUS by claiming that British membership would establish a “White Man’s Pact” in the Pacific and would do significant damage to U.S. relations with key Asian allies. Such justifications, however, rarely drove policy. U.S. reluctance to expand ANZUS centered on fears that British membership would lead to a broader Pacific security pact that would extend U.S. commitments in the region and do so at considerable cost.

**Pacific Diplomacy**

Despite many similarities, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and Great Britain sometimes sought different military and economic objectives in the Pacific region in the post-1945 period. These countries’ competing international ambitions shed light on the subsequent course of U.S. diplomacy.

**The United States**

Following the end of the Second World War, Australia assumed a growing importance in U.S. thinking. An internal policy document from the State Department reveals that a “fundamental” objective was to “maintain and strengthen the close ties of friendship [that had been established] between the two countries” during the Second World War. Australia, the document notes, occupied an “important geographical position” with a people “whose way of life and whose political ideology is similar to our own.”

The relationship nevertheless suffered some tensions. Under the government of Ben Chifley, the Australians had assumed a role that was sometimes troublesome for U.S. interests, especially within the United Nations (UN). Policy disputes marred relations in the latter half of the 1940s, and Canberra’s insistence of pursuing an “unpolarised line in foreign policy” irritated Washington. Nevertheless, at
least in the assessment of the U.S. State Department, the Australians could be “generally counted on to vote on our side.”\textsuperscript{18} Australia had evidently secured a position of importance to the U.S. government well before the “loss” of China and the onset of the Korean War. As the Cold War began to polarize international relations more keenly, the role of such “third actors” was of increasing interest for U.S. policymakers.

Economic factors, often downplayed by existing accounts, also help to explain the growing U.S. interest in cooperation with Australia. The Bretton Woods Agreement of 1944, of which Australia was a signatory, meant that the U.S. dollar functioned as the pivot of the global exchange system. All signatories pegged their currencies to the U.S. dollar on the assumption that a fixed parity system would stabilize international trade and, in turn, temper the violent nature of international relations.\textsuperscript{19} Yet persistent dollar deficits, alongside the continuation of tariff protection, complicated this new economic order.\textsuperscript{20} Australia possessed an adverse balance-of-dollar-payments and was unwilling to forgo the trading advantages it enjoyed as a member of the British Commonwealth.\textsuperscript{21} Nevertheless, the State Department recognized the growing economic importance of Australia in the Southeast Asian region and to international trade more broadly.\textsuperscript{22} This argument complements recent research concerning the origins and implementation of the Truman administration’s national security objectives as enunciated within NSC 68. The massive rearmament program endorsed by NSC 68 reflected concerns about ensuring the survival of the nascent global economy, an essential component of postwar U.S. prosperity, as well as containing the Communist threat.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{18} “Policy Statement of the Department of State,” 18 August 1948, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{19} The British pound was set at $4.03 with the Australian pound being effectively pegged to sterling until 1967. For more detail, see David Sanders, \textit{Losing an Empire, Finding a Role: British Foreign Policy since 1945} (Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 200–206.


\textsuperscript{22} Ibid.

Equally important, interest in Australia reflected broader geostrategic shifts. The stability and reconstruction of Europe was the primary U.S. goal at the end of the Second World War. As relations with the Soviet Union deteriorated, however, the situation in the Pacific became more important. Domestically, fears about the threat of a global Communist conspiracy were growing, encouraged by revelations about the extent of Soviet espionage throughout the Western world. The Soviet Union’s explosion of a nuclear bomb in August 1949, believed by many to reflect the success of Soviet espionage, catalyzed such anxieties and shattered the U.S. nuclear monopoly. The subsequent defeat of Nationalist forces in China further encouraged U.S. fears of a global Communist threat.  

The ascension of Mao Zedong and the creation of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) increased U.S. interest in Asian security. President Harry S. Truman’s administration began to increase its material support for France in its war inside Indochina because the French were now presumed to be fighting a Communist-supported enemy and thus preventing further Communist expansion. The Korean War, deemed by the Truman administration as an act of flagrant Communist aggression, fueled growing U.S. concerns about the Communist threat. As such, the idea of a broader Pacific security pact became increasingly attractive to U.S. policymakers.


Japan therefore came to assume a position of extreme importance in U.S. strategic planning. U.S. policymakers concluded that if Japan fell under the influence of the Soviet Union, the Communist bloc would harness its economic and industrial might and threaten stability and U.S. interests throughout the region. Thus NSC 13/2, delivered on 5 April 1949, emphasized that Japan would be treated as an ally rather than an occupied power. This approach would undermine Soviet propaganda, which claimed that the United States was a colonial power, and stimulate economic growth, thereby negating the possibility of an internal Communist takeover of power. U.S. support would also ensure the revitalization of Japan’s industrial base, allowing Japan itself to play an important role in containing Soviet expansion.

Although General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in Japan, and other influential figures argued that the reindustrialization of Japan was unnecessary for containing Communist influence in the region, Mao’s victory swept away these objections. Thereafter, MacArthur, like most senior U.S. officials, believed that Japan would have to act as a central hub for resisting Communist influence in the Pacific. The Truman administration subsequently decided that such a security role required a Japanese peace treaty, which in turn would mean the end of the U.S. occupation and the promotion of economic recovery. Creating a Japanese peace treaty on a lenient basis thus assumed top priority in Washington’s strategy toward the Pacific.

*Australia and New Zealand*

The relationship between the United States, Australia, and New Zealand complicated progress toward a Japanese peace treaty. Although the differences

31. A peace treaty would help to address fears from international investors that Japan was a stable place in which to invest. The Truman administration’s determination to sign a Japanese peace treaty is emphasized in NSC 48/2, which can be viewed in Thomas Etzold and John Lewis Gaddis, eds., *Containment: Documents on American Policy and Strategy, 1945–1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), pp. 252–264. For a good overview of the importance of NSC 48/2 in relation to Japan, see Jones, *After Hiroshima*, pp. 52–56.
between the two antipodean states are important, their positions often aligned neatly. Antipodean anxieties about a rearmed Japan manifested themselves as an uncooperative attitude toward the idea of a lenient Japanese peace treaty.\textsuperscript{32} From Canberra and Wellington’s perspective, it was essential to avoid a repeat of the disaster of 1942 when the British Army had collapsed in Singapore and the United States had retreated from the Philippines, leaving Australia and New Zealand exposed to an expansionist rival with greater military strength. While Australian and New Zealand forces were engaged in fighting German and Italian forces in Northern Africa, Japan had struck the Australian mainland in 1941 and 1942, bombing Darwin and sinking naval vessels in Sydney harbor with midget submarines.\textsuperscript{33} Within Australian policymaking circles, there was a sense that Britain had betrayed its obligations in the region. The U.S. and British decision to pursue a “Germany first” strategy was hardly designed to convince policymakers in Australia and New Zealand that antipodean security was afforded top priority in London or Washington. The clear preference given to the defense of the European and Middle Eastern theaters at the onset of the Cold War only soured opinion further in both Canberra and Wellington.\textsuperscript{34}

Given the lack of direct security commitments early on, it is little wonder that both Australian and New Zealand policy-makers believed that the continued occupation of Japan ensured regional security and prevented a repetition of the military disasters of 1941–1942.\textsuperscript{35} The brutality with which the Japanese military conducted itself toward Allied troops operating in the Pacific theater, especially toward prisoners of war, only magnified these concerns. Successive Australian and New Zealand governments therefore placed the future of Japan at the forefront of their thinking.\textsuperscript{36} For the antipodean powers throughout the 1945–1949 period, regional security concerns were far more pressing than


\textsuperscript{34} For an example of this line of argument: David Day, \textit{The Great Betrayal: Britain, Australia and the Onset of the Pacific War, 1939–42} (North Ryde, Australia: Angus & Robertson, 1988).


\textsuperscript{36} For a convincing argument about the fear of a resurgent Japan in Australian strategic thinking in this period, see Meaney, “Look Back in Fear,” pp. 42–43. For examples of New Zealand concerns, see “The Minister of External Affairs to the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, 15 July 1947,” in \textit{The ANZUS Pact}, Doc. 42, pp. 68–69.
the broader Cold War. Australia did not wish to see a resurgent Japan that could once again strike southward, and New Zealand regarded the possibility of Japanese resurgence with considerable apprehension. The New Zealand Department of External Affairs summarized its position clearly:

New Zealand’s primary interest in the Japanese settlement is security . . . the lesson that we must draw from our experience is that no action we might take is in itself likely to make the Japanese feel goodwill for us, and any trust we put in Japanese promises or good faith or peaceful intentions is likely to prove misplaced. The history of Japanese preparations for aggression, the evidence that militarist projects won almost unanimous support of Japanese politicians, businessmen and workers, and the record of Japanese atrocities upon uniformed soldiers and defenseless civilians, makes it imperative that our primary aim should be to impose the most rigorous security control upon Japan.

U.S. talk of harnessing the economic and industrial potential of Japan, even as a means of ensuring collective security in the Pacific against the growing influence of the Soviet Union, therefore raised alarms in antipodean policymaking circles.

Changing global circumstances, however, encouraged the Australian and New Zealand governments to realign with their superpower ally. The collapsing influence of European colonial empires, coupled with rising nationalist movements in Southeast Asia, was of growing concern to security planners in Canberra and Wellington. As Japan returned to the Western orbit, Mao’s China, which was funding insurgencies throughout Malaya and Indonesia, came to assume prominence. From the perspective of Australian and New Zealand strategic planners, the rise of Chinese power threatened a scenario analogous to the Japanese threat in the Second World War. Because the two


countries had only limited resources in relation to the possible external threats confronting them, securing some type of security alliance with an outside power was of paramount importance to both Australian and New Zealand policymakers.40

The antipodean governments also shared concerns about future defense provision in a rapidly transforming world. Although the Statute of Westminster (1931), establishing legislative equality between self-governing dominions and the United Kingdom, had given the Australian and New Zealand governments a greater say in the pursuit of their foreign policies, their failure to ratify the statute meant that they had still largely followed Britain’s lead on strategic policy. The Second World War, however, encouraged a change of approach in both Canberra and Wellington.41 The conflict had provided a practical demonstration that Britain was simply unable to provide adequate defense in the region.42 The U.S.-British agreement in 1942 to make the defense of the Pacific region the primary responsibility of the U.S. government marked a turning point in defense policy. Australia and New Zealand could no longer rely solely on a defensive alliance with Britain.43 In the postwar defense planning between the antipodean powers and Britain, Australia took the lead in formulating such plans.44 A U.S. State Department assessment of antipodean defense policy ably captures this shift. “The impact of the war,” the document stresses, “has brought an awareness of the strategic dependence of New Zealand and Australia upon the U.S. for defense in the Pacific and of the importance of maintaining close and friendly relations with the U.S. and furthering cooperation between the two countries in matters connected with the Pacific area.”45

41. The Statue of Westminster provided Australia and New Zealand with the right to conduct their own foreign policies independent of the UK. However, not until 1942 did the Australian government actually pass a law to ratify the treaty. New Zealand ratified the treaty in 1947.
44. “Memorandum of Australian Government’s Observations of United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff Memorandum COS (52) 685,” attached to Prime Minister to High Commissioner, 27 March 1953, in NAA, A 5954, 1424/3.
Beyond the continuation of close relations with the Allied powers, Australia sought increased strategic cooperation with New Zealand—which came in the form of the ANZAC Pact in 1944—and the maintenance of security relationships with Britain. These relationships remained extremely close. Australia and New Zealand were signatories to the signals intelligence (SIGINT) arrangement in the UKUSA agreement of March 1946. Such cooperation afforded antipodean policymakers access to, and knowledge of, British and U.S. strategic thinking. In exchange, however, the governments of Australia and New Zealand had to continue to commit military forces to the defense of the Middle East and Mediterranean. British policymakers believed the “front line” in any global war involving the Soviet Union would be in the Middle East and Europe and wanted to focus their resources accordingly.

The difficulties surrounding negotiations during the Colombo Conference of January 1950 reflect these tensions, as British and Australian representatives clashed over the relative strategic importance of British Commonwealth interests throughout the Pacific as compared to those of Western Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East. The British government’s refusal to accord the same priority to Pacific defense as it had to the Middle East and Europe did nothing to convince Australian policymakers that their country would be defended in the event of a global war. As Percy Spender, the Australian minister for external affairs, outlined to his cabinet colleagues: “It is above all becoming clear that the United Kingdom, with added commitments in the Middle East over and above its responsibilities to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO], will have few resources to spare for active participation in the defence of the Australasian region.”

Nevertheless, traditional security relationships endured, principally because few alternatives existed. The Australian and New Zealand security relationship with the United States was patchy in the absence of any formal mechanisms for the exchange of military information, joint planning, and


47. Lowe, Menzies, pp. 49–60.


staff talks. As Peter Fraser, the New Zealand prime minister from 1940 to 1949, candidly admitted, his country could hardly be expected to compel the United States to enter into a security alliance with New Zealand. Australian efforts to convince the Truman administration to do just that had proven unsuccessful. Washington was simply uninterested in entering a trilateral security pact. The U.S. government’s intensifying interest in Japan, however, eventually gave Australia and New Zealand a diplomatic opportunity to achieve these goals.  

**The United Kingdom**

Successive postwar British governments found it increasingly difficult to uphold their global responsibilities. The Second World War had demonstrated the inability of the British Empire to maintain its territorial integrity in the face of aggression, inflamed nationalist passions, and heightened financial difficulties. Economic challenges proved increasingly onerous. Under the Labour government of Clement Attlee, an ill-fated attempt at currency convertibility took place, which, when coupled to growing gold and dollar deficits, exposed the fragility of the British economy. Further cuts in military spending followed, contributing to the withdrawal of military forces from India, Greece, and Palestine.  

Although policymakers in London sensed that U.S. domination of strategic planning for Pacific defense was unavoidable, they nevertheless remained unwilling to abdicate all of their influence in the region. The British government was anxious about the shifting balance of power. Reporting to the cabinet in 1950, Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations Patrick Gordon Walker provided a stern warning. “Our hold over Australia’s loyalty and respect,” he noted, “will depend upon our capacity to show vigour and leadership in the world’s affairs.”  

The 1945–1946 Australia, New Zealand, and Malaya (ANZAM) understanding serves as an important example of growing antipodean independence. Although never a formal defense treaty, staff talks between Australia, New Zealand, and the UK followed, along with informal

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52. Memorandum from Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, 2 October 1950, in Cambridge University, Churchill Centre Archive, The Patrick Gordon Walker Papers, Box 1/9.
interchanges of assessments and defense preparations in the Pacific region.\textsuperscript{53} Crucially, the ANZAM understanding accepted that Australia had a “special role” in the region: “In war, Australia would accept responsibility in conjunction with the United Kingdom and New Zealand for overall direction and control of operations (other than home defense) in ANZAM region.”\textsuperscript{54}

The British government had therefore accepted that Australia would be leading Commonwealth strategic planning in the southwest Pacific.\textsuperscript{55} Nevertheless, British policymakers still believed they had legitimate interests in the region, and such perceptions were at the heart of many of the difficulties within U.S.-UK and UK-Australian–New Zealand relations in the forthcoming years.\textsuperscript{56} Senior British officials were especially concerned about expanding U.S. influence in the region and the impact this would have on the antipodean powers. “We cannot ignore the danger that Australia,” Gordon Walker warned, “will be drawn into the American orbit of civilisation.”\textsuperscript{57}

For British policymakers, however, Pacific security remained a secondary concern, lagging behind the restoration of postwar Europe, the defense of the Middle East, and the desirability of upholding Anglo-American cooperation.\textsuperscript{58} During transatlantic discussions about the possibility of a Pacific security pact, the British made clear that they attached primacy to the defense of Europe and the Middle East and wanted to maintain the Australian and New Zealand commitment to the latter region.\textsuperscript{59} The Middle East was, in the minds of most British strategists, to be the first line of defense against the Soviet Union. This priority stemmed from the region’s large oil reserves, its proximity to the Soviet Union, and its value as a buffer to Communist advances into both the


\textsuperscript{54} UK High Commissioner in Australia to the Commonwealth Relations Office, Telegram 221, 28 March 1953, in The National Archives of the United Kingdom (TNAUK), PREM 11/403.

\textsuperscript{55} Menzies to Allen, 9 June 1950, in NAA, MP464/3, item 99/1/498/1; and Spender to Menzies, 8 June 1950, in NAA, MP464/3, item 99/1/498/1.

\textsuperscript{56} This was true not least in the economic realm, where serious differences existed. See, for example, the documentation contained within TNAUK, T 236/2498. For Australian complaints about British economic behavior, see Percy Spender to Robert Menzies, 14 January 1950, in NAA, CRS A1838, item 532/7.

\textsuperscript{57} Memorandum from Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, 2 October 1950.


\textsuperscript{59} Talks between Dean Rusk of the United States and M. E. Dening for the United Kingdom in Washington, July 1950, in TNAUK, FO 371/83014.
Mediterranean and Africa. A more hostile and global Cold War, however, would encourage both London and Washington to look more closely at the Pacific and consider closer cooperation with Australia and New Zealand.

**Explaining ANZUS**

After the Second World War, both the British and the U.S. governments located their immediate interests in the European and Middle Eastern theaters. Analysts in both countries, however, began to suspect that the Soviet Union was responsible for instigating nationalist rebellions throughout the Pacific region. The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) noted that the USSR recognized the immediate advantages of denying the West access to Southeast Asia, which was then the principal Western source for natural rubber and tin as well as a secondary source of petroleum. The region was also a major source of food for India and Japan. The Western powers would have serious problems adjusting to the loss of these supplies in the event of a Communist takeover.

The Malayan Emergency of 1948, which developed into a lengthy guerrilla war fought between British Commonwealth forces and the military arm of the Malayan Communist Party, stoked suspicions in London about Soviet intentions. Although British policymakers were confident that the economic weakness of the Soviet Union would deter Soviet leaders from launching a war against the West until the mid-1950s, they worried that Soviet interference globally would persist and thus continue to damage British national interests. The potential loss of Malaya’s dollar earnings would be a severe blow to the UK and thus indirectly to the United States, while the consequent impact on

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60. Ovendale, *Anglo-American Relations*, pp. 60–61. This type of thinking is encapsulated in the following papers created by the British Joint Chiefs of Staff and Foreign Office Planning Staff: Russian Policy and British Attitudes toward Russia, March 1946, in TNAUK, FO 371/56832; and Chiefs of Staff Committee: Minutes of Meeting Held on 24 November 1948, in TNAUK, DEFE 4/18 COS (48) 168th Meeting.


63. Report by the Joint Intelligence Committee: Strategic Intentions of the Soviet Union Scale and Nature of Russian Attacks on Certain Areas, 6 August 1948, in TNAUK, CAB 158/4 (Part 2) JIC 48 (48) 87 (0); Report by the Joint Intelligence Committee: Soviet Intentions and Capabilities 1949 and 1956/7, 8 November 1949, in TNAUK, CAB 158/4 (Part 2), JIC (48) 104 Final; and Joint Intelligence Committee, “Minutes of the Twenty Second Meeting of the Committee,” 24 February 1950, in TNAUK, CAB 159/7 JIC (50) Chiefs of Staff Committee.
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strategic materials and balance of payment positions of the NATO countries would damage plans for NATO’s armament.\footnote{64}{“Memorandum from CIA, National Intelligence Estimate,” pp. 111–112.}

The possibility of victory for the Communists in China heightened such concerns. The UK Joint Intelligence Committee concluded that without preventive action and substantial material support the countries of Southeast Asia might fall under Communist control.\footnote{65}{Report by the Joint Intelligence Committee: The Implications of a Communist Success in China, 30 September 1949, in TNAUK, CAB 158/7 JIC (49) 40 Final.} Senior British officials were evidently early advocates of the Domino Theory that would subsequently inform U.S. strategy in Indochina. Events in Southeast Asia subsequently took on much greater importance for British policymakers. Continued UK military involvement in suppressing Communist insurgents during the Malayan Emergency testifies to this shift in thinking.\footnote{66}{On the Malayan Emergency, see Robert Jackson, \textit{Malayan Emergency and Indonesian Confrontation: The Commonwealth’s Wars, 1948–1966} (London: Pen and Sword, 2011).} Yet U.S. officials still felt considerable reluctance about direct military engagement in the region. They had even less enthusiasm for the creation of a Pacific security pact. Political and economic concerns continued to inhibit involvement. Acheson publicly stated in May 1949: “As I have taken pains to make clear on several occasions, the United States is not currently considering participation in any further special collective defense arrangements other than the North Atlantic Treaty.”\footnote{67}{Statement by the Secretary of State, 18 May 1949, in Harry S. Truman Presidential Library (HSTL), Independence, MO, Dean Acheson Papers, Press Conference File, 1949–53, January–June 1949, Box 72.}

Events in Korea, however, had a profound effect on U.S. thinking. The surprise of the North Korean invasion of South Korea in June 1950 caught the intelligence services of both the United States and the United Kingdom unawares, invoking memories of Pearl Harbor for some U.S. analysts.\footnote{68}{Aldrich, \textit{GCHQ}, p. 100; Andrew, \textit{In Defence of the Realm}, pp. 386–390; and Christopher Andrew, \textit{For the President’s Eyes Only: Secret Intelligence and the American Presidency from Washington to Bush} (London: HarperCollins, 1996), pp. 184–186.} The response was a U.S.-led UN “police action” under General MacArthur. The situation confronting him was challenging. South Korean forces were retreating in disorder, and Seoul had fallen to the North Koreans. The remnants of the South Korean army, along with the reinforced UN contingent, soon became penned into the Pusan Perimeter, the southeastern corner of Korea, surrounded by their North Korean foes. At this stage of the war, a Communist victory seemed likely. MacArthur’s spectacular counterattack via an amphibious landing at Inchon on 15 September 1950 reversed the situation.
By the end of the month, North Korean forces had retreated across the 38th Parallel.69

However, MacArthur soon overplayed his hand. As UN forces pursued the North Koreans and moved toward the Yalu River, he misread the likely response of the PRC. Chinese “volunteers” mounted an assault in October, and then launched a full-scale attack against UN forces on 25 November. Having downplayed the possibility of PRC intervention to his political masters in Washington, MacArthur now declared that the United States faced “an entirely new war.” Significantly outnumbered by PRC forces in November and December, the UN swiftly retreated, allowing Seoul to fall once again. On 16 December, President Truman declared a “national emergency” that “require[d] that the military, naval, air, and civilian defenses of this country be strengthened as speedily as possible to the end that we may be able to repel any and all threats against our national security.”70 By the end of December, Communist forces appeared ready to drive the UN from the Korean peninsula. As one military historian has noted, an “American Dunkirk loomed.”71 By the end of February 1951, under the direction of General Matthew Ridgeway, a semblance of stability had returned to the war. Nevertheless, given the turn of events, Acheson later referred to the unfolding drama as the “December Despondency.”72

These traumatic events catalyzed the Truman administration’s efforts to construct an integrated national security apparatus. Only after the surprise of the Korean War did the United States establish a centralized SIGINT organization, the National Security Agency. U.S. policy toward Europe also evolved as the United States began to hasten its efforts to strengthen the NATO alliance, which would even see Secretary Acheson begin to push for the rearmament of West Germany. Events in Korea further helped to convince U.S. policymakers of the urgency of finalizing the Japanese peace treaty as a bulwark against the spread of Communism.73

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Although the United States looked for strong and reliable regional allies within the Pacific to oppose Communism and was convinced that the Communist victory in China could precipitate a domino-like effect throughout the region, U.S. commitments in the region remained strictly limited. U.S. officials repeatedly rebuffed lobbying from the Australian and New Zealand governments to establish a formal Pacific security pact. Nevertheless, U.S. thinking shifted subtly toward the idea of entering into limited agreements with regional powers to uphold U.S. security interests.

Japan was at the heart of U.S. strategic planning in Asia, as it was the only state in the region to possess the industrial means, labor resources, and strategic location with which to act as the primary defensive hub in the Pacific. Events in Korea had provided a timely reminder of Japan’s value as a base for supplying UN forces. U.S. intelligence assessments argued that for all of these reasons “Japan’s ultimate political alignment will be a decisive factor in the balance of power in the Far East.” Consequently, Japan would “unquestionably be one of the primary targets of the Soviets” in any future war. Washington’s top priority thus became the creation of a Japanese peace treaty that would end the occupation of Japan and begin to harness its economic and industrial potential in the containment of Communism.


76. Both Dulles and Rusk, who was undersecretary of state for Far Eastern affairs at this stage of his career, wanted to achieve a more comprehensive Asian security pact. The Joint Chiefs of Staff were also coming around to the idea that the United States should enter into limited security pacts throughout Asia. See Schoenbaum, Waging War and Peace, pp. 226–229.


Central to achieving this outcome was a treaty that stipulated lenient terms. Dulles, the principal U.S. negotiator, looked to draft a “treaty which invoked the spirit of forgiveness to overcome the spirit of vengefulness.”

Indicative of this leniency was Acheson’s suggestion that Japan should pay no reparations to the victims of its wartime actions. Finalizing the terms of a Japanese peace treaty nevertheless remained a complex task. The Japanese instruments of surrender contained the signatures of eleven other powers, including the United Kingdom and Australia as well as the Soviet Union. A preliminary peace conference that had begun in 1947 further complicated matters by mandating that any final peace treaty would require the approval of a two-thirds majority. Given the Cold War context, the United States was prepared to press ahead with a peace treaty that excluded the Soviet Union.

As the State Department began to gauge the likely reaction of its allies to a non-punitive treaty, opposition quickly became apparent. For a mixture of strategic and economic reasons, the British government, despite having previously urged the Truman administration to sign a Japanese peace treaty, was unhappy with the current U.S. proposals. U.S. plans seemed to suggest that Japan would enjoy unsupervised economic redevelopment, which risked aggression in the future in the absence of safeguards. In addition, the United States was not calling on Japan to pay reparations to the victims of its actions. Retaining close links with numerous British Commonwealth states that had suffered greatly under Japanese occupation encouraged the UK to demand that some reparations be paid. Furthermore, Japan had been a major pre-war competitor for British commerce and enterprise throughout Asia. The British had benefited from the void left by the collapse of Japan’s Southeast Asian Greater Co-Prosperity Sphere in 1945. The U.S. government’s insistence that Japan not trade with the PRC, however, forced Tokyo to look toward


84. Baxter, Great Power Struggle, p. 102.

85. Ibid., p. 169.

Southeast Asia for commercial opportunities and markets, cutting into the
UK’s dominant share there.\textsuperscript{87}

Britain now sought to forge its own Japanese peace treaty, a prospect that
deepest concerned U.S. officials. Dulles, who was special consul to the president
and, in large measure, the man negotiating the terms of the proposed treaty,
argued that a British draft would “not adequately take account of what the
United States believes to be its vital interests in this area.”\textsuperscript{88} Although united
by a desire for security in the region, the major powers evidently parted
company over how best to achieve this objective. International wrangling
proved corrosive. Dulles believed that the British government was encouraging
the Australians to take an antagonistic line on the Japanese peace treaty.\textsuperscript{89}
Such suspicions were accurate. The British were indeed working closely with
their Commonwealth partners to oppose U.S. influence over the treaty.\textsuperscript{90}
U.S. interests nevertheless largely prevailed as British policymakers constantly
saw their advice rebuffed during the negotiations.\textsuperscript{91} Officials in Washington
attached great importance to concluding a peace treaty on U.S. terms. Dulles
even started to gauge whether the Japanese would agree to a peace treaty that
excluded the British if they continued to oppose the U.S. draft.\textsuperscript{92}

The position of Australia and New Zealand requires clarification. The Aus-
tralian government stubbornly argued that any peace treaty had to prevent a
resurgence of Japanese militarism. In the judgment of Australian officials, U.S.
proposals would allow Japan complete freedom over its economic and indus-
trial development without providing adequate safeguards to prevent Japanese

complaint that a resurgent Japan would harm British economic interests appears in William Strang to
Ernest Bevin, 27 February 1949, in TNAUK, FO 371/76208. See also Visit of Prime Minister Yoshida:
South and Southeast Asian Economic Cooperation, 5 November 1954, in Princeton University, Seeley
Mudd Manuscript Library, John Foster Dulles Papers (JFDP), Box 1, Folder 8, MCO74.

\textsuperscript{88} “The Consultant to the Secretary (Dulles) to the Secretary of State,” 4 January 1951, in \textit{FRUS},

\textsuperscript{89} See, for example, “Mr. John Foster Dulles, the Consultant to the Secretary, to the Supreme

\textsuperscript{90} Lowe, \textit{Containing the Cold War in East Asia}, pp. 27–29.

\textsuperscript{91} “Memorandum of Conversation by the Deputy Director of the Office of British Commonwealth
to the Consultant (Allison) to the Consultant to the Secretary (Dulles),” 5 April 1951, in \textit{FRUS}, 1951,
Vol. VI, pp. 961–964; and “Memorandum of Conversation by the Deputy to the Consultant,” 12

\textsuperscript{92} Dulles agreed that it would be preferable to appease the British on minor points of the treaty so
that they could save face. See “Memorandum from Mr. Robert A. Fearay of the Office of Northeast
economic power from being used again for military purposes. New Zealand officials were equally alarmed by U.S. proposals. Security concerns, however, were not the only drivers of antipodean diplomacy. In light of the sustained defense of Korea by the United States and Britain, Canberra gained newfound confidence in existing security commitments. After successive meetings with Australian officials, Acheson noted that Australian demands for a security pact did not reflect “security reasons”; rather, they served as a vehicle with which to achieve closer participation in all stages of Washington’s high-level strategic planning. Thus, contrary to U.S. expectations, when Australian Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies visited Washington in late July and early August 1950, he made no mention of a security pact to the president or his advisers. The prime minister instead focused his attention on securing financial support to implement a five-year Australian immigration and development program.

The Australian government was also reluctant to pursue a security pact at this juncture because of concerns that the Truman administration would reject the idea out of hand. New Zealand policymakers agreed that the subject of a formal security pact was unlikely to receive U.S. support and was thus not worth pursuing. Such pessimism was well founded. By the winter of 1950,


94. The United States recognized this point. See “Memorandum from Assistant Secretary of State to Secretary of State,” 27 October 1950, in FRUS, 1950, Vol. VI, pp. 224–225.


96. See the briefing material prepared for the Menzies visit: Background Memoranda prepared in the Department of State, 24 July 1950, in NARA, RG 59 743.13/–2450NARA; Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, Perkins, to the Secretary of State, 27 July 1950, in NARA, RG 59 743.13/–2750NARA; Report prepared by the Department of State on the visit of Menzies, n.d., in NARA, RG 59 743.13/8–750; and “The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Australia,” 3 August 1950, in FRUS, 1950, Vol. VI, pp. 206–207. The discussion can be followed in “Memorandum of Conversation with President Harry S. Truman and Prime Minister Robert Menzies of Australia,” 28 July 1950, in HSTL, Acheson Papers, Secretary of State Files.

97. See “Report Prepared by the Department of State on the Visit of Menzies; Memorandum of Conversation by the Secretary of State,” 28 July 1950, in NARA, RG 59 743.13/8–750NARA;
an opportunity to discuss a Pacific security pact emerged when Dulles met with New Zealand representatives. Dulles’s opposition to establishing a Pacific Security Pact was evident. As noted by those in attendance, he explained why such an alliance was unwise: “first of all, that it gave rise to great embarrassment as to those who wish to be included. [Dulles] felt, moreover, that, as compared with Europe, there was lack of common civilization of real community of interest and trust among the diverse countries of the Pacific area.”

The likelihood of a full-scale Pacific security pact at this point therefore seemed remote. Yet, in the Truman administration, opinion was shifting in favor of a limited security agreement between the United States and the antipodean powers. As Acheson noted, accommodating Australian demands concerning security cooperation was “politically necessary,” in part because the large-scale development program in Australia served U.S. interests and in part to garner a more cooperative position concerning the drafting of the Japanese peace treaty. Without Australian support for a peace treaty, U.S. officials believed Menzies would pursue economic policies that could inhibit Japan’s economic revival. Where Australia led, they assumed, New Zealand would follow. U.S. officials also worried that if both antipodean powers acted in such a fashion, the British would follow suit. Such policies would undermine Japan’s economic revival and thus put at risk the internal stability of Japan. Replicating arguments about European economic recovery from the likes of Acheson and George Marshall, Dulles argued that if Japan failed to improve its economy then it would be “futile to expect the Japanese to keep away from communism.” Security cooperation could help to overcome these problems. For the United States, economic and security concerns were interwoven during the Cold War, and overseas security commitments were designed to influence allies’ economic policies. This theme came up explicitly at an early ANZUS meeting.

“Memorandum of Conversation by the Secretary of State,” 31 July 1950, in NARA, RG 59 743.13/8–750NARA; and “The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Australia,” pp. 204–207.

98. “Record of a Discussion with Mr John Foster Dulles 14 October 1950, contained within: The Deputy Secretary of External Affairs to the Prime Minister,” 27 October 1950, in The ANZUS Pact, Doc. 140, p. 409.


These concerns were equally evident in U.S. policy toward Europe in the 1940s and early 1950s. The European Recovery Program, or Marshall Plan, had largely been motivated by the belief that European living standards would not improve without economic assistance. U.S. officials feared that in the absence of any improvement, the promises of the Communist model would become difficult to resist for populations experiencing hardships from the war. Yet despite the enormous resources that were transferred to Europe, the economic situation remained precarious. During a meeting between Truman and president-elect Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1952, for instance, both men agreed that the economic underpinning of the Western alliance was “too flimsy for safety. The slightest diminution of U.S. aid or U.S. defense spending might produce economic consequences which might seriously weaken the countries most closely associated with [the] U.S.”\textsuperscript{104} Once in office, Eisenhower echoed such thinking about both Europe and Asia.\textsuperscript{105} From an economic standpoint, Japan, and increasingly Australia, were too important to ignore.\textsuperscript{106}

In early 1951, Australia and New Zealand continued to make known their opposition to a non-punitive settlement, and an impasse arose.\textsuperscript{107} To gain antipodean approval for a lenient Japanese peace treaty and thus ensure the necessary two-thirds support from the Occupying Powers, the United States would have to guarantee that the revitalization of Japan’s economy would not lead to future military aggression. U.S. officials thus increasingly realized they would need to provide the Australian and New Zealand governments with a suitable security guarantee. After considerable deliberation, the ANZUS Treaty emerged as the best solution to this problem. The U.S. government would enter into a security pact if the antipodean powers agreed to the Japanese peace treaty. As Acheson wrote to Dulles,

the United States Government is willing to make a mutual assistance arrangement among the Pacific nations (Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Japan, the United States, and perhaps Indonesia) . . . [but] the United States Government

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\textsuperscript{105} Zelizer, \textit{Arsenal of Democracy}, pp. 124–136.
\textsuperscript{106} See, for instance, Forsberg, \textit{America and the Japanese Miracle}.
\end{flushright}
should agree to this course of action only as the other nations accept the general basis on which the United States is prepared to conclude a peace settlement with Japan.\footnote{Draft Letter to Mr. Dulles [from Dean Acheson], attached within, "The Secretary of State to the Secretary of Defense (Marshall)," 9 January 1951, in \textit{FRUS}, 1951, Vol. VI, p. 789.}

The U.S. government, both in public and in private, made the link between the security pact and the successful conclusion of the Japanese peace treaty explicit.\footnote{Further examples of where this linkage is made can be found within “Memorandum from Mr. Robert A. Fearey of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs,” p. 815; and “Memorandum from the Consultant to the Secretary,” 12 April 1951, in \textit{FRUS}, 1951, Vol. VI, p. 976. Rusk gave a public speech in which he made the connection between the security pact and the successful completion of the Japanese peace treaty known. \textit{Starke}, \textit{The ANZUS Treaty Alliance}, p. 34.} A CIA National Intelligence Estimate makes this point clear: “A U.S. decision to assist Japanese rearmament would not cause seriously adverse reactions in any non-Communist country with major interest in the Far East. Australia and New Zealand, however, will require U.S. guarantees against future Japanese military aggression.”\footnote{"Memorandum from the Central Intelligence Agency," 20 April 1951, p. 999.}

In discussions with Carl Berendsen, the New Zealand ambassador to Washington, Dulles hinted that he would discuss the possibility of security guarantees to both Australia and New Zealand during his forthcoming tour of Asia.\footnote{“The New Zealand Ambassador, Washington, to the Minister of External Affairs, 19 January 1951,” in \textit{The ANZUS Pact}, Doc. 149, pp. 438–439.} Prospects for a defense pact improved when Dean Rusk, the assistant secretary of state for Far Eastern affairs, mentioned the possibility of a tripartite security agreement during a conversation with New Zealand Prime Minister Sidney Holland in early February 1951.\footnote{On 7 February 1951, Prime Minister Holland reported, “the prospects of some form of Pacific Pact are good.” A day later Berendsen reported that Rusk had raised the prospect of a tripartite security pact. “From Prime Minister for Mr Doidge contained within: ‘The New Zealand Ambassador, Washington, to the Minister of External Affairs,’” 7 February 1951, in \textit{The ANZUS Pact}, Doc. 214, p. 574; and “From the Prime Minister for Mr Doidge within: ‘The New Zealand Ambassador, Washington, to the Minister for External Affairs,’” 8 February 1951, in \textit{The ANZUS Pact}, Doc. 218, pp. 582–583.} During subsequent meetings, Truman and Acheson hinted that the United States would countenance a U.S. commitment to defend New Zealand if this would guarantee continued commitments to the Middle East and Mediterranean.\footnote{“From Prime Minister to Doidge within: The New Zealand Ambassador, Washington, to the High Commissioner for New Zealand, Canberra,” 9 February 1951, in \textit{The ANZUS Pact}, Doc. 220, p. 585.} Holland had also suggested a similar arrangement. The New Zealand prime minister accepted that the likelihood of a direct attack on his country “was remote,” and thus military forces “could best be utilized in some other theater,” but “New Zealand would...
have to know, in the event the unlikely occurred and they were attacked, that someone, preferably the United States, would ‘give them a hand.’”

These events, then, form the background for Dulles’s visit in February 1951 to Canberra, where the crucial discussions took place on the ANZUS Treaty.

The Canberra Talks

Once the respective delegations convened in Canberra in February, negotiations about the nature of a Japanese peace settlement and a security pact began in earnest. Spender stressed that a lenient Japanese peace settlement that did not provide some type of security guarantee would ultimately lead Australia to reassess its Cold War commitments. In such a situation, “Australia’s capacity to discharge her obligations in the event of war in Malaya as well as outside the Pacific area would be gravely impaired.” Both Spender and his New Zealand counterpart, Frederick Doidge, made good use of their respective countries’ commitments to the Middle East in persuading Dulles of the merits of a tripartite security guarantee. Spender went on to suggest that a tripartite security organization involving the United States, Australia, and New Zealand would provide the necessary security guarantees for both antipodean powers to support a lenient Japanese peace treaty. Over the next two days, Doidge supported Spender’s fundamental points. Antipodean endorsement for a lenient Japanese peace settlement would require a security guarantee from the United States.

Dulles questioned the necessity of such an arrangement given the negligible threat of a direct Communist attack on either Australia or New Zealand. Spender responded that because the risk of a Communist attack was negligible, the United States could provide a security guarantee without fear of having to fulfill it. In reply, Dulles stressed that if the United States agreed to the tripartite security arrangement, any security pact would contain no formal pledge in the fashion of the NATO alliance. Moreover, the United States would not


116. Ibid., p. 599.

117. Ibid., p. 594.

118. Ibid., p. 601.

119. Ibid., pp. 597–598.
station its troops in Australia or New Zealand in advance of an attack against them, as it did with NATO. On 17 February, after further discussions about the nature of the alliance and possible expansion of the security pact to include the Philippines, the representatives reached agreement on the general contours of the ANZUS Treaty. What emerged was a tripartite agreement without binding security terms. No single party to the treaty achieved all of its objectives. Nevertheless, the agreement benefited all of the participants.

From an Australian and New Zealand perspective, the agreement provided a security guarantee against resurgent Japanese militarism and against any attack from an outside power. Given that New Zealand leaders believed the best they could hope for from the Canberra talks was some type of informal U.S. defense commitment, the final agreement was somewhat of a coup. Furthermore, as Canberra and Wellington well understood, if the United States was determined to push for Japanese reindustrialization and rearmament neither antipodean power could do much to stop it. The best way to prepare for the risk that Japan would again use its economic power in the pursuit of military aggrandizement was by obtaining a direct security guarantee from the United States. At the end of the Canberra talks, the antipodean powers had achieved this objective.

Furthermore, Australian and New Zealand policymakers never seriously countenanced neutrality in the Cold War. The Soviet Union was a major security threat that both states wished to contain. A security pact with the United States, which Doidge referred to as “the richest prize in New Zealand diplomacy,” would allow both antipodean powers to maintain their Cold War commitments. Berendsen exclaimed that the United States had “offered on a platter the greatest gift that the most powerful country in the world can offer to a small comparatively helpless group of people.” A security guarantee from the United States would defend against the Soviet Union and its Communist

120. Ibid., p. 598.
121. “Minutes of a Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee and Officers of the Department of External Affairs,” 6 February 1951, in The ANZUS Pact, Doc. 209, p. 567.
123. New Zealand policymakers acknowledged, however, that the Soviet Union did not pose a “direct threat” against New Zealand. See ibid., p. 544.
serves in the short term and defend against potential Chinese Communist expansionism in the long term.  

Nevertheless, the agreement was limited in several regards. Australia and New Zealand were not given access to other areas of U.S. strategic thinking. The Australian government had sought to include in the ANZUS agreement regular exchanges of information and staff officers with the U.S. defense establishment. The New Zealand government had also desired a greater voice in international security arrangements. The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), however, were unwilling to allow more service chiefs in Washington than were necessary. As a general point, the JCS were “lukewarm” about ANZUS and reportedly viewed it as “of no great importance.” Communist agents’ successful infiltration of the Australian government did little to encourage cooperation. On learning of this security breach, U.S. officials had refused to exchange further intelligence information with Canberra. In order to restore the intelligence relationship, the UK had to send a delegation from MI5, its own internal security organization, to help its Australian counterparts improve internal security practices. The JCS were thus unlikely to welcome the possibility of exchanging further information with an outside power that exhibited such security lapses, especially given the persistent congressional criticism of the Truman administration and its supposed weakness against internal Communist threats. Thus the United States swiftly rejected Spender’s attempts in the Canberra talks to “establish a framework of formal consultation

127. The lack of consultation with NATO was especially galling for Australian and New Zealand policymakers given that they had been an Allied power in the Second World War. See, for example, “The New Zealand Commissioner, Washington, to the Minister of External Affairs,” 1 June 1951, in The ANZUS Pact, Doc. 266, p. 723; “The Minister of External Affairs to the New Zealand Ambassador, Washington,” 19 June 1951, in The ANZUS Pact, Doc. 268, p. 727; and Percy Spender to Richard Casey, 18 March 1952, attached to B. Townsend to Mr Loveday, 9 July 1952, in NAA, A10299, A15.
and... provide a link with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.” Efforts by antipodean policymakers to expand their newfound security relationship were not yet able to result in broader U.S.-Australian-New Zealand strategic cooperation.

The United States certainly benefited from the agreement. The treaty sparked antipodean cooperation toward a peace settlement with Japan, which policymakers believed to be of even greater importance by 1951. Dulles had also ensured that the treaty was limited in nature and scope, disappointing Australian and New Zealand officials who had sought to establish joint staff talks and integrated military planning. In addition, by agreeing to the ANZUS Treaty, the United States received a guarantee from both Australia and New Zealand to remain active in the Cold War; specifically, to maintain their commitment to the defense of the Middle East and Mediterranean, areas that had come to assume great importance within U.S. strategic thinking.

131. “Notes of the Australian–New Zealand–United States Talks in Canberra,” p. 593. Spender argued forcefully that the creation of NATO would encourage the Soviet Union to look toward Asia for additional global advances and that Pacific countries should prepare for this eventuality. Direct cooperation with NATO was a clear ambition of Spender. See David Lowe, Australia between Empires: The Life of Percy Spender (London: Chatto & Windus, 2010), p. 125.

132. Securing a Japanese peace settlement is of clear significance throughout. See “Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Rusk) to the Acting Secretary of State,” p. 894. On U.S. intelligence assessments of the Soviet Union’s intentions in relation to Asia and Japan, see The Secretary of Defense (Marshall) to the Secretary of State, 20 April 1951, in FRUS, 1951, Vol. VI, p. 1001. For clear demonstrations that Japan had become the key state for opposing Communism in Asia, see “The Ambassador in the Philippines to the Secretary of State,” 15 March 1951, in FRUS, 1951, Vol. VI, pp. 926–928.

133. See the original Australian proposals within “Memorandum of Conversation between F. Officer, P. Spender for Australia and J. Hickerson and W. Allen for the United States, New York,” 12 October 1950, in NARA, RG 59 790.5/10–1250NARA. New Zealand policymakers had also intended a “regional association” that would comprise the UK, United States, Australia, and “only such other countries having interests in the Pacific area.” See “The Prime Minister to the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom,” 6 July 1948, in The ANZUS Pact, Doc. 163, p. 477. In May 1950, New Zealand’s foreign minister, Doidge, had publicly stated that a Pacific security pact would have to contain “powerful nations” such as the United States, Britain, Canada, and India. See “Statement by the Minister of External Affairs,” 9 May 1950, in The ANZUS Pact, Doc. 201, p. 547.

134. One British official reported to London that when Eisenhower took office the Middle East dominated conversation and appeared to be the only subject of interest to the new president. See Sir Roger Makins to Anthony Eden, 4 March 1953, in Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University, Birmingham, UK, Avon Papers, FO 800/759, Con/53/33. The Australians had entered into planning-level discussions with the United Kingdom only about the dispatch of forces to the Middle East in the event of a war. Menzies had sought to expand Australian forces, however, in order to ensure that enough resources would remain in Australia for home defense in the event of a general war. New Zealand had gone a lot further than Australia, and the New Zealand Prime Minister, Peter Fraser, had agreed to dispatch forces to the Middle East, which the UK believed was necessary. In real terms, this commitment would have absorbed the vast majority of the New Zealand army. On this point, see David Devereaux, “Britain, the Commonwealth and the Defence of the Middle East,” Journal of Contemporary History, Vol. 24, No. 2 (1989), p. 332.
This outcome did not mean that Australian or New Zealand diplomats had been blindsided. Since coming to office, Menzies had made known that he wanted Australia to take a more active role in the Cold War and refrain from the officious approach adopted by the preceding Chifley government. He wanted Australian forces to be committed to a region in which they would actually have an impact on the outcome of any future global war. For Menzies, committing Australian forces to the defense of the Middle East and Mediterranean made strategic sense. Likewise, by the beginning of 1950, New Zealand officials had concluded that a third world war instigated by the Soviet Union was increasingly likely. One appraisal of the world situation composed by Berendsen mirrors the more damning indictments of Soviet intentions that are traditionally associated with the likes of Dulles and Paul Nitze. Berendsen believed that the Soviet Union sought “domination of the world” and was led by “international gangsters.” The world situation was, he concluded, “a struggle between two totally incompatible and irreconcilable theories of human relations and human government.” The New Zealand Joint Planning Committee was equally clear when it claimed that the “only possible enemy in the foreseeable future is the Soviet Union acting with the assistance of her European and Asiatic satellites.” Both antipodean states therefore were committed to fighting the Cold War, and the ANZUS arrangement complemented this ambition.

In addition to protecting key security interests, the United States derived several economic benefits from the successful conclusion of negotiations. ANZUS complemented attempts by the Truman administration to strengthen its economic position throughout Southeast Asia. The U.S. State Department was already concerned about the exclusive nature of economic cooperation between the United Kingdom and the two antipodean powers. The dominions’ temporary wartime bulk purchase agreements, aspects of which continued for several years after hostilities had ended, were especially troubling. Such agreements, by restricting trade, threatened to undermine the structure of international trade and impede Japanese revival. While America would not break these historic trade connections, the treaty helped to build confidence in Australia and New Zealand to improve trade relations with Japan. In so doing,

137. “Report by the Joint Planning Committee, ‘The Defence of the Pacific-Strategic Background and Examination of the Military Requirements for A Pacific Defence Pact,’ The Assistant Secretary, Chiefs of Staff Committee to the Secretary of External Affairs,” 28 April 1950, in *The ANZUS Pact*, Doc. 199, p. 538.

Before the treaty was agreed, the State Department had stressed the need to “continue to point out to Australian officials the economic objections to such [trade] arrangements.”\footnote{“Department of State, Policy Statement: Australia,” 21 April 1950, in *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. VI, p. 193.} ANZUS provided a potentially useful platform to encourage the antipodeans to “gradually counteract the narrow trade concepts of the past,” thereby strengthening international trade in general and Japanese recovery in particular.\footnote{Ibid.} As Clifton Webb, the New Zealand minister of justice and close confidant of the prime minister, noted in a cabinet discussion, the creation of ANZUS meant that New Zealand could no longer “pound the table on the matter of imperial preference.”\footnote{“Notes of a Cabinet Discussion,” 22 March 1951, in *The ANZUS Pact*, Doc. 240, p. 673.} In this way, ANZUS respected the Truman administration’s belief that the United States could pursue economic and security objectives in tandem.\footnote{Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, p. 14.}

Yet even the United States could not obtain all it wanted. Prior to the Canberra talks, Acheson had instructed Dulles to negotiate a wider security pact. Dulles called for ANZUS to include at least the Philippines among its members. Spender and Doidge successfully resisted Dulles’s efforts, although both left the meeting believing that the Philippines was likely to be included as a founding member of ANZUS.\footnote{Spender suggested that he would be willing to accept Philippine membership but that a tripartite pact was preferable. “Notes of the Australian–New Zealand–United States Talks in Canberra,” p. 609. On the obvious discomfort that Philippine membership created in Australian and New Zealand policymaking circles, see “The Minister of External Affairs to the New Zealand Ambassador, Washington,” 21 February 1951, in *The ANZUS Pact*, Doc. 230, p. 624; and “Notes on Discussions Held in the Department of External Affairs,” 19 March 1951, in *The ANZUS Pact*, Doc. 237, pp. 662–663.} Antipodean resistance to Philippine membership reflected a mix of geopolitical, security, and racial motivations. Australia and New Zealand were determined to be treated as “Western” powers and were committed to play an important role in the Cold War. A security pact that included the Philippines would signal that Australia and New Zealand were in fact Southeast Asian powers and might limit their ambitions of
influencing U.S. strategy beyond the Southwest Pacific region. A pact involving Asian powers could also potentially drag both states into the defense of areas that had no direct bearing on their own interests. Racial and cultural assumptions also informed antipodean thinking. As Alan Watt, the Secretary of the Department of External Affairs in Australia, candidly admitted in private discussions with his New Zealand colleagues, Australia’s desire for a security guarantee from the United States stemmed from three factors. First, the Australians wanted a security hedge against a rearmed Japan, against Communist imperialism in Asia, and “against Asian expansionism generally.” The record of the conversation notes that “the third reason, which [Watt] agreed was the strongest, could not, however, be made public.” Race and culture provide additional explanatory tools for understanding the nature of the ANZUS Treaty.

Antipodean resistance, supported by the UK, encouraged the United States to forgo Philippine membership and instead conclude the bilateral U.S.-Philippine Mutual Assistance Treaty in August 1951. The British government thus exerted influence over the final membership of ANZUS, and British opposition to a broader and more inclusive Pacific security pact helps to explain the exclusion of other regional powers from ANZUS. The British could tolerate their own omission from a strictly tripartite alliance, albeit only for the time being, but if a broader Asian security alliance emerged, then British policymakers would demand membership in it. The limited tripartite nature of the agreement therefore reflects the influence of four, rather than three, states. The ANZUS agreement also indirectly benefited British interests because it provided the regional security guarantees that in turn allowed both Canberra and Wellington to commit their forces to the Middle East and Mediterranean in the event of a war with the Soviet Union.

145. See, for example, “Report by the Joint Planning Committee: ‘The Defence of the Pacific-Strategic Background and Examination of the Military Requirements for A Pacific Defence Pact’: The Assistant Secretary, Chiefs of Staff Committee to the Secretary of External Affairs,” pp. 538–543.
146. “Notes of Discussions Held in the Department of External Affairs,” p. 663.
147. Dulles made this clear in his discussions in Canberra. See “Notes of the Australian–New Zealand–United States Talks in Canberra,” p. 602; and “Report by the Joint Planning Committee: ‘The Defence of the Pacific-Strategic Background and Examination of the Military Requirements for A Pacific Defence Pact’: The Assistant Secretary, Chiefs of Staff Committee to the Secretary of External Affairs,” p. 537.
Nevertheless, the British remained uneasy about the treaty. Throughout the creation of ANZUS, the British government was excluded from the process and largely ignorant of the details. British officials had made known to their Australian and New Zealand counterparts that they would not “favour the idea of a Pacific defence organisation which excluded the United Kingdom,” but this proved to be the very result of the Canberra talks. As one historian notes, British policymakers did not deem Australia or New Zealand to be a “foreign country,” yet during the creation of ANZUS both had acted as such. The affinity of empire and common kinship was limited in the face of geopolitical realities. As Doidge remarked in one cabinet session, “Britannia no longer ruled the waves,” and New Zealand would thus have to guarantee its security through a pact with the United States. As Spender’s assessment during the talks was also clear: “Australia was a principal in the area but the United Kingdom was not.”

British objections, as Menzies noted to Holland, would not prevent the creation of a tripartite security pact with the United States. U.S. officials never seriously regarded the UK as a key member of any future security pact in Asia. In contrast, the Philippines, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand repeatedly appeared as the key states in U.S. policymaking conversations. When Britain did come up, it was often in connection with trade and economic practices that were seen as undermining broader U.S. geopolitical objectives. U.S. policymakers considered the British to be of marginal importance as an ally in resisting Communism throughout the Pacific. As Dulles noted to MacArthur, “The United States and Japan are the only

154. “The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Gifford) to the Secretary of State,” 26 February 1951, in FRUS, 1951, Vol. VI, pp. 898–897; and “Memorandum of Conversation by the Second Secretary of the Embassy in the United Kingdom,” 21 March 1951, in FRUS, 1951, Vol. VI, pp. 936–939. The major British complaint leveled at the U.S. draft of the Japanese peace treaty was that it did not adequately account for the likely negative economic impact the treaty would have upon the United Kingdom. See, for example, “The British Embassy to the Department of State,” 12 March 1951, in FRUS, 1951, Vol. VI, pp. 909–913.
significant sources of power in the Pacific, we actual, they potential."\footnote{155} Such was the honesty, or perhaps insensitivity to British sensibilities, that both Dulles and Acheson repeated this point in discussion with British officials.\footnote{156}

Suggestions that Anglo-American differences over the creation of ANZUS were limited, or reflected “clumsy diplomacy and personal obstinacies,” downplay British interests in the region.\footnote{157} The British government saw its omission as detrimental to its national interests, reflecting concerns beyond mere self-esteem. As British policymakers feared, exclusion meant that if ANZUS either materialized into a broader alliance or began to involve strategic planning, the United Kingdom would find itself on the outside unable to influence the course of events.\footnote{158} British policymakers were right to be concerned about their exclusion from ANZUS. By the end of 1954, encouraged by U.S. policymakers in forums created by ANZUS, both Australia and New Zealand repositioned their strategic planning to defend Malaya instead of the Middle East, in line with growing U.S. concerns about the increasing threat posed by Communist forces in Southeast Asia.\footnote{159}

During cabinet discussions, Prime Minister Attlee had suggested in the face of opposition that ANZUS aligned with the overarching British policy to encourage allies to provide for their own national defense.\footnote{160} Competing accounts and the actions of British diplomats contradict Attlee’s position. British lobbying of U.S., Australian, and New Zealand officials in the lead-up to the Canberra talks—with the aim of preventing the UK’s exclusion from any

\footnote{155} “Mr. John Foster Dulles, the Consultant to the Secretary, to the Supreme Commander for Allied Powers (MacArthur),” p. 931.

\footnote{156} “Memorandum of Conversation, by the Deputy to the Consultant (Allison),” 5 April 1951, \textit{FRUS}, 1951, Vol. 6, p. 964; and “Memorandum of Meeting with Ambassador Sir Oliver Franks of Great Britain,” 2 April 1951, in HSTL, Acheson Papers, Secretary of State Files.

\footnote{157} Lowe, \textit{Menzies}, p. 79.


\footnote{160} The Cabinet discussion on ANZUS can be followed in “Pacific Defense,” 27 February 1951, in TNAUK, CAB 129/44 CP(51)64.
security pact—had proven unsuccessful. Foreign Secretary Herbert Morrison also complained to Dulles that U.S. public announcements about the negotiation of the ANZUS Treaty undermined the illusion that the British government was involved in the negotiations, removing even the veneer of influence. Moreover, Britain’s exclusion from a defense treaty with two of its dominion powers hardly supported British ambitions of retaining world-power status. Although on balance the antipodean powers would have preferred British inclusion at that time, U.S. support was essential. Spender was therefore unwilling to see his designs for a security treaty scuppered by British complaints. He remained insistent throughout his negotiations with Dulles that British grievances concerning exclusion were groundless and should be disregarded.

The timing of the ANZUS Treaty also complemented important economic shifts away from British interests. As Australia’s goals for diversifying its industrial structure developed, Britain had struggled to provide the necessary capital. Australia subsequently renegotiated its trade relations in the 1950s and placed more emphasis on relations with the United States. Economic recovery throughout Asia, along with the liberalization of trading practices, weakened Britain’s privilege within the imperial trading system and encouraged rival markets for potential Australian goods and services. By the late 1960s, Japan had become a more important market than the United Kingdom for Australian products.

161. For complaints made to the United States, see “Editorial Note on Meeting Held on 29 January 1951,” in FRUS, 1951, Vol. VI, p. 826; “Memorandum from Allison of Conversation on the Japanese Peace Settlement between Franks and Graves of the British Embassy with Dulles, Magruder, Babcock and Allison on January 12 1951,” in NARA, RG 59 694.001/1–1251NARA; and “Memorandum from Allison of Conversation between Dulles and Gascoigne,” 2 February 1951, in NARA, RG 59, 694.001NARA. For grumbling within the British foreign policymaking establishment, see, for example, Gascoigne to Foreign Office, 7 February 1951, in TNAUK, DO 35/2927; and “The High Commissioner for the United Kingdom to the Acting Secretary of External Affairs,” p. 570. The New Zealand high commissioner to Canberra reported that the UK was pressuring the Australians about the nature of a Pacific defense pact. See “The High Commissioner for New Zealand, Canberra, to the Minister of External Affairs,” 5 February 1951, in The ANZUS Pact, Doc. 212, p. 572.


163. “Notes on Conversations between Dulles, Spender and Doidge by R. Fearey,” 16–17 February 1951, in NARA, RG 59, 54/423NARA.


165. Schenk, Decline of Sterling, pp. 122–123.
which to discuss discriminatory trading policies with the antipodean powers, exclusion from the ANZUS agreement ultimately proved to be a costly failure for the British government.

**Maintaining British Exclusion**

All three signatories of ANZUS had agreed to exclude the UK from membership. British officials rightly perceived the United States to be the driving force behind this decision. Explanations for exclusion, however, differed on either side of the Atlantic. Key officials in the British Labour government and the Conservative opposition believed that exclusion stemmed from Attlee’s earlier decision to recognize the PRC despite U.S. protests. Such arguments are unconvincing. London’s recognition of the PRC was certainly distasteful to Washington but had not undermined cooperation in many other areas of alliance security policy. Limited mention of the UK’s China policy in U.S. documentation concerning membership of ANZUS also makes such explanations difficult to substantiate.

U.S. explanations publicly centered on the idea of race. U.S. officials suggested that British exclusion from ANZUS reflected anxieties about an “Anglo-Saxon or White Man’s Club” in Asia. British membership, U.S. officials declared, would create such a club, whereas a limited tripartite agreement would help to win the propaganda battle against the Soviet Union, pacify continued international complaints about U.S. domestic racism, and placate potential criticism from allies such as the Philippines that were themselves seeking a security alliance with the United States. Historians have paid a great deal of attention to the categorization of groups for many decades,

166. During the actual Canberra talks, both Spender and Doidge suggested that British membership in ANZUS “should be kept in mind” for the future. See “Notes of the Australian–New Zealand–United States Talks in Canberra,” p. 607.


168. For works that raise the issue of race and the ANZUS agreement, see Beisner, *Dean Acheson*, p. 502; Travis J. Hardy, “The Consanguinity of Ideas: Race and Anti-communism in the U.S.-Australian Relationship, 1933–1953,” Ph.D. Diss., University of Tennessee, 2010; and Srdjan Vucetic, *The Anglosphere: A Genealogy of a Racialized Identity in International Relations* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), pp. 54–73. None of these works demonstrates that U.S. policymakers used the issue of race to obscure other motivations.

169. See McMahon, *Cold War on the Periphery*, pp. 82–84.
producing a rich and diverse historiography concerning domestic politics. 170 Diplomatic historians have also found race to be especially relevant to U.S. foreign policy in Asia during the Second World War and in the postwar period. 171 In relation to ANZUS, however, historians have largely overlooked the issue.

Concerns about race were important to key U.S. policymakers. During the negotiation of the Japanese peace treaty, for instance, Dulles was anxious that Asian countries might perceive U.S. policy as racist because of their exclusion from the negotiations. Such tensions could undermine his chances of successfully concluding a treaty. 172 Regarding ANZUS, Dulles was concerned about an exclusively “white” security pact. As one memorandum makes clear, “There was a danger that a security pact limited to the three white Pacific nations would raise serious political problem for the United States in the Philippines, and [Dulles] felt that, for that reason, his Government might wish to ask that the Philippines be admitted as an original party.” 173 This was the very objective that Dulles had pursued during the Canberra talks, albeit unsuccessfully. In addition, he was concerned about U.S. race relations, both domestically and internationally, and how such a treaty could undermine the United States in its struggle against Communism. 174

Nevertheless, explanations for British exclusion based on race are only partly convincing. Onlookers would surely have struggled to see the addition of Britain to ANZUS, given existing British alliances with the three members, as “unnatural.” The creation of ANZUS with Australia and New Zealand was, for all intents and purposes, a “White Man’s Club” given the immigration policies


174. For instance, Dulles warned his British counterparts in 1951 that the United States had to ensure that its immigration laws did not continue to treat the Japanese as an “inferior people”; however, the “policies of the United States, Australia, and New Zealand present a problem” in this regard. See “Memorandum of Conversation by the Special Assistant to the Consultant (Allison),” 12 January 1951, in FRUS, 1951, Vol. VI, p. 794.
maintained by “White Australia” and “White New Zealand” at this time. Furthermore, the documentary evidence does not support the claim that ethnic or ideological concerns were determining factors guiding U.S. foreign policy in the region. “Race”—specifically, repeated references to a “White Man’s Club”—was instead often used by U.S. policymakers as a diplomatic tool. Such terminology obscured the pursuit of U.S. geopolitical and economic interests in the region. Scholars should therefore look to ideas about race to complement, rather than replace, existing accounts of U.S. foreign policy vis-à-vis the ANZUS Treaty and broader security strategies throughout the Pacific.

The U.S. decision to exclude Britain from ANZUS largely reflected two material concerns. The first revolved around a continued fear within the U.S. policymaking establishment that the United States could simply not afford to create a NATO-style pact in Asia, which would inevitably involve a major contribution from the U.S. Treasury. The election of the Eisenhower administration, which was determined to control rising public expenditure, meant that without significant external developments, increased spending was unlikely. The second problem was that broadening the defense pact could invite other European powers to manipulate the United States into defending their colonial possessions under the guise of fighting Communism. As the British were involved in a counterinsurgency war in Malaya, which involved a contribution from Australian and New Zealand forces, such fears appeared reasonable. Moreover, the JCS accepted ANZUS as it currently stood only because it was an essential prerequisite for gaining antipodean approval for the Japanese peace treaty.

Under the Attlee government, Great Britain had sought to downplay British exclusion from ANZUS, but electoral defeat brought with it a reversal


in policy. On 26 October 1951, Prime Minister Winston Churchill returned to office for his final premiership, at the age of almost 77, with a small parliamentary majority. It did not take long for the prime minister to demand membership in ANZUS. Churchill’s belief in the connection between the “Mother Country” and the “dominions” was strong. Nevertheless, his actions in the Second World War, which had effectively left Australia and New Zealand to fend for themselves against Japanese aggression, had demonstrated his pragmatism in foreign policy.

As events in Asia became increasingly important to the course of the Cold War, inclusion in ANZUS could potentially allow the United Kingdom to exert more influence over U.S. thinking in the region. In keeping with British grand strategy, close U.S.-UK relations were necessary in order to “guide” the United States in the struggle against Communism. Furthermore, Churchill had become increasingly worried about the likelihood of a global war, prompted by both Soviet and U.S. belligerency. Such concerns encouraged the prime minister’s belief that the British should play a major role in a broader defense treaty in the Pacific, something he would term a “Pacific Defence Pact,” that would include the ANZUS members, the United Kingdom, France, and several other Asian states.

Gaining entry into ANZUS became a priority for Churchill and consequently led to a two-pronged diplomatic effort. The first involved directly lobbying Washington, which occurred on numerous occasions throughout 1951–1953. The second involved appeals to both the Australian and New Zealand governments for them to lobby the United States on Britain’s behalf. Thus, throughout his efforts to achieve membership, and in an effort to gain

political leverage over the United States, Churchill sought to establish stronger ties with the Australian and New Zealand governments. Such attempts came in the form of detailed staff talks about how to uphold security throughout the ANZAM region in the longer term.\textsuperscript{185} As the British government took greater interest in the region, it also sought to establish a closer security partnership with Australia and New Zealand, which would come in the guise of a broader Pacific security framework. Churchill envisaged that the partnership would have a central machinery of control for the wider Pacific area, including Southeast Asia.\textsuperscript{186} This two-pronged approach, however, ultimately failed.

Both Canberra and Wellington gave Churchill’s ideas considerable thought. In April 1952, Holland confirmed that “the United Kingdom must be brought in” to ANZUS.\textsuperscript{187} Menzies was also interested in British membership. He believed that Churchill’s ideas provided the opportunity for turning ANZUS into a functioning security alliance that would include detailed strategic planning. The Australian prime minister suggested to his closest security advisers that British membership increased the likelihood of strategic planning discussions among members and would increase the level of importance attached to the defense of the Pacific in both British and U.S. grand strategy.\textsuperscript{188} There was considerable sympathy for Menzies’ thinking, not least from the Australian Defence Department. Because strategic planning between Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom already existed within the context of ANZAM, it was illogical to replicate this within the framework of some future ANZUS planning that omitted the British entirely. In addition, in the event of a global war, Britain’s military contribution would be vital for ensuring that

\textsuperscript{185} UK High Commissioner in Australia to the Commonwealth Relations Office, Telegram 221, 28 March 1953.

\textsuperscript{186} “Outward Telegram from Commonwealth Relations Office to UK High Commissioner in Australia and UK High Commissioner in New Zealand,” Telegram 43, 14 January 1953, in TNAUK, PREM 11/403; “Memorandum of Australian Government’s Observations of United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff Memorandum COS (52) 685”; and “For Spender from Casey,” 12 February 1953, in NAA, A5954, 1424,1.


\textsuperscript{188} Menzies’s position is detailed in “Memorandum of Australian Government’s Observations of United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff Memorandum COS (52) 685.”
Australian sea lanes remained open. Finding a solution to British omission from ANZUS was therefore important.  

Policymakers in Washington, though less susceptible to British arguments, were thus forced to confront the issue of British exclusion from ANZUS early on. The first meeting of the ANZUS council, held in Honolulu on 4–6 August 1952, surrendered a considerable amount of time to the topic. In discussion, the Australian and New Zealand representatives put forth the case for British membership. Such efforts perhaps revealed lingering imperial ties but more likely reflected a belief that British membership would bolster chances of creating a NATO-like security pact, introducing all of the strategic benefits this afforded. Nevertheless, the Australian and New Zealand delegations were more concerned with trying to convince the United States to begin detailed military discussions within the framework of ANZUS, and the difficulty of securing military collaboration eventually sidelined discussions of British membership.

During the talks, the United States rebuffed all proposals for joint military planning. Efforts to enlarge ANZUS, and thus accrue the strategic and military planning benefits via the “backdoor,” proved equally futile. At the conclusion of the conference, the participants issued a joint communiqué. Although it did not strictly exclude British membership in ANZUS, it made clear that none of the member-states were looking to expand membership in the immediate future. Australia and New Zealand might have preferred British membership, but they were unwilling to endanger the nascent treaty to achieve this outcome. Policymakers in Canberra and Wellington feared that Washington would misconstrue efforts to expand membership as an effort by former colonial powers to uphold their interests in the Pacific and South-east Asia more generally. The United States, Australian officials noted, might then have decided to retract their commitment to Australian defense.  

U.S. objections to British membership thus prevailed.

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189. For detailed documentation on ANZAM planning, see “Strategic Planning in Relation to Co-operation in British Commonwealth Defence,” attached to Minute by Defence Committee at Meeting Held on Thursday, 8 June 1950, in NAA, A5954, 1626/4. For Australian thinking that it was essential to avoid replicating planning within ANZAM and ANZUS, see “Memorandum of Australian Government’s Observations of United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff Memorandum COS (52) 685.”  
192. “From Foreign Office to Washington,” 4 June 1952, in Cadbury Research Library, Avon Papers, FO 800/750, Co/52/12. For later examples of Australian concern, see P. A. McBride to the Prime Minister, 11 May 1953, in NAA, A 5954, 1680/2; and “United Kingdom Attitude to ANZUS,” attached to P. A. McBride to the Prime Minister, 11 May 1953, in NAA, A 5954, 1680/2.
The public communiqué issued at the end of the conference suggested that the UK would be permanently excluded from ANZUS. The British nevertheless sought confirmation via sources within the New Zealand government. The response, which confirmed initial suspicions, left senior policymakers seething.193 “What impudence to suggest that France and I suppose Portugal (who has interests in these waters),” Churchill wrote to British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, “are on the same terms with Australia and New Zealand as Britain. If this point became public in either of these countries, I am sure that there would be a violent re-action.”194 Lord Salisbury, the minister of state for the dominions, was equally disdainful, suggesting that the attitude of the dominions was “deplorable” and “ tiresome.”195 Exclusion from ANZUS was evidently a serious affront, and many senior political figures believed it would have damaging implications for British interests in the region. These responses indicate that British policymakers never saw their exclusion as merely a case of hurting British prestige.196 Instead, British policymakers feared their continued exclusion from ANZUS meant that the UK had lost the ability to “guide” Western strategy in the region.

The obstacle to British membership had come largely from the United States. Yet, when British officials pressed their U.S. counterparts, they received only vague excuses. Acheson repeatedly explained that ANZUS could not expand to include other members because doing so would arouse enormous opposition in the U.S. Congress. In addition, an expanded ANZUS would appear as a “White Man’s Pact” that was “cloaking some new form of Imperialism.”197 These utterances were in line with the Truman administration’s use of race as a diplomatic tool in the postwar period. These sorts of explanations were much more convenient to cite than lingering doubts about discriminatory trading practices between Australia and Britain, fears about new strategic commitments, or concerns about the costs of defending European colonial assets.198

194. WSC [Churchill] to the Foreign Secretary [Eden], 30 August 1952, in TNAUK, FO 371 101239.
As a tool for cloaking real U.S. intentions, however, the race argument was deficient. The British Chiefs of Staff recognized that far less altruistic reasons governed U.S. policy. Mirroring the types of complaints made during World War II, the chiefs complained that “the United States desire to keep control of Far East planning in their own hands, and their own attitude towards ANZUS is governed by that desire.” Likewise, British Foreign Office officials complained that the U.S. argument lacked substance. British exclusion, in their assessment, had little to do with the fear of creating a “White Man’s Club” and much more to do with a desire to exclude the UK from strategic planning and to weaken its preferential economic position throughout the region. Yet, in a perverse fashion, such excuses allowed the British government to save face. Fairness, not weakness, appeared to explain British exclusion to international onlookers, which perhaps explains the persistence of this particular diplomatic excuse.

Although British ministers and officials believed they had little chance of joining ANZUS while Truman and Acheson occupied the White House, the election of Eisenhower in November 1952 raised hopes that a change in U.S. policy would be forthcoming. The president’s decision to appoint Dulles as his secretary of state soon dashed such optimism. Dulles, disliked by both Churchill and Eden, had been a key negotiator for both the Japanese peace treaty and the ANZUS Treaty. His conduct during both demonstrated his willingness to ignore British sensitivities. Eden and Churchill spoke privately with Eisenhower in January 1953, which only reinforced their concerns, as the president-elect appeared uninterested in the subject of expanding ANZUS

European colonialism more generally and the concern that it would hurt their efforts in containing the Soviet Union, see Odd Arne Westad, The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 109–111.


201. For examples of such thinking, see Norman Brook to the Prime Minister, 26 September 1952; “Text of a Personal Message from Mr Casey to Mr Eden,” 12 September 1952, in TNAUK, PREM 11/403; “Inward Telegram to Commonwealth Relations Office from UK High Commissioner in New Zealand,” No. 549, 20 September 1952, in TNAUK, PREM 11/403; and Salisbury to the Prime Minister, 2 October 1952.

202. Such was Churchill’s and Eden’s dislike of Dulles that Eden is alleged to have made a personal plea to Eisenhower not to appoint him as secretary of state. Churchill’s first meeting with Dulles as secretary went so poorly that Churchill in a fit of pique declared that he would have nothing further to do with him. Given Dulles’s position as secretary, this was going to be difficult to accomplish! On this point, see D. R. Thorpe, Eden: The Life and Times of Anthony Eden, First Earl of Avon, 1897–1977 (London: Chatto & Windus, 2003), pp. 381–383; and John Colville, The Fringes of Power: Downing Street Diaries, Vol. 2, 1941–April 1955 (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1985), p. 321.
The U.S. excuses, however, remained consistent. Dulles emphasized his concern that ANZUS should not appear to be a “White Man’s Club” in Asia.

Although Eisenhower appeared uninterested in British membership in ANZUS, Churchill was confident he would be able to influence the new president owing to their close cooperation during the Second World War. Throughout 1953, Churchill redoubled his efforts to gain entry and put forth his latest idea about the creation of a Five Power Pact—involving the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Britain, and France—or a broader NATO-like security arrangement for the region that would expand the membership of ANZUS. European powers, such as the UK and France, would join with Asian powers such as the Philippines, Singapore, Malaya, India, and Pakistan in a new security alliance. The inclusion of these “non-white” powers would help to undermine the U.S. racial argument.

Churchill, however, had fundamentally misread the foreign policy intentions of the ANZUS powers. In Australian and New Zealand policymaking circles, the idea of a Five Power Pact was unappealing as it threatened to downgrade their status vis-à-vis the United States. More worrying yet was the continuing Australian suspicion that British proposals were a ploy designed to destroy ANZUS. As Spender, now Australian ambassador to the United States, warned from Washington,

I know the grand old man [Churchill], does not like ANZUS and will do his best to reduce it to bare bones—perhaps by putting forward the Five Power Staff Agency, and by seeking agreement to broad political directives—which can always be interpreted as one is disposed to interpret them—directed to the Staff agency. But we have achieved a special place in the Pacific through ANZUS and I know you will forgive me when I say, we must hang on to it.

Regardless of London’s efforts, the Eisenhower administration was also unlikely to welcome a broader security alliance in the Pacific. Such a commitment would require additional funding, which ran contrary to the administration’s

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204. “Far East Gen Anzus and Anzam”; and H. C. to the Prime Minister, 6 October 1953.
205. Churchill’s thinking about the Pacific Security Pact is captured well within Churchill to Eden, 8 May 1953, in Churchill Papers, Churchill Archive Centre, Churchill College, Cambridge University.
serious efforts to reduce U.S. public expenditure on defense. Not until the collapse of the French in Indochina in 1954 did a real change in U.S. thinking concerning the region emerge. Only then would the U.S. government seriously consider a Pacific security pact. Although these events led to the creation of the South East Asia Treaty Organization, even this international organization for collective defense remained heavily reliant on nuclear arms, and many historians consider it to have been a “failed alliance.”

As the United States continued to oppose British membership in ANZUS, Churchill looked for support elsewhere. Meeting with Menzies and Holland in June 1953, he took the opportunity to press his case. Churchill started the meeting with a plea that exclusion ran “contrary to United Kingdom interests, and was objectionable on both military and political grounds.” Stressing that relations “might be impaired in [the] future if a solution were not found to the problem of planning Pacific strategy,” he concluded that “in view of the difficulty of associating the United Kingdom with ANZUS, some wider form of Pacific pact should be considered.” The response was lackluster. Both Menzies and Holland refused to offer any immediate support for the prime minister’s proposals. Following further reflection in Canberra and Wellington, Churchill’s proposals received a lukewarm response.

Any lingering Australian sympathies had now evaporated. Menzies made clear that he would no longer allow ANZUS to be “disrupted” by the question of British admission. His foreign minister, Richard Casey, was also adamantly opposed to British membership. Casey resented the implication that the Australians required British “hand holding” in any alliance, and he feared that pushing for a broader security pact could spur the United States to cut its existing security guarantees to Australia. Spender had also made a similar argument to Menzies in a lengthy note from Washington:

I specially want to stress, if we allow anything to interfere with ANZUS, whether on the political or military plane, we will lose the only means we have of any effective entry into USA political and military thinking at a high level and the intimacy which ANZUS unquestionably affords us. For the first time we have got a toe hold into the councils in the USA which affect the world and its destiny.

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209. “Pacific Defence: Minutes of a Meeting held at 10 Downing Street,” 10 June 1953.
at a high and acknowledged level through ANZUS. I cannot tell you how glad I am that you are resolved that we shall not relinquish it.\textsuperscript{210}

Australian policymakers had now concluded that the status quo was preferable. In New Zealand, there was considerably more sympathy for Churchill’s plight, but progress also foundered on fears that pursuing such a path would jeopardize current U.S. commitments. In the final analysis, such a risk was not worth taking.\textsuperscript{211} Sentimentality and imperial bonds were evidently unable to overcome geopolitical realities.

Support for British membership within the antipodean countries continued to wane in subsequent months. “The ANZUS arrangement,” Menzies explained to Churchill, “has political reality in New Zealand and the United States as well as in Australia. It is a political fact of the first magnitude. In any of these countries, moves which had the effect of destroying or even weakening this arrangement would be liable to serious misunderstanding.”\textsuperscript{212} Familiar U.S. excuses also now took root in the Southern Hemisphere as Australian policymakers began to suggest that British membership in ANZUS would create the impression that it was a “White Man’s Club” and would therefore damage relations between its members and the other Asian powers.\textsuperscript{213} This racial explanation was largely disingenuous, as the Australian decision to exclude Britain from ANZUS had little to do with racial equality. Such rhetoric, however, served as a useful excuse.

British representatives also encountered resistance from the New Zealand government. Holland, though more sympathetic to the British position, would not countenance alterations in the treaty that could potentially undermine U.S. security commitments. Churchill’s ambition of obtaining Australian and New Zealand support for a Pacific security pact therefore collapsed in the absence of any real enthusiasm.\textsuperscript{214} Evidence of such discussions also tempers claims of an “ANZAC dilemma.” Australia and New Zealand may have felt “the pull between old habits of thought and emotion and the necessities imposed by geography and the present state of world affairs,” but their preferences were sufficiently clear to lessen the difficulty of any such choice.\textsuperscript{215}

\textsuperscript{210} Spender to Menzies, 29 May 1953.
\textsuperscript{213} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{214} “Pacific Defence: Minutes of a Meeting Held at 10 Downing Street,” 10 June 1953.
Both the Australian and the New Zealand governments were becoming increasingly skeptical about the benefits associated with British membership in ANZUS.216

Despite failing to convince their antipodean counterparts, Churchill and Eden persisted in bilateral diplomacy with the United States. Following his orders from London, the British ambassador to Washington, Oliver Franks, met with U.S. representatives in September 1953. Membership, he learned, was no longer a possibility for the British. The explanations offered in defense of this position included fears of a “White Man’s Club” and the consequent possibility of French membership, which risked the costly expansion of ANZUS into Indochina. British hopes that Eisenhower’s ascension to the presidency would help them to gain access to ANZUS had proved ill-founded.217 Although Churchill and Eden accepted that the United Kingdom could no longer dominate Western strategy in the Pacific, now even a marginal role eluded them. Churchill had evidently overestimated his country’s importance to the United States in relation to Pacific security.218

By late 1953, Dulles had made abundantly clear that the United States would not countenance the possibility of British membership in ANZUS. In a thinly veiled threat to any potential supporters, he stressed that if the two antipodean states continued to pursue the matter they would do so at the expense of the entire ANZUS relationship. As the Australians subsequently informed the British:

A decision was taken not to extend the membership of Anzus to include the United Kingdom. Mr Dulles at one stage professed readiness, if Australia and New Zealand, really wished it, to let the United Kingdom into Anzus. But he made it clear that if that happened, it would therefore be the end of Anzus as a treaty having any value to the three parties.219

219. H. C. to the Prime Minister, 6 October 1953.
The Australians may have exaggerated the U.S. diplomatic approach in an effort to downplay their own interests, but such duplicity seems unlikely. The United States had been insistent on British exclusion from the very beginning, and the depiction of Dulles’s diplomacy was in character. Even if Dulles’s behavior was merely an act of frustration or bravado, U.S. strength nonetheless allowed for the creation of an alliance predominantly on U.S. terms. Accordingly, a communiqué issued at the end of the 1953 ANZUS meeting explicitly ruled out expanding membership.220

The U.S. government’s handling of its allies, and the issue of British membership more broadly, represents a subtle challenge to the existing Cold War historiography. Claims of “empire by invitation” tend to stress cooperation among alliance partners. Dulles’s diplomacy with the antipodean powers complicates such assumptions. These sorts of negotiations were by no means an aberration for the period or the region. Marc Trachtenberg has likewise shown that the United States could treat its allies roughly if required to secure national interests. Such insights challenge popular caricatures of the U.S. government’s handling of the Atlantic alliance, and there is good reason to believe similar methods extended to the Pacific.221 Reinforcing Dulles’s rough diplomacy with Australia and New Zealand, the United States cemented its preference for a tripartite agreement without formal defense ties. Following the public announcement, Australian and New Zealand officials made clear to their British counterparts that they would no longer push for expansion. ANZUS would remain an exclusive tripartite pact.

Conclusion

The emergence of a formal security pact between the United States, Australia, and New Zealand in the early 1950s reflected a compromise. The United States offered a limited security guarantee and in return obtained Australian and New Zealand support for a lenient Japanese peace treaty, which complemented broader U.S. ambitions to contain Communism. The antipodean powers also benefited, as ANZUS addressed concerns about the threat of a resurgent Japan that had deeply troubled policymakers in Australia and New Zealand. Although the security apparatus of the alliance was limited, it established an

220. “Far East Gen Anzus and Anzam.”
important precedent of strategic cooperation across the Pacific. The ANZUS Treaty therefore benefited all its members.

The tripartite agreement nevertheless discriminated, at times, in favor of Washington rather than Canberra or Wellington. Australian and New Zealand efforts to expand the treaty’s remit to include broader strategic cooperation and planning failed in the subsequent years. In addition, Australia and New Zealand grudgingly surrendered older traditions of cooperation with the UK under the pressure of U.S. threats of withdrawal. The forging of ANZUS came at the expense of the UK’s interests. Many senior British figures were determined to make the treaty as irrelevant as possible if they could not achieve membership. 222 The longevity of the ANZUS Treaty thus highlights both the futility of such ambitions and the enduring success of U.S. diplomacy in the Southwest Pacific.

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