

without doubts or hesitancy, New Zealand moves on its unique path through history.

There are some disappointing and avoidable blemishes. An index entry may comprise a string of undifferentiated page numbers, and while the index is impressively full, it does not lack chaotic features. In quite a few cases it appears a matter of chance whether a person achieves index status, or whether, having achieved such status, he or she will be indexed for every reference. There is an occasional mistake which should have been picked up: for example the listing of Frank O'Flynn as Foreign Affairs Minister 1984-87 and, most strikingly, a statement that the French agents caught after the *Rainbow Warrior* affair were never brought to trial. These particular mistakes probably reflect the fact that the work moves from decades heavily researched to less heavily researched commentary on more recent years. There can also be disconcerting jumps in the narrative. Sometimes individuals flit across the page dropping an apt remark or simply expressing a viewpoint, and then disappear from sight. Footnote citations often make little concession to the casual reader. An entire book may be given as a reference, a citation so abbreviated that its meaning has to be tracked down.

The work should be commended not as a trailblazer but as a well-rounded, nicely expressed, commentary on New Zealand's external relations since 1935. Anyone wishing to explore some facet of New Zealand foreign policy in this period would find this an excellent starting point for study — once having grasped the broad background which is rather taken for granted — and will be grateful for the extensive citations and full bibliography. This will be a book students of foreign policy will want to read and will like to quote.

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New Zealand and the Korean War, Volume 1: Politics and Diplomacy. By Ian McGibbon. Oxford University Press in association with the Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, Auckland, 1992. 468 pp. NZ price: \$69.95

THIS IS, without doubt, the best book written so far on New Zealand's external affairs. Although Kayforce was only a bit player in the 21-nation coalition which went to the rescue of South Korea under the banner of the United Nations in 1950 (and it was known as the 'forgotten force'), New Zealand's contribution, as a proportion of population, was second only to that of the United States. McGibbon shows that this contribution was also a most significant episode in the evolution of New Zealand's role in world affairs. The book deserves the highest praise and a wide readership because of five virtues.

Firstly, it provides clear judgement on the causes and course of the war. It is divided into two parts. The first deals with the North Korean invasion, the UN forces' retreat to Pusan, the Inchon landings and the recovery of South Korea. At the time, it was believed that World War III was about to begin, that Korea was a Soviet-inspired diversion before assaults on the Middle East and Western Europe. Revisionist historians later tried to argue that South Korea engineered the war. McGibbon sees 'overwhelming circumstantial evidence' that Kim Il-Sung, the North Korean leader, planned the attack. He says that the 'case for Chinese instigation is not strong' and that the Soviet Union, while willing to go along with the adventure, had urged caution. The second part of the book deals with the period after October 1950, when UN forces attempted to re-unify Korea, which led to

Chinese intervention and a further attempt to subjugate South Korea. Recovery by the UN forces was followed by a period of stalemate, 1951-53, devoted to border battles, bombing and negotiations. On this phase McGibbon states categorically that the UN had 'assumed the role of aggressor'.

Secondly, McGibbon gives a definitive analysis of the New Zealand decisions to participate. Sid Holland, only seven months in office, was 'not at all anxious to take any part', but when he heard that the British Far East Fleet had been placed at the disposal of the American Commander, he changed his mind 'on the spur of the moment' and, without consulting the Cabinet Defence Committee, announced on 29 June 1950 that the frigates *Pukaki* and *Tutira* would join the British fleet. When it came to the call for ground forces, the British at first urged New Zealand not to get involved as its main commitment at this time was to reinforce the Middle East in a world war. But when the British did an about-turn, Holland determined, on 26 July, to get in first with the offer of a medium regiment of artillery. The regiment had to be specially recruited and it did not join a British brigade in Korea until 23 January 1951. Kayforce also included signals and transport platoons and a light aid detachment, and when it became part of the Commonwealth Division, a transport company was added.

The third strength of the book is its illuminating discussion of the domestic impact of the war. A boom in wool prices became so great that the government froze a proportion of the wool growers' returns to keep money out of circulation and stem inflation. When this boom was threatened by the waterfront strike in 1951, a state of emergency was declared, troops used on the wharves, and a snap election called. Holland railed against 'Communist wreckers' and won an increased majority. But, although the rhetoric of the Cold War was injected into domestic politics, McGibbon shows that the government did not go to the anti-Communist lengths of its Australian counterpart.

The fourth and the most striking merit of this book is the perspective view it provides on defence and foreign policies. McGibbon suggests that the war confirmed the need for the Department of External Affairs and he illustrates vividly the work Alister McIntosh (the Secretary), Foss Shanahan (his deputy), Carl Berendsen (the outspoken ambassador in Washington) and younger officers like George Laking and Frank Corner, who subsequently headed the department in the 1960s and 1970s. The private correspondence of McIntosh, Berendsen and Corner reveals a pungent commentary on the problems faced by a small state dealing with great power allies. For New Zealand the problem was complicated by the recently-reversed roles of Britain and the USA. After the Second World War New Zealand leaders still saw the country's security tied up with the British Commonwealth: 'one could just as well question the law of gravity', said Fraser, and Holland loved to talk of the 'dear old Empire'. It had been accepted in 1949-1950 that in the event of a world war, one division and five squadrons would go to the Middle East within three months. Two frigates in fact left for service in the Mediterranean early in 1950 and a fighter/bomber squadron was sent to Cyprus in 1952. The 'fall of China' to the Communists in 1949 did not alter this strategy. However, fears about Hong Kong led the government to put three frigates on a month's notice to join the British fleet, a detachment of Dakota transport planes went to Singapore and the government also offered four Mosquito bombers. Hong Kong was not attacked, but the Dakotas flew a ferry service to Hong Kong and later dropped supplies in the Malayan emergency.

McGibbon suggests that Korea highlighted the inflexibility of traditional plans and the need for closer relations with the USA. This was made more urgent by the American determination to sign a 'soft' peace with Japan to win that country as a Cold War ally. This (and the Middle East commitment) caused Australia and New Zealand to seek an American guarantee, which was fulfilled in the ANZUS treaty in 1951. Thus defence and foreign policy became much more complicated for New Zealand, especially after China's

intervention in Korea raised fears that it would also intervene in Southeast Asia. New Zealand then joined in five power talks about how to deter the Chinese in Southeast Asia. In this light, the Middle East commitment seemed increasingly anachronistic to Holland. As the British planned a Commonwealth Far East Strategic Reserve in Malaya, New Zealand committed an SAS Squadron (later an infantry battalion) and the airforce squadron was transferred from Cyprus to Singapore. McGibbon considers that the Korean War itself did not lead to the Southeast Asian commitment, but the change in the general strategic situation, caused by China's intervention, did. The great dilemma for New Zealand diplomacy, brought about by the Korean war, was the fear of Anglo-American differences: 'The pursuit of a British-oriented policy within an American-dominated international arena made difficult choices inevitable — unless Anglo-American unity was assured.'

The final merit of this book is its meticulous professionalism. It is extremely well-documented from New Zealand, Australian, British and US archives. The appendices include the texts of seven UN resolutions and lists the contributions to the UN forces, from 21 countries. There are 102 photographs, 8 maps and 20 cartoons, including Gordon Minhinnick from the *New Zealand Herald* and Sid Scales from the *Otago Daily Times*.

This volume is an exemplary vindication of the existence of an Historical Branch charged with the task of producing official histories. It is the first volume of a series covering New Zealand's role in conflicts since the Second World War. Amazingly, the publisher printed only 500 copies so that by the time this review is read it will, no doubt, be out of print. May we hope that this is rectified when the eagerly-awaited second volume, on naval, military and logistic operations of New Zealanders in Korea, is published?

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Undiplomatic Dialogue: Letters between Carl Berendsen and Alister McIntosh 1943-52. Edited by Ian McGibbon. Auckland University Press in association with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, Auckland, 1993. xx, 305 pp. NZ price: \$29.95.

THE PERIOD 1943-1952 was a critical one in the development of New Zealand's international relations. Accounts of the major issues abound: the final stages of the Second World War, establishing the United Nations and the Commonwealth, the momentous changes in Asia, the Cold War and Korean War, and the conclusion of the ANZUS and Japanese Peace treaties.

To this discussion *Undiplomatic Dialogue* brings the unique perspective of two of New Zealand's key public servants at the time: Carl Berendsen, who represented New Zealand in Canberra and then Washington, and Alister McIntosh, who oversaw the establishment of a professional diplomatic service. Both were knighted for their service to New Zealand.

From their extensive personal correspondence, Ian McGibbon has selected and edited, with considerable skill, less than a quarter of their letters to show something of how they wrestled with the momentous issues of their day, if not of the twentieth century. The letters also provide fascinating insights into the domestic, personal and professional worlds of their time, the early days of New Zealand diplomacy and the characters of each writer. The