Review Article

The Anzus Pact and the Treaty of Peace with Japan: Documents on New Zealand External Relations, Vol. III. Edited by Robin Kay. Government Printer, Wellington, 1985. lxx, 1268 pp. N.Z. price: $85.00.

THIS VOLUME provides the first collection of official documents on the Japanese Peace Settlement and the making of the ANZUS Treaty. The Australian documents will not appear for some time yet. Although there is naturally a heavy emphasis on New Zealand material, there is also a great deal from other countries, especially the United States, Britain and Australia. Readers with interests in the Commonwealth of Nations, the occupation of Japan, the formulation of US foreign policy, and the early days of the Cold War, will find much to enlighten them. The editing is expert (though sometimes a little out of date in footnotes which describe careers such as Sir James Plimsoll's), the printing clear (though the paper is perhaps a bit thin), and the range of documents highly satisfactory.

New Zealand was fortunate in its diplomats during the decade following World War II. They were few in number, but of very high quality. Such men as Berendsen, Powles, Shanahan and McIntosh come through as shrewd, sensible, careful and often enlightened. Their political masters seem less effective and realistic (though Doidge appears more so than I remember his being represented at the time). The fact that there were so few professionals and that they knew each other so well means that the documents are sometimes more informal and revealing than is usually the case in such collections: a communication which begins 'Dear Bill' will not be couched in stilted language. (Berendsen's letter to his Minister of 14 March 1950 — document 198 — is as robust and representative an example of how Australian and New Zealand officials thought about the Cold War as one is likely to find anywhere.)

The documents date from 1947 to 1952. There are 451 of them, which means that there is plenty of material on which to base a judgment about how the peace treaty and ANZUS came to be as they were. Inevitably, the collection is not complete: it lacks, for example, documents about the political discussions which lay behind the attitudes taken up by the participants in the negotiations. The detail is sufficient, however, to give us considerable insight into the attitudes involved. So far as the peace settlement is concerned, the following conclusions seem to me to emerge.

First, it is clear that, as earlier studies have suggested, New Zealand and Australia were soon isolated in their conviction that Japan might again become an aggressor and that continued controls were necessary in order to prevent this from happening. Such a conviction, which survived changes of government in both countries in 1949, was rejected by other members of the Commonwealth of Nations, and (most em-

phatically) in Washington. For years the two South Pacific governments kept repeating it. The documents do not help us to decide why this was so; it was unquestioned at the time and seemed to require no explanation. Yet events have shown that it was wrong. Why did Australia and New Zealand go on saying it? The answer seems to lie in the peculiar circumstances of the Occupation, and the lack of effective reporting of the realities of Japanese politics. The two southern governments went on saying what came naturally to them, because they were unable or unwilling to find out the facts or to identify the trends in Japan which were to prevail.

Second, the representatives of the United States were quite frank about why they wanted a soft treaty. It was because they feared 'a coalition between China, Russia and Japan' (document 226). Dulles and those around him were convinced that Japan must be made an ally and eventually rearmed; they were also sure that this would constitute no danger. (They felt, incidentally, that it would be very difficult to get the Japanese to rearm. There is a highly contemporary note about Dulles's comment on p.612). They may have been wrong about the intentions of the Soviet Union; who can say? But they were right about Japan.

Third, while the other Commonwealth countries disagreed with Australia and New Zealand about a harsh peace with Japan, it is fascinating to see how much they seem to have agreed with these two countries and Britain about the correctness of the US diagnosis of Soviet aims. Subsequent events have made it difficult to recall how much the Commonwealth was united in the early 1950s about the state of the world — South Asian members and Dr Malan's South Africa as well as Australia and New Zealand. This unity was to be disrupted by US policy towards Pakistan and British policy over Suez, not by any basic disagreement about the Soviet Union. No doubt the 'unity' was fragile and would have been broken in any case, if only by the new preoccupations of later members; but it is a mordant thought that the leaders of the Western alliance were better at the breakage business than the Russians.

Fourth, it is clear from the documents on the actual content of the treaty that Britain, New Zealand and Australia were anxious to see that their economic interests were protected. Anyone who thinks that international politics is confined to peace and war should read documents 317-378.

Fifth — and this leads on to the ANZUS part of the volume — it seems to me difficult to maintain that Australia and New Zealand agreed to the Japanese peace treaty as a direct *quid pro quo* for ANZUS. It is true that Spender, the Australian Minister for External Affairs, did threaten opposition to the treaty if there were no 'acceptable security arrangements in the Pacific' (document 226). But the documents suggest very strongly that the isolation of the two countries was so pronounced, and their leaders were so aware of this, that they would probably have signed the peace treaty in a grudging way whether ANZUS was offered to them or not. ANZUS was a kind of bonus, provided by Dulles because he was in a hurry and he needed to implement some part of his 'island chain' policy of alliance.

Suggestions of a 'Pacific pact', a 'Pacific Union', or a 'South-east Asia Union', sometimes confined to the so-called island chain and sometimes including mainland Asian countries, were in the air from 1947 onwards. On the whole, the United States was cautious about them, whether they came from Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines or Chiang Kai-shek's China. The US administration did not want to be responsible for the preservation of regimes which it might decide were not worth preserving. This did not apply to New Zealand and Australia, which, US spokesmen were prepared to say, the United States would defend if they were attacked. It did apply, however, to Asian regimes which looked insecure and might prove very difficult

to protect. Until 1951, US representatives were not prepared to confine a treaty of guarantee to New Zealand and Australia, because of the accusations of discrimination which this might attract. The sticking point was the Philippines, continually (as now) a puzzle for US officials anxious to provide a neat solution to Asian problems. An ex-colony which continued to behave as if it had learnt its politics at a school for gangsters was an embarrassment to an ex-colonial power. (There is a nice comment by Dulles in document 226, the most interesting in the volume.)

A matter which is likely to be debated for some time is what differences in emphasis there were between Australian and New Zealand desires for an effective alliance with the United States. The documents (the key one being no. 231) show that, broadly speaking, the main difference was between formality and informality, between the Australian wish for a treaty and the New Zealand readiness to be content with an undertaking.

There may also have been something of a split in both countries between military and political opinion. A communication of 28 April 1950 from the New Zealand Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of External Affairs (document no. 199) states flat-footedly that on military grounds there were at that time 'no reasons for an approach by New Zealand to the United States for the conclusion of a Pacific Defence Pact' because American responsibilities would be exercised north of the equator while ANZAM looked after things south of it. This preference for an association with the British may well have been shared by the Australian Chiefs of Staff; it did not characterize Spender, the Australian Minister for External Affairs.

Spender set the pace for demands on the United States. From document no. 202 onwards (i.e., from October 1950) one can see him arguing that Australia — and New Zealand, which he was happy to include in his advocacy, whether licensed to do so or not — wanted American guarantees. He did not confine his reasons to the alleged Japanese menace, but also argued that the ill-defined and hardly public responsibilities of the South Pacific countries in the Middle East made such guarantees necessary. Otherwise Australia and New Zealand might find themselves attacked when their forces were deployed elsewhere. Clearly, it was the US Navy that he was after in his demand for a formal treaty. The New Zealand Department of External Affairs sympathized to some extent with his quest, but considered it impracticable (document no. 208); it preferred an informal guarantee.

The role played by the British in the operation which culminated in ANZUS was a complex one. It is clear that they wanted a free hand for ANZAM in Malaya, where there was no question of US interference. At the same time they wanted the United States involved in mainland Asia, and they were aware of how much the South Pacific countries hankered after US guarantees — guarantees which it was clear Britain itself could not provide. They still had hopes that Australia and New Zealand would play a role in the Middle East. They were probably aware of Spender's desire that they not be part of the discussions in February 1951 between Dulles and Australian and New Zealand ministers (see document 212). Their optimum interest lay in having a say, if not a role, in the outcome; but they could hardly claim to be a party principal, especially since Dulles said there were no British possessions in the island chain on which so much of his thinking was based (documents 215 and 226). Spender agreed with him (document 226). Of necessity, the British approach was essentially negative (see especially document 216).

In the end, a tripartite security treaty commended itself to such people as Dean Rusk and Berendsen, and was highly acceptable to Spender. Dulles's original desire for an island chain treaty was fulfilled when it became clear that he could get the

same result with three treaties (with Japan, the Philippines, and Australia and New Zealand respectively) instead of one. The New Zealand Prime Minister, Holland, seems to have been rather left behind by events at times, but fell in with the others. Neither he nor the Australian Prime Minister, Menzies, is prominent in these documents.

What is most striking, in the light of present-day arguments, is that the documents appear to contain no reference to either nuclear warfare or to the kinds of military cooperation which might be organized between the three countries in ANZUS. The emphasis throughout is upon the desire of New Zealand and Australia for guarantees of security. There is, however, a link with the present day in the constant iteration by the two countries' spokesmen of their wish to cooperate with NATO, and the emphasis they place on their role in the Middle East. In this sense they are asserting their agreement with a worldwide strategy against Communism /the Soviet Union, the central factor in which is the military might of the United States. The documents contain very few, if any, specific military references (which is not surprising, since nearly all those represented were politicians or diplomats). But there is no doubt about the enthusiasm for military connections, expressed in general terms; so any American who looked back over the files might well be justified in saying that, if the Australians and New Zealanders willed the end so enthusiastically, they could now be expected to will the means. The fact that it all happened so long ago, and that the world is now a different sort of place, is, of course, another matter.

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